

மனோன்மணியம் சுந்தரனார் பல்கலைக்கழகம்

திருநெல்வேலி

MANONMANIAM SUNDARANAR UNIVERSITY

TIRUNELVELI

தொலைநெறித் தொடர்கல்வி இயக்ககம்

DIRECTORATE DISTANCE & CONTINUING EDUCATION

TIRUNELVELI

History of Tamil Nadu from up to 1565 AD



மனோன்மணியம் சுந்தரனார் பல்கலைக்கழகம்,

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HISTORY OF TAMIL NADU UPTO 1565AD

Objectives: To acquaint the students about the ancient Tamil Kings who ruled over this land with the unique culture and language.

Unit: I

Geographical features and the Sangam Age:

Geographical features of Tamil Nadu- Sources : Literary , Archaeological- Race, Language and Religion- the Sangam Age:- Main sources- Sangam works- The Age of the Sangam – Political history KadalPirakkottiya Senguttuvan -KarikalaChola TalayalanganattuNedumseliyan. Sangam culture- Administration- Economy- Cultural life.

Unit: II

The Kalabhras and The Pandyas:

The Kalabhras: Origin of the Kalabhras- Effects of Kalabhra rule on the Tamil country- The first empire of the Pandyas: Sources- Political achievements: Pandya contribution to government, Art and Architecture.

Unit: III

The Pallavas and The Cholas:

Origin of the Pallavas- Imperial Pallavas- Mahendravarman I- Narasimhavarman I- Other rulers- The Pandya-Pallava conflict- Contribution of Pallavas to Art and Architecture, Culture- Administration, Socio-economic life- Religious condition- The Cholas: The Vijayalaya Line of Cholas: Parantaka I- Rajaraja I - Rajendra I - Chalukya Cholas: Kulottunga I- Kulottunga III- The Chola administration- Contribution to Literature- Art and Architecture- Socio-economic life – Culture- trade- Religious condition.

Unit: IV

Pandyas and the Muslim invasions:

Pandyas of the second empire – Political History- Administration and Social life- Contribution to Art and Architecture- Revenue Policy of the later Pandyas- Muslim Invasion of South India- Invasion of Malik Kafur- Rise of Madurai Sultanate- Impact of Muslim Rule.

History of Tamil Nadu from up to 1565 AD

Sources

We depend upon sources to know the history of any country. Tamilaham situated in the southern part of peninsular India had a cherished history. A number of dynasties ruled Tamilnadu. The Chera Chola and Pandyas of the Sangam age ruled the Tamilaham upon 300 A.D. The glorious sangam period began to decline due to the intervention of Kalabhras. They ruled from 300 A.D to 600 A.D. The decline of kalabhras led to the domination of Pallavas and they ruled Tamilaham from 600 A.D. to 900 A.D. Tamilaham challenged the authorities of neighbouring states under imperial Chaolas from 900 A.D. to 1300 A.D. The subsequent civil war in the Pandyan Kingdom led to the intervention of Muslims. The Vijayanagar Kingdom was founded in 1336 A.D. to check the activities of Musilims. To study and understand the glory of the above mentioned periods, we have to dive deep into the sources. Because, sources are unique to reconstruct the history of TamilNadu. The sources are numerous and varied. They are divided into literature, epigraphy, numismatics and archaeology.

Archaeology

Archaeological monuments also served as an evidence for the construction of the history of Tamilnadu. But less importance was given to the excavation of unearthed articles and monuments in ancient periods. Knowing the validity of ancient articles and monuments, a separate department was constituted only after the arrival of the British. Bruce Forte, was a pioneer in the field of South Indian archaeology. He was responsible for bringing to light the archaeological findings at Adichanallur.

Adichanallur

Adichanallur is in Thirunelvelly district, It is located on the right bank of the Tambarapani river, about two miles west of the town of Srivaikindam. This place was brought to the attention of British government in 1876. The government handed over this place to the archaeological department for excavation. This was the most ancient archeological centre in South India. Dr. Jagor of Berlin visited this place and studied the historical backgrounds of this place and decided to start excavation works. The

then acting collector of Tirunelvely and the district engineer rendered required assistance to him. As a result of the excavation, a considerable number of iron weapons and implements chiefly knives or short sword blades hatchets and great quantity of bones and skulls were discovered. Two small pots were discovered. All these articles were taken away by Dr.Jagor, for the Berlin Museum and none of them reached the Madras Museu. Knowing the importance of the previous articles further excavations were conducted in 1903-1904. This collections were kept in the Madras Museum. The discovered articles at adichanallur revealed the ancient civilization of the people of Tamilnadu. The potteries discovered at this sit revealed the burial system of the Tamils. The discovery of the deity of Murugan proved that the people of Tamilnadu were very familiar with Murugan. Again, the use of household articles made of iron and bronze highlighted the existence of an advanced civilization.

Arikkamedu

Siliar excavation was held ar Arikkamedu in Pondicheey. Martimer Wheeler, the Director of Archaeological department conducted excavation works at Arikkamedu. As a result of the excavation, a number of gold coins were discovered. The discovery of an industry at Arikkamedu proved the minting og Roman Coins in Tamilnadu. This excavation provided various information connected with trade and culture of the ancient Tamil.

The discovery at Arikkamedu put Tamilnadu on the archaeological map of India and added a new dimension to the study of ancient Tamil History. Again, excavations were held at Korkai, Uraiyr, Madurai on a small scale and Roman gold coins were discovered. The findings of these excavations threw much light on the socio economic activities of the people of ancient TamilNadu. In short, the Roman coins discovered at various places of Tamilnadu confirmed the commercial contacts of the ancient Tamils with Rome.

The sources mentioned so far give a clear and accurate picture of ancient Tamils in their social, economic, religious and diplomatic spheres of activity.

Races

The races which dominated South India in the pre-historic period is a matter of controversy among scholars. Due to lack of literary evidence, scholars in this field, depended on the archaeological remaining to know about the races of this age.

Ethnographical Survey

Ethnography concentrate mainly on the study of various races of mankind. Among the ethnographers, Risely was the first to make a systematic study of the Indian population. Edger Thurston, in his "Castes and Tribes of South India". mentioned the existence of more than three hundred tribes in Madras Presidency in the beginning of the twentieth century. But the account given by him was not authentic. A detailed study of this field was carried out by J.H. Hulton. He continued the task of Risely. Based on the caste, language and Culture. J.H. Hulton divided the races that existed in India into eight divisions. But none of them was Indian in origin. B.S.Guha. "The Director of the Anthropological Survey in India, concentrated more on the study of mankind. His findings were recent and authoritative. he divided the people who lived in India into six divisions. B.S.Guha concluded that of them belonged to Tamilnadu. He classified the six races into Pre-Dravidian, Dravidian and Post - Dravidian or Indo - Aryan.

The Six Races

1. The Negrito

They were dark in colour, their stature was short. They possessed short and flat nose. They had wide nostrils and curly hair. It was believed that they were responsible for Paleolithic civilization. This civilization declined with the arrival of Proto Australoids. They defeated and drove out Negritos from the society. But a small group of this race was found in Andaman. The Kadar and Pulayar in the hilly regions of Kerala, the Irular in Waynad and the ribals of Annamali belonged to this race.

2. The Proto-Australoids

The Proto-Australoids defeated Negritos and permanently settled in India. They further moved southwards and settled in certain parts of Tamilnade. They were black

in colour and medium in size. They had long heads. Their nose was short, but wide. They were the architects of Neolithic civilization. The Kadar and Kurumbar who lived in the hilly regions of Tamilnadu belonged to this race.

3. The Mongoloid

This race was not found in Tamilnadu. Mostly, they were settled in Tibet, Burma and Chittagong hills.

4. The Mediterranean group

This race represented Tamilnadu. They possessed medium structure, dark skin and oval face. They were found in Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam regions. People believed that they were the ancestors of Dravidians.

5. The brachycephalic

This race had small head. They were found in Kannada, Orissa, Bengal and Tamilnadu.

6. The Nordic Race

Their original home was Scandinavia. They possessed long head and white face. They were settled in the river beds of north India. It is believed that they were Brahmins or Aryans.

Though B.S.Guha mentioned the six races in India, he had not mentioned the original homes of the races. Hence, a number of theories were put forward by various scholars.

I. Lemurian Theory

The original home of the Dravidian was a theme of controversy among the scholars. According to this theory, the original home of the Tamils was not confined to Tamilnadu alone. It attributed to the theory that man originated in Lemuria, a vast mass of land stretching to the South east and west of Cape-Comerin. Sangam works gave references to this land. The land was called Lamura. Scholars like Salter and Holderness viewed that the continent of Lemuria was the cradle of mankind. Silappadikaram mentioned Lemuria as Kumarikandam. It was divided into 49

divisions. The name Lemuria was derived from Lemur, the monkey-like animal. The area they lived connected South India with Ceylon, Malaya, Indonesia, South Africa, Madagascar and Australia. Tamil rulers once ruled this continent. The first and second Tamil Sangam also existed in this area. These two sangams perished due to the erosion of India Ocean. After the deluge, the third Tamil Sangam was shifted to Madurai. It also served as the capital of Pandyas. The existence of the land beyond Kanyakumari was ascertained by various other evidences. The people who lived in this continent maintained commercial and colonial contact with West Asia and Mediterranean. Hence, P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar held that the original home of the Tamil was Lemuria.

II Mediterranean Theory

This theory advocated that the Tamils of the Dravidian stock hailed from Mediterranean region. It is said that, the Dravidians settled in the Western Asia, migrated to South India through the North Western region. Based on this view, various scholars contributed their ideas. Elliot Smith concluded that, “the Egyptians were the fathers of civilization”. This theory was mainly based on the similarities between the Dravidians and the Egyptians. Fuerer and Kanakasabai Pillai suggested that the Dravidians came by sea-route and the Aryans came by land route to India. Both the migrations took place without and mutual knowledge. James Hornell expressed his view based on the sea faring nature of the Tamils. This theory was based on the similarity between the boats used by the early Dravidians and the Mediterranean. Again, he mentioned certain social similarities that existed among them. Based on the above theories F.J.Richards concluded that the Dravidians migrated from the Mediterranean region.

III Mongolian Theory

This theory viewed that the primitive Tamils of the Dravidian stock migrated from Tibetan Plateau. It stressed the similarity of the usage of the syllable both in the Tibetan and Tamil languages. This theory was rejected by most of the scholars including Sir. William Turner.

IV Traditional Theory

Traditional theory attributed that the Dravidians were the natives of South India. It is said that, when the Dravidians moved towards the north, some of them settled in Bihar, Orissa, Bombay and Indus. Further, they migrated to Baluchistan, Sumaria, Egypt and other places both by Land Sea. The similarities that existed among these cultures, confirmed this migratin. Again the primitiveness of Tamil and the use of the words Amma and Appa in all the languages proved that South India was probably the cradle of the human race. But the truth is yet to be revealed.

Language and Religion

Tamil Brahmi

Brahmi was one of the oldest languages found in the inscriptions pertaining to the history of Tamilnadu. There were thousands of inscriptions in Brahmi language and they all belonged to the third century B.C. Among them, the Brahmi inscriptions found in Anaimalai, Azahaharmalai, Mettupatti, Muthupatti, Sittannavasal, Thiruvathavur, Vikramamangalam, Thirupparamkuntam, Mankulam, Karungalakkaudi, Puzhaloor, Arasalur and Mamandur were important.

During the reign of Maurya Emperor Asoka, Buddhism had spread in Srilanka and South India in the third century B.C Especially. Jain and Buddhist monks mastered Tamil language to spread their religious principles. The original religious works were in Prakrit language. In this manner, the Brahmi Script entered Tamilnadu. The Buddhist and Jain, onks of Tamilnadu lived in caves. Inscriptions in Brahmi scripstd were found in these caves. As these inscriptions were found in these caves, they were called cave inscriptions or Tamil Brahmi inscriptions.

The oldest inscription in Brahmi script was found in the caves of Pandyan Kingdom. They were similar to the Brahmi script discovered in Srilanka. It was assumed that they belonged to the third century B.C. and the language used was Tamil. But there were certain Brahmi interpolations. As Brahmi words were found in these inscriptions they were called Brahmi inscriptions.

In the Indian alphabetical system, the Brahmi script was considered to be pure (basic). This script had undergone growth and structural changes. On the basis of the script, they were arranged as North Brahmi and South Brahmi. There were changes in the script of the two systems. The North Brahmi script had adapted itself to the North India languages and found beyond the boundaries of Tamilnadu. It was extant and popular at the time of Maurya ruler Asoka and hence called Asoka Brahmi Script. It was easy and simple. Likewise, the script in Tamilnadu was called South Asoka Brahmi. It was also called "Dravidi". In Srilanka it was called Lanka Brahmi.

Scholars differed on the origin of Brahmi. Some scholars believed that Tamil script originated from the Brahmi inscriptions found in the caves. But the basic structure of the script was not clearly mentioned till now. It was clear that before the advent of the Pallavas there was no script for Tamil and that it depended on Brahmi script for its survival. Megasthenese in his travelogue had stressed that Indians had no alphabet then and that Tamil had originated from Brahmi. Western scholars considered that Brahmi script would have reached India through West Asia. Some others believed that Brahmi scripts were based on North Semetic alphabets and originated in seven hundred B.C. There was another school of thought which claimed that Brahmi script originated in India itself. Whatever might be its origin, it was written from left to right. But in some places it was written in the reverse order. Its syntax was based on the Tamil system. The oldest inscriptions discovered in India were found only in Brahmi alphabet. The scripts on the potteries found in Arikamedu were considered contemporary. Therefore its antiquity could be traced to third or fourth century B.C. It was of particular interest and importance and that ancient inscriptions of Tamilnadu were found to be only in Brahmi script and it was very obvious.

Vattaluthu

Tamil as used in Tamilnadu had adopted round or rotund letters and hence called Vattaluthu. This language contained many letters which had curves or inflexions. So it was called Vattaluthu or Vattom. During the Chola period, it was called Malaiyanma and Kolauthu. Some scholars opined that since the letters were

used to inscribe in stores, it was called as Vattaluthu. The epic Silappadikaram mentioned it as AKannaluthu.

T.A.Gopinatha Rao claimed that Vattaluthu originated and developed from Brahmi script. T.B.Subramonian and Poolar also followed this assumption. The civilized Tamils who lived in Tamilnadu before the arrival of Aryans had claimed that the origin and source of Brahmi was Binishya, alphabet and Vattaluthu would have been modelled on the script. This was the opinion of Dr.Bunel. Dr.Moova referred to the old inscriptions and claimed that they were all in Vattaluthu.

C.R.Ramachandradeshitar stated that even before the origin of Asoka inscription in Brahmi language, Vattaluthu was in vogue. It was also believed that the grantha script of Pallavas and the Tamil script of the period had originated from Vattaluthu. T.V.Pandarathat, a well known scholar of Tamil inscription, claimed that Vattaluthu was the language created by the Tamils of the past and the present day Tamil was a refined variation of the old. He also doubted whether the language that originated from the Binishya alphabet which was written from left to the right could have been responsible for the development of a language that was written in reverse order (from right to left).

Vattaluthu was well known in Pandya kingdom. They were found in the ancient Pallava inscriptions between sixth and eighth century A.D. The Pandyan Kings who ruled in 8th century A.D. had their copper plates in Vattaluthu. The ephigraphists said that Vattuluthu was very well known and popular in the Pandya and Kongu kingdoms during 12 th century A.D. In course of time, the grandha and Vattaluthu blended themselves and thus Malayalam had its origin. Linguists considered that Vattuluthu should have spread throughout Tamilnadu and its decline started with the introduction of grandh by the Pallavas. In the final analysis, a scholar named Thani mentioned that grandh Tamil and Vattuluthu originated and developed in different parts of Tamilnadu.

As the later Pandyas encouraged the development of Tamil language, their predecessors had sponsored Vattaluthu and made it popular. In Particular, this

language was in vogue and popular in Kanyakumaru, Tirunelveli, Ramanthapuram, Madurai, Kovai, Salem, Dharmapuri, North Arcot, South Arcot and Chengleput.

Though Brahmi and Vattaluthu were in practice before the origin of Tamil, the scholars were not unanimous in their views, and regards the antiquity of the language. Even then, there is no doubt that these alphabets were the fundamentals from which Tamil language originated.

The Sangam Age

The Tamil sangam

‘Sangam age’ is the age to which sangam literature belonged. The Sanskrit word was popular in Tamilnadu only after the penetration of the Buddhist philosophy and the migration of the Buddhist monks. It was first used by the Jain monks. Tamil sangam was the literary academy. The academy of the Tamil poets was established and patronised by the Pandyan rulers. In the earlier period, it was known as ‘Koodal’. Sirupanarrupadai called it an assembly. The word ‘Avai’ and ‘Mandram’ are mentioned in Silappadikaram, Manimekalai and Pruananura. Later, it assumed the name ‘Sangam’ in the 7th century A.D. in the ‘Devaram’ of Appar.

The word sangam is often used in the commentary of the Iraiyanar Ahapporul by Nakkirar in the 8th century A.D. It mentioned the three Tamil sangams or literary academies that existed in Tamilaham. The first sangam was held at Southern Madurai. 594 celebrities including Lord Siva and Muruga participated in this sangam. This sangam lasted for 4400 years and was patronised by 89 Pandyan kings beginning with Kayasinaivaludi and ending with Kadungan. First sangam declined due to the erosion of Indian Ocean. Then it was shifted to Kavatapuram, Situated on the east coast near Korkai. This second Tamil academy was known as Idai sangam or middle sangam. Fiftynine members adorned this sangam. Among them, Agathiyar and Tolkappiyar were important. 3700 poets presented their compositions to this sangam. After the destruction of Kavatapuram, it was shifted to Madurai, the capital of Pandyas. This was the last Tamil sangam. Hence it was the last Tamil sangam. It contained 49 members including Nakkirar. 449 poems were submitted in the sangam. It lasted for 1850 years. Pandyan kings patronised this sangam. Mudathirumaran was the founder

of the third sangam and it ended with Ukkiraperuvaludi. The weakness of the sangam rulers and the emergency of the Kalabhras and the Pallavas caused the decline of the Tamil sangam. Though the sangam literature supplies much information about the Tamils, it fails to indicate the age in which the works were composed. Hence it created controversy among the scholars. The scholars attributed their own view with regard to the age of the Tamil sangam.

View of different Scholars

The date of the sangam is one of the greatest puzzles in South Indian chronology. V.R.Ramachandra Dikshitar assigned the fifth century B.C. to the origin of the Sangam and the end of the fifth century A.D. to the extinction of the sangam. Dr.L.D Swamikkannj Pillai ascribes 7th and 8th centuries A.D. as the date of the sangam period. He mentions that Kannaki burnt the city of Madurai on 17th June 643 A.D. or 3rd July 756 A.D. This date was based on astronomical grounds. But astronomy may not be a safe ground to fix the date.Hence proof of the date is opposed.

But the general opinion of the western scholars was that the Tamil literature was not composed before 9th century A.D. Prof.V.Kanakasabhai vehemently repudiates the opinion of western scholars and attributes that the earlier Tamil works were composed more than two thousand years ago. Vincent A-Smith, differs from the view of Tamil scholar and equates Tamil age with Augustan age and placed the first three centuries of the Christian era as sangam period. Dr. N.Subramonian accepts that 4th century B.C. as the early limit and 3rd century A.D. as the later limit of the Tamil sangam. The above mentioned dates were not at all uniform and they differ from one another. Hence, various techniques were adopted to fix the date of Tamil sangam, based on the availability of historical, literary and archaeological evidences.

I Historical evidences

Certain important events in Tamilnadu are considered, to prove the date of Tamil sangam. Mamulanar was a sangam poet. In his work, puram 175 and Aham 281, he mentioned the Mauryan invasion of Tamilnadu. The date of invasion may be fixed, 278 B.C Which actually falls during the reign of Bindusara, the Maurya ruler. It

indicated that the invasion took place during his regnal period and proved that he was a contemporary of Mimulanar, the sangam poet.

Again, the inscriptions of Asoka mentioned its neighbouring states such as Chera, Chola, Pandaya, Satyaputras and Pulindas. The Satyaputras were Kosalas. The name of Kosala is found in the sangam literature. The Kosala ruled North India from the 3rd century B.C. and they were feudatories of the Mauryas before they came to power. This information helps to some extent to fix the sangam date.

Moreover, the sangam works did not mention the existence of the Pallava rule in Tamilnadu. The Pallavas had the longest reign and attractive history. The early Pallavas came to power towards the end of the third century A.D. Similarly, the Pallava inscriptions did not mention the sangam ruler as contemporaries. It proved that the sangam period existed prior to the Pallavas.

Again, Kalabhras, who were responsible for the decline of Sangam age, ruled Tamilnadu from the later part of third century A.D. to the middle of sixth century A.D. They created confusion in Tamilnadu. To know the reign of the Kalabhras we have both literary and inscriptional evidences. But the sangam works did not mention anything about the administration of the Kalabhras. It is a concrete proof that sangam age existed earlier to the Kalabhras.

2. Synchronism of Senguttuvan - Gajabhahu

The synchronism of Senguttuvan with Gajabhahu is considered to be the sheet anchor of the South India chronology. Silappadikarm is a sangam work. It describes the northern expedition of Chera Senguttuvan and the installation of the image of Kannaki, The goddess of chastity. On the inaugural function of the image, the Chera king invited almost all rulers of South India including Gajabhahu of Ceylon. Mahavamsa speaks of two Gajabhahus. The first Gajabhahu was the 39th ruler who ruled Ceylon from 177 A.D. to 199th A.D. The next Gajabhahu was the 126th ruler, who ruled Ceylon in the 12th century A.D. But there was no Senguttuvan in the 12th century A.D. in Tamilnadu. So his contemporary must have been Gajabhahu I who ruled in the last Quarter of the 2nd century A.D. It proved that Gajabhahu was the contemporary of Chera Senguttuvan. Silappadikkaram was written by Illango Adigal,

the brother of Charan Senguttuan. Illango was the sangam poet. Hence, his brother Senguttuan was considered as sangam ruler. Sathanar, the author of Manimekali was the contemporary of Illango Adigal. As these two works belonged to the same period, Sangam was in existence during the region of Senguttuan and Gajabhahu.

3. Archaeological Evidences

Ahananuru, Purananuru and Patinappalai refer at some length to the commerce of Tamilaham with the western countries of the Graco Roman world. This commercial relation was mentioned by the Greek and Roman writers and geographers of the first and second centuries A.D. The sangam literature of this period also narrates the contact of the Tamils with the Yavanas. The anonymous author of the Periplus of the Erytherean sea as well as Pliny, both assignable to the first and second century A.D. and Pliny of the succeeding century describe the ports of South India and the commercial relationship that they had with the western countries. Strabo, a contemporary of Augustus gave an authentic information about the trade relation between Roman and Panyan Kingdom in the first century of Christian era. The coincidence of the references in the sangam classics with the account of the foreign writers of the first and second centuries A.D. confirmed by the archaeological evidences. The Roman coins unearthed at Arikamedu reveal the Roman contact with the Tamils. these coins belonged to the period of Augustus and Tiberius. Augustus ruled Rome in the later half of the first century A.D. and early half of the first century A.D. This trade continued for some more time. Practically, no Rome coins of the third century have been found in Tamilnadu and the business relations were not resumed afterwards.

So based on the above information we can fix the date of the third sangam broadly between the first three centuries of the Christian era.

The Sangam Cheras

The ancient Tamilaham was divided into three political units. They were ruled by the three ancient royal houses namely the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas. Of the three monarchs, the Cheras were mentioned first, Chera country located along the western coast from the Konkan in the north and spread as far as Kollam in the south. It was

divided into six small units namely Konkan, Kudam, Kuttam, Venad, Tempandi and Puli. Vanji-Karur was the capital of the Cheras. The important sea ports were Tondi and Musiri. The Chera monarchs had the Palmyra as their garland, Bow and arrow was the emblem of the Cheras. The chera monarchs assumed several titles such as Vanavaramban, Vanavan, Kuttuvan, Poraiyan, Iruporai, Kadungo, Kodai etc.

The earliest Chera monarch mentioned in Puranuru was Perum Sorru Udayan Cheral. He is said to have fed the armies of both the Pandavas and Kauravas in the famous Mahabharata war. He was the lord of the eastern and western coast. His expeditions were described in the abananuru. He received a wound on his back in his battle against Karikal Chola and died of starvation.

To know the political and dynastic history of the cheras we are mainly dependent on Padittupattu. This work was a collection of ten decades, verses composed by different poets of which only eight were available now. Some minor details about the other members of the Chera royal family were derived from other sangam works like Aham, Puram and Silappadiakaram. To a large extent the early history of the Chera king was disconnected and diffused.

After Udayan Cheral, his elder son Imayavaramban Nedum cheral Adan ascended the throne. He defeated the Aryans and inscribed the bow emblem of the Cheras on the hills. He defeated Kadambas and cut their Kadamba trees for making drums. The Chola King Peruvial Killi was the enemy of Imaya varmban. So he waged war against him. In the battle, when all the soldiers of the two armies were killed, the two monarchs fought a duel and both of them died in the battle field. Then the widows of the king committed sati. He ruled for 58 years.

Imayavaramban has two sons, Kalangaikkani Narmudi Cheral and Adukotupattu Cheraladan through his chief wife Pathumandevi. He had two more sons through his Chola wife Narsonai. They were Kadalpirakkottia Senguttuvan and Ilango. Senguttuvan was the most important ruler of the Chera dynasty. Palyanai Selkelu Kuttuvan succeeded Imayavaramban. He ruled for 25 years. Kalangaikkani Narmudi Cheral was the next ruler. He defeated Tagatur Senguttuvan was the next ruler.

Adukotapattu Cheraladan succeeded Senguttuvan. During his reign, the northern boundary of the Chera country was extended. He subjugated the Malavars in the Kongu region. He reigned for 38 years. Adukotapattu Cheraladan was the last king of the udiyan Cheral royal line. After him three other rulers belonging to a different Chera family ruled over the different parts of the Chera Kingdom. They were selvakkadungo Vali Adan, Perum Cheral Irumporai and Illamceral Irumporai.

Selvakkadungo Vali Adan was the son of Anduvan Cheral Irumporai. He was a contemporary of Chola Perunarkilli. He besieged the city which belonged to Vanavasi. He founded many towns in his kingdom. He defeated his enemies. He was a devotee of Tirumal and performed many vedic sacrifices. He died after a glorious reign of twenty five years.

Perum Cheral Irumporai was the next ruler. He destroyed Tagadur, the capital of Adigaman. The epic Tagaduryattirai composed by Arkisilkilair, Ponmudiyar and others referred to this expedition. He performed many sacrifices. After a reign of 17 years, he renounced his worldly life and became an ascetic.

The last Chera Prince mentioned in the Padittuppattu was Kudakko Illem Cheral Irumporai. he was the son of Perun Cheral Irumporai. He defeated the Chola and Pandya rulers. He was praised by his court poet Perumkunrur Kilar.

Then Yanaikkan sey Memtarm Cheral Irumporai ruled the Chera country with Tondi as the capital. Nedumchadayan defeated him in the battle of Talaiyanamjanam and imprisoned him. But he escaped from the prison. Kudalur Kilar, Illam Kiranar and others praised his achievements.

Kanaikkal Irumporai was the next ruler. He defeated Muvan. Chola King Chenkanan defeated him in the battle of Tirumpporpuram and imprisoned him. He died in the prison. The poet Poykaiyar, a friend of the Chera king, dedicated to him a work Kalavali Narpadu.

The sagam Cheras ruled over a period of first three centuries. In addition to the above Chera rulers, several members of the royal family are referred to in the sangam works. But it is not possible to reconstruct their historicity due to lack of evidences.

Karikalan

Karikalan was the greatest of the Chola Kings of the Sangam Age. He was the son of Ilam Set Senni. A group of literary evidences are available to remember him. His capital was Uraiyur. The date of birth and the accession of Karikalan was not clear.

After the death of Ilam set Senni, there was plot against his son Karikalan. He was kidnapped and imprisoned by the conspirators. Karikala escaped from the ordeal of fire, but his leg was charred, hence he was called Karikal. Other explanations for the name was that he killed elephants of his enemies. In Tamil, Kari means elephant. So Karikalan means "Killer of elephant". Right from the beginning he had to cross several difficulties.

Karikala was very young when he became heir to the Chola throne. While he was young, he was guarded and guided by his maternal uncle, Irumbidartalaiyar, who was a Chera Prince who lived at Vanji.

Karikala was not only an able ruler but also a gallant warrior. One of his early achievements was the victory in a great battle at Venni (modern Koil Venni) a village fifteen miles east of Tanjore. Though the cause of the battle were not known, it proved to be a turning point in Karikala's life. This battle enabled him to wipe out a widespread confederacy formed around him. In this battle the Chera King Perum Cheral Adan, Supported by a Pandya ruler and eleven Velir Chieftain fought against Karikala. The Chera King accepted his defeat and committed suicide. As a result of this victory in the battle at Venni, Karikala assumed the overlordship of the entire Tamil country.

Another success of Karikala was his great victory at Vakaipparandalai. In this battle he defeated a confederacy of nine minor Chieftains. Poet, Parinar, contemporary of Karikala, referred to this battle, but did not speak of the causes of the battle or the enemies of Karikala.

According to Pattinappalai, Puhar became an important harbour and an alternative capital to Karikala. Karikala possessed a powerful navy. It invaded and

conquered Ceylon. Though Mahavamsa did not mention it, the later chronicles of Ceylon refer to it. After the battle, the Chola army carried away 12,000 of the Ceylonese inhabitants as slaves. They were utilised for the fortification of the sea port, Puhar and the construction of the dam, Kal Anai. Puhar (Kavirippattinam) was a flourishing harbour during the time of Karikala. It became the seat of trade and diplomacy.

Legends say that he marched upon Himalayas, but there is no evidence to confirm this view. But Silappadikaram mentions the Himalayan expedition. During the marriage festival of Kovalan and Kannagi, those who blessed the couple referred to Karikala's achievement of imprinting the chola emblem of the tiger on the Himalayas. While Karikala was returning from his Himalayan expedition, the rulers of Maghada, Avanti and Vajjira presented him with several valuable and artistic presents. At the time of famous Indra festival at Puhar, Ilango mentions the North Indian invasion of Karikala. The Periyapuram mentions that on his return journey he stayed at Kanchi and built a fort around the city.

After consolidating the country Karikala spent his time for the benefit of his subjects. The construction of "Kal Anai" was the famous achievement of Karikala. Even now it is a living monument which provided waters to the southern districts of Tamilnadu. He controlled the floods of Kaviri by constructing high embankment showed his encouragement to irrigation. He laid the foundation for the prosperity of Tanjore delta which subsequently earned the well coveted title. "The granary of South India". He richly deserves the title, "Karikal Peru Valathan" for his accomplishments.

Karikala was a man of wisdom. The story says that two groups of men approached Karikala for justice. Karikala sat on the throne to hear their demands. They were afraid, how this small boy would satisfy their grievances. Knowing their mind, Karikala decided to teach them a lesson. He disguised himself as an oldman and sat on the throne for passing the verdict. Now they were satisfied and expressed their grievances. Karikala gave a clear verdict which made them wonder. Then Karikala removed his appearance and showed that he was the young prince. They glorified the wisdom of Karikala.

Karikala patronised the Tamil poets, musicians and dancers. He was not free from the peculiarity of the age in which he lived. He was fond of the company of women. It is said that he enjoyed that wordly pleasure thoroughly. He married a Velir girl. Athimanthi, one of the daughters of Karikala, served as the theme for the fertile imagination of poets. After Karikala the history of the Cholas became confused.

Neduseliyan

Neduncheliyan of Talaialanganam was the illustrious sangam ruler. The puram and aham anthologies narrated the achievements of this ruler. He came to power early in his life. On seeing that he was young and inexperienced, the Chola and chera monarchs supported by five other minor chieftains opposed him. The battle took place at Talaialanganam near Nidamanagalam in Tanjore district. The Maduraikkanji and other poems provided accurate picture of this ruler. The Chera Mantaram Cheral and the Chola Rajasuyamvetta Perunarkilli supported by five other minor chieftains opposed Neduncheliyan at Talaialanganam. This Pandya ruler made a declaration before the battle and he

was true to his words and he was completely successful at the battle of Talaialanganam. This victory became so famous that the poets who were contemporaries of Neduncheliyan had praised it and the later inscriptions of the Pandya monarchs also refer to it. Mangudi Marudan, Nakkirar, Karikkanan, Idaikkunurkilar etc. were some of the contemporary poets of Neduncheliyan. He also annexed to his kingdom the two chieftaincies of Milalai and Muthur. These Chieftaincies existed on the north eastern part of the southern Velar. Mangudi Marudan was the court poet of the Pandyan ruler. He wrote Madurai Kanji. This poet described the city of Madurai elaborately.

The last great Pandya ruler of the sangam period was Ugraperuvaludi. He conquered Kanapper, the modern Kalayarkoil in Ramnad district. According to the iraiynar Ahapporul commentary, he was the last Pandya Palion of the Third sangam. The early Pandya power began to decline due to the rise of the Pallavas in the 4th century A.D. and due to the invasion of the Kalabhras.

Sangam Culture

Tribes in Tamilnadu

Sangam literature offers the most important evidences of the social activities of the sangam people. Ancient Tamil society was tribal organization. Among the sangam works, Tolkaappiyam, Kalittogai and Ainkurunuru mention various tribes, their function and their station in the society. The hunters and robbers were mentioned as Vedar and Eyinar. The fishermen were called as Paratavar or Minavar. Panar was a wandering community. The Tular and the Paraiyar were used to beat drums to proclaim the royal orders. The Kadambas were a different type of robbers and pirates. The material maravas were professional fighters. The Kallar were robbers. The above mentioned tribes were treated as low castes in the society. The eight anthologies and the epics mention the Brahmins and their contribution to the society and literature. They occupied the highest status in the society.

Sangam works also mention various other communities. The merchant community was the Vaisyas. Puhar was the most famous city for the great Vaisyas families to which Kannagi and Kovalan belonged. Chetti was known commercial community in the sangam age. The Vellalas were the agriculturists. The Umanar were the manufactures and sellers of salt. The blacksmith was the very soul of the village industry. He was called kollan. He produced and repaired various metallic weapons and household articles. The goldsmith was called Porkollan. He was an expert in ornament making. The carpenter or techahan was busy craftsman. The weavers and the tailors, were also busy in the sangam age. The slaves were the servants of the rich. The above castes increased according to the development of the industry and other professions.

The geographical divisions of Tamilnadu into Jurinji (hill), Mullai (Pastoral), Marudam (agricultural land), Neidal (coastal area) and Palai (desert) also had its own impact in Tamil culture. Lack of communications and cultural unwillingness of the people to mingle with one another led to the development of different ways of life and culture among Tamils. The civilization of the above caste or tribes were independent

of their own, and totally different from Aryan culture. The Tamil language was the medium through which the people communicated their ideas.

Administration

Political Condition

Sangam literature offers authentic evidence to the political conditions of the sangam period. In this age, Tamilaham spread from Vengadam (Tirupathi) in the north to Kanyakumari in the south. The Tamil country was divided into Chera, Chola and Pandya Kingdoms. The Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas were its rulers. The Cheras ruled over the south - western, the Cholas over the north eastern and the Pandyas over the south - eastern parts of Tamilaham.

Sangam age produced certain historical rulers. Senguttuvan was the greatest king of the Cheras. Karikala was prominent among Cholas. The Pandyas also had a glorious past. Talaiylamkanathu Nedunjelivan was the most important ruler of the Pandyas. Apart from the three crowned monarchs, there were a number of chieftains, Smith says that there were 120 such chieftains who ruled in various parts of Tamilnadu in this period. Among them Pari, Kari, Ori, Nalli, Ay, Pehan and Adikaman were noteworthy.

Kingship

king was the centre of amministration Kingship was common. It was hereditary. Generally the elder son was the heir apparent of crown prince. The crown prince was called as Komahan. The younger prince was known as Llango. If a ruler died without a successor, a strange way was adopted to choose the King. An elephant was directed to go around the country with a garland. It was allowed to go till the garland was put on somebody's head. The man who received the garland was brought to the palace and treated as the king. Karikkala was the only ruler, who was selected this way. He was young at the time of the selection. It proved that even a boy was selected for the throne. When the King was too young to rule necessary arrangements were made to assist him. There was no provision for the appointment of a regent in the sangam age.

The three crowned monarchs of Tamilnadu assumed the title “vendan”. The chieftains were known as “Mannan”. The rule of Vendan and Mannan existed at a same time side by side. The sangam people considered their Kings as gods. Only males were given the privilege to become kings. There was no instance of the rule of any women in the sangam period. The king ascended the throne by a formal functional called Mudisuttuvila.

The Court of the King

The king possessed an impressive court. It was called Arasavai. The court was the centre of the king’s official activities Usually the court, assembled in the morning. The king presided over the court. It was an open court. It permitted the members of the royal families, the officials and the public to see the procedures of the court by sitting on the audience hall. The court was summoned in the midst of the pleasant voice of musical instruments. The King used to sit on the throne. It was called Ariyanai. In the court, king was surrounded by government officials, distinguished visitors and court poets. The court also gave importance to literary discussions when the official programmes were not heavy. Learned scholars participated in this discussion.

The position of the king was very high. He was treated and god on earth. The king seldom appeared before the people. he used to appear before the public no certain important occasions. Dane performances were arranged frequently for the enjoyment of the king the queen and members of the royal family. The queen used to sit by the side of the king in the audience hall. The queen never participated in administrative matters. But she used to advise the king whenever he sought her advice.

The birthday of the king was celebrated every year on grand scale. This day was called. “Perunal”. The king showed his clemency on this day by releasing prisoners and giving presents to beggars and poets. Military men were also honoured on the occasion. In the Sangam age kings were weighed in gold and that gold distributed to deserving citizens. It is said that Senguttuan presented fifty thulams of gold to a Brahimin of Puhar.

Duties of the King

The Sangam rulers had five fold duties. They were, encouraging learning, performing sacrifices, making presents, protecting the people, and punishing the criminals. The King considered himself as the protector of the people. He protected the people from foreign invasion and cruel animals. The King maintained a well disciplined army for his protection and invasion of other kingdoms. The king used to give military training to the able bodied men.

The Sangam rulers conducted sacrifices for the welfare of the people. The Rajasuyam (the imperial sacrifice) and the Asvamedha (the horse sacrifice) were the two important sacrifices conducted during this period. Sacrifices were conducted in the sacrificial halls. The King used to spend most of his time in the capital. But at the time of conquest, he used to stay in the territories of the enemies, mainly to consolidate his success.

The sangam rulers patronised scholars and artists. They also encouraged fine arts. Most of the sangam rulers were philanthropists. They gave liberal gifts to the poets and artists. For example Karikala gave 16,00,000 gold coins to Kadiyalur Rudran Kannanar for his poem Pattinappalai. Likewise, the dancers in the court were liberally gifted by the kings. The gifts granted to the Brahmins were called Brahmatayam. But the grants to the temples were not known. He also conferred honours and titles to the people who rendered meritorious services to the country. The King was very punctual in discharging his duties. The routine work of the King in the palace was regularised by a bell.

Position of the King

The King enjoyed all rights and privileges. he lived in the palace. It was decorated beautifully with sculptures and paintings. The palace was situated in the centre of the capital. It was protected by compound walls. It possessed all the facilities. In the palace, King was accompanied by the Queen, Princes and close relatives. A number of servants and attendants were in the place to serve the king. The nature of the harem in the palace enhanced the position of the king. It contained a number of beautiful ladies from all over the world. Periplus in his account mentioned

that Roman merchants exported beautiful ladies for the harems of the Tamil Kings. They also served as body guards of the King. Queen was called as Kopperumdevei. The royal emblem of the King was inscribed in the outer gate of the palace. The expenses of the King were met by the state. The things he used and possessed enhanced the position of the ruler. The royal palace, the throne, the servants, the umbrella, the whistle, the drum, the flage, the fortress, the decorative festoon, the couch, the harem, the ornaments, the sceptre, the sacrifices, the garlands, the extension of the kingdom, the dresses, the chariot, the titles and honours, the nature of the army and navy determined the position of the king.

Aimperumkulu and Enperayam

In the day to day administration, king was assisted by a number of advisors, The sangam works like Silappadikaram, Manimekalai. Maduraikkanji etc. mentioned the advisory bodies, which were frequently consulted by the king. They were known as Aimperumkulu and Enperayam. Aimperumkulu consisted of five great assemblies. The assemblies consisted of the representatives of the people, the priests, the physicians, the astrologers and ministers. The meetings of the assemblies were held at separate places of the capital. These assemblies were the recognised bodies of the people. The resolutions of the assemblies were just conveyed to the king.

The Enperayam consisted of eight groups of officials. They were accountants, executive officials, treasury officials. place guards elderly persons of the capital, the chief of infantry, cavalry and elephant. These officials frequently met and passed resolutions. These solutions were conveyed to the Kings. The above bodies advised the ruler, whenever he required advice. They were expected to give good advice to the rulers. Severe punishments were given those who gave wrong advice. These bodies never compel the ruler to accept their decisions. The King may accept or reject the decisions of these bodies. They were treated purely as advisory bodies.

Village and Municipal Administration

Though the sangam rulers were despots, they adopted the policy of decentralisation by giving importance to the local administrative bodies in town and villages. The village was the fundamental unit of administration. Generally, the

villages were in a desolate condition. Traditionally, the villages looked after its administration. The village assemblies such as manram, avai, ambalam managed the local business. Mantram was a local assembly. It met under the shadow of the tree. All the people of the village participated in the meeting. Ambalam was a building constructed on a slightly elevated platform. Generally, the wandering dancers used to stay in the ambalams. The members of the assemblies were elected by Kudavolai system. Most of them were elders. The village assembly enjoyed more powers than the present day Panchayat. It settled petty disputes arising in the village. The members of the village assembly were called as Avaiyattan. They were not remunerated for their services.

Tamil works mention a number of towns. Among them, Puhar, Uraiyr, Korkai, Madurai, Mauiri, Vanji. Kanchi were the important cities in Tamilnadu. Certain arrangements were made to regularise the activities of the towns. But the system of administration adopted in the towns were not known. But evidences are there to know the maintenance of accounts in certain towns. 'But foreign accounts indicated that there was no organised body to maintain the accounts of birth, death or marriage. Arrangements were made to connect cities by main roads. Roads were the only means of transport and communications in those days. So due importance was given to its maintenance. Custom officials were appointed to collect the toll tax on roads. A system of police force was deployed in important junction of the road mainly for the protection to the people from robbers. Towns were properly guarded during nights by guards. They used to go around the town with dagger and a lamp in their hands. They were also accompanied by dogs. The tanks provided water supply to the cities. The huge building erected in towns were constructed with bricks. Most of the houses in the towns possessed all facilities. Drainage system was regularised. Thus adequate arrangements were made in the sangam period for the effective functioning of the towns.

War and military Organisation

The sangam rulers loved and enjoyed the game of war. The greatness of the ruler rested on his success in the battles. The misunderstanding among the rulers and

the ambition for the expansion of the territory were the main reasons for war. The army of the sangam period was called as 'Padai'. The Padai was mainly used for destruction. Most of "Puram" works dealt with the heroic activities of the people in the battle field. The art of war developed in this period. The martial community was deeply involved in wars. Proper training was given to the soldiers. Making of war weapon was an important industry in the sangam period.

The army in the sangam period consisted of four divisions. They were the infantry, cavalry, elephantry and chariot. The Fifth wing of the army was the navy. The commander-in-chief of the army was known, Enadi, Enadi led the army in the battle. On certain important battles, the King used to command the army. Generally, the King and the Princes took keen interest in war and participated in battles along with common soldiers. The Tamil army was equipped with necessary weapons of war. The offensive weapons used in the battle were Vel, Val, Vil and Ambu. Kavan was used for destructive purposes. Shields and armours were the defensive weapons. The beating of drum and blowing of couches were the beginning of warfare.

Special sacrifices were conducted before the expedition. The soldiers took a solemn oath at the of war called Vanjinam Kooral. They also used to wear an anklet called Virakkalal. The newly constituted army was Kumarippadai. Fortresses were constructed to prevent the onward march of the enemy armies. Specially constructed camp houses were used for the stay of the army. It was called as padai veedu. Separate tents were constructed for the king and the high officials. The tent was called Padangu. The King and the commander-in-chief of the army were guarded by armed women. The water-clock was used to announce the hours of day and night. Temporary towers were built to watch the movements of the forces of the enemy. The services of the mercenary soldiers were utilised on certain occasions. Much safety was given to the cows, Brahmins caste women, children and sick people before the beginning of the war. Death by getting wounds in the chest was considered as an unique honour. To honour the, death of the heroes, a stone was planted at the place of his burial. This stone was called the hero stone.

At the time of war unlawful methods were adopted to win the battle. Those who rendered meritorious services in the battles were encouraged with titles and honours. The prisoners were treated mercilessly. Some times they were utilised for the constructive purposes. For example, the 12,000 soldiers captured by Karikala at the time of his Ceylon expedition were utilised for the construction of Puhar and Kalanai. Usually, the defeated were humiliated. Knowing the bad effect of the war, scholars intervened on certain occasions to prevent it.

Law and Justice

The administration in the sangam period was traditional. There is no evidence of any written law in the sangam age. The customs and traditions constituted the law of the land. The King was the fountain of Justice. The court of justice in the capital was called Avai or Avaiyam. The court of Justice in the village was Manram. The Kings's court served as the court of justice. Special officials were not at all appointed to perform the duties of judges and magistrates. The King presided over the court of justice at the capital. In this matter king was assisted by the learned judicial advisors called Arankuru Avaiyam. A regular oral trial was conducted in the court. The trial was based on witness and evidence. No age limit was prescribed to preside over the court. It is said that, Karikala presided over the court, when he was young. The punishments of the court were severe. The cutting of cow, forced abortion of a woman, and killing of Brahmin were serious crimes. Adultery was also a severe crime and capital punishment was given to it. Severe punishments were also given to theft. For example, Nannan the sangam ruler gave severe punishment to a small girl for eating a mango fruit from the royal garden. Self imposed penalty also existed in the sangam age. Kulasekhara Pandyan was the best example for it. He cut off his own offending hand. Pirarmanai nayathall was another serious crime. Punishment was also given to forgery. Death punishment was given to the case of treason. Generally the case of treason was tried by the King in the royal court. Decapitation mutilation, torture and imprisonment were certain important punishments given to the criminals.

Manunithi was also exercised in the sangam age. In short the system of eye for eye and tooth for a tooth prevailed in the sangam period.

Revenue Administration

In the sangam period, due importance was given to the revenue administration. The land tax was the main source of income to the state. The taxable land was called as Variyam. The tax was known as Vari. An officer, who collected the land tax was called as Variyar. In the sangam period 1/6 of the produce of the land was collected as tax. Brahmatayam, the village donated to Brahmin was exempted from taxation. The land tax collected in the sangam period was unfair. Severe punishment was given to those who did not remit the tax. People even migrated from one place to another due to over taxation.

Land revenue was only a part of the total revenue. The state also collected income from customs, tolls, tributes, court fines etc. Toll was collected on high roads. The officer who collected toll tax was called as Ayakkarar. Custom dues were collected from the ports, for importing and exporting commodities. The tribute collected from the ports, for importing and exporting commodities. The tribute collected from the neighbouring Kings were also added to state revenue. The presentations given by the King was also met from the revenue. A major portion of the revenue was utilised for the maintenance of the army. The personal expenses and the construction of temple and palaces were also met by the state. A considerable amount was spent for education, construction of roads, hospitals, tanks, canals etc. The state also patronised poets and artists. Coins were in circulation. Weight and measures were also known to be in use.

Sangam Economy

Sangam economy was simple self-sufficing. The Tamil literature of the sangam period and the contemporary foreign evidences dealt with the economic condition of the Tamils. The people of the Tamil society was divided into rich, poor and intermediate class based on their wealth. While the rich rolled in luxuries, the poor felt the pinch of poverty. Various sangam works mentioned that wealth is not a constant (stable) one. Naladi says that, "No man was always rich and no man was always poor, riches and poverty came round and round by turns like the wheels of a chariot". This philosophy minimised the pride of the rich and gave consolation to the poor. The

economy of the sangam age was determined by the development of agriculture, the nature of the industry and the growth of trade and commerce.

Agriculture

Agriculture was the chief occupation of the people. It was carried on in almost every part of the land. All kinds of people depended on agriculture. The land fit for agriculture was called Marudam. The chief product of cultivation was paddy. The yielding from land varied from place to place. Thousand kalams of paddy was cultivated in a veli of fertile land. Commonly, the owners of land and the tillers of the soil were called Vellalas. The man who cultivated the soil was called as Ulavan and his wife as Ulathy. Most of the rivers of Tamilnadu and the frequent monsoons gave fertility to the soil. Next to paddy, millets, varieties of con, coconut, plantain, sugarcane and cotton were cultivated. But the monsoons frequently betrayed the agriculturists. So there were severe famines in the sangam period. Iraiyanar Ahapporul mentioned a long period 12 years of famine in the Pandiyan Kingdom. On one occasion, due to severe famine, the farmers of the capital, consumed the seed normally intended for sowing. The agriculturists had to pay tax to the government. Normally 1/6 of the produce was collected as tax Severe punishment was given to those who did not remit the land tax in the stipulated time. Due to severe taxation, the agriculturists migrated to other places of the country. The high caste people were exempted from taxation. For example, the Brahmadhayam villages donated to the Brahmins were exempted from taxation. Though the agriculturists were the backbone of the country, their position was deplorable due to political and high caste exploitation.

Industry

Sangam age witnessed an advanced stage of industries and crafts. Next to agriculture, spinning and weaving were given importance. Women spent their spare time in spinning cotton threads 'Uraiyr and Madurai continued to be the chief centres of handloom industry. Dyeing was another popular industry closely connected with spinning and weaving. They produced high quality cotton, silk and woollen fabrics. The embroidered cloth had great demand among the wealthy people. The cloths and garments manufactured in Tamilnadu were in great demand in foreign countries. They

were exported to Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Greece, Roman and others countries. The textile dealers of Tamilnadu were known as aruvai-vaniyar”. for they cut the cloths into pieces. The tailors of Madurai and other important towns were called as “tunikarans”.

Tamilnadu was famous for its jewels and pearls. Peral fishing was an important industry in the Pandyan Kingdom. The rich people had great fascination for pearls. Silappadikaram mentioned that the Pandyan Princes Koperumdevi used muthu, Whereas Kannaki used manikkom. Goldsmiths were popular and had great demand in this period. They concentrated more on the making of ornaments. Rope making, manufacture of leather and bangles, conches and ivory were some other known industries in Tamilnadu. Carpentry was a common industry. It was a hereditary profession. The carpenters were utilised to construct temples, Palaces, buildings, boats, ships, chariots and household articles. In the coastal areas fishing was a regular industry. Salt industry was the only another industry of the sea-coast. The smithy was an important industry. Blacksmiths manufactured and repaired war weapons and wheels. They also manufactured household articles.

In thr rural areas, jiggery cakes out of the sugarcame juice were prepared. Usually, the industries in Tamilnadu manufactured articles needed for the local population. certain itmes produced in this period were in great demand in foreign countries.

Trade

Inland Trade

The agricultural and industrial commodities produced in various parts of Tamilnadu boosted the activities of trade and commerce. Internal trade was older than the foreign trade. The established markets to sell and buy commodities in almost every town. The markets or bazaars were called Angadies. The markets were of two types. They were the nalankadi (morning market) and allankadi (evening market). The internal trade was mainly based on the barter system. Cattle was an attractive exchange commodity. The accepted medium of exchange was paddy. Salt was sold for paddy. Honey and roots were exchanged for fish, oil and arrack. Sugarcane was

exchanged for toddy. Grains were exchanged for fish. House wives purchased vegetables by giving paddy or rice. Gold coins were mainly used for foreign trade.

All the markets in the towns were crowded with buyers and sellers. In the markets, there were various merchants to sell textile, copper wares, wooden articles, gold ornaments, dolls, perfumes, flowers, sandal paste, salt, oil and fish. Flowers were in great demand during festivals. The traders were settled in separate streets. The merchants stored their articles in the warehouse situated very near to the markets. The warehouses had no ventilators or windows.

Roads available in the country were utilised for transport of commodities. Local carts were the only available vehicles to carry the commodities. Articles were also brought to the market on head loads. Tolls were collected from the cart on roads. Special officers were appointed mainly for this purpose. The merchants moved from place to place in caravans, due to the fear of highway robbers.

Foreign Trade

Tamilnadu carried out an extensive and brisk trade with foreign countries. The commodities produced in Tamilnadu had great demand in foreign markets. Tamils had brisk commercial contacts with Egypt, Rome, Greek, Burma, Malaya, Java, Sumatra and China. Elephants, Lions, leopards, monkeys, tigers, dogs, birds, parrots, peacocks, female slaves, elephant driver, cooks, prostitutes, sheep, goats, wool, honey, ivory, shells, pearls, ornaments, gems, sandal wood, pepper, oil, ginger, cardamom, turmeric, cotton fabrics and rice were the commodities exported to the foreign countries.

In the first century A.D., Tamil people had lucrative trade with Rome. Pandyan ruler sent an embassy to the court of Augustus to win his favour. The account of Strabo gave authentic information about the trade relations between Rome and Pandyan kingdom. As a result, the trade between the Roman empire and South India became more active than before.

Tamilnadu also maintained close commercial contact with North India. Arthashastra of Kautilya mentioned some important commodities exported from Pandya Kingdom. It mentioned the pearls produced in Pandya Kingdom as

Pandyakavatakam. A kind of cotton fabric from Madurai was mentioned in Arthasatra as maduram.

On certain occasions, the foreign trade was disturbed by the sea pirates. So military protection was given to the mercantile ships. Roman military possessed excellent discipline. Impressed by the discipline of the Roman soldiers, the Tamil rulers appointed them as guards of the fortress gates.

The foreign trade enriched the economic condition of Tamilnadu. Roman gold coins poured into Tamil country. Every year Roman gold coins worth of the and a half crores of rupees were imported into several parts of India in return of luxuries. They were sold to the consumers within the Roman empire at fabulous, Seneca and pliny. Roman aristocrats and wealthy ladies lived luxuriously. A Roman empress, Lollia Penline wore precious stones worth a crore of rupees at an ordinary marriage function. Emperor Nero decorated his shoes with pearls. Even Seneca possessed five hundred tables with ivory legs. This luxurious life of the Romans led to the economic drain and financial collapse of the Roman empire.

During the third century A.D., the direct trade between Rome and Tamilnadu declined because of the growing anarchy in the Roman empire. While coins of the previous century were found in such huge quantities, coins relating to the third century were rarely to be found. It meant that the trade did not vanish completely. But Roman coins re-appeared soon, as in the past. The merchants carried out the trade scientifically with the help of “guilds” and “Chambers of Commerce”.

In due course, the Romans came and colonized permanently in certain parts of Tamilnadu. They lived in considerable number on the west coast. They acted as agents for the foreign traders. Special arrangements were made for the protection of traders. It is said that they maintained a force containing 800 to 1200 men at Muziri to protect their trade.

The Romans were brave. The Roman who settled in Tamilnadu mixed with the politics of Tamilnadu. They entered the royal service and served as body guards and palace guards. A temple of Augustin erected at Cranganore proved that they resided permanently in Tamilnadu. Foreign trade flourished in the first two centuries A.D.

Gold and silver coins of the Roman Emperors of this period had been discovered in large quantities in Coimbatore Travancore and Pudikkottai areas and to a small extent in other parts of India. The excavations at arikkamedu have brought to light the existence of a Roman mercantile industry mainly to mint local Roman coins in Tamilnadu.

Ships were used for foreign trade Ship-building was a native industry in Tamilnadu. The Ship was called as Markkalam, as it was made up of wood. From the small Kattumarams to the big ocean going ships and boats were anchored in Tamil ports. The ship were anchored in the ports with the help of thick long rope attached by a big stone.

Tamilaham had many natural ports. Important among them were. Puhar, Musiri, Korkai, Tondi, Kollam (Quilon) etc. The harbours possessed all required facilities, as in the present day. The chief ports (harbours) had light houses called Kalamkarai Ilangucudar for the safe arrival of the ships. Ware house were constructed very near to the harbours to store and protect the imported and exported commodities.

Tamilaham imported the excellent wine from the Yavana country. The Yavanas also exported sugar candy to Tamilnadu. The wine occupied a prominent place in the social life of the people. Usually, the wealthy people including the ruler, used foreign wine.

From the above study, we can imagine that the economic condition of the sangam period was really at its heights.

Beliefs of the people

Sangam people had many beliefs and superstitions. They believed in the significance of dreams. People divided the dreams into good and evil dreams. The dream of the first quarter of the night was given more importance. Silappadikarm mentioned various types of dreams and its impacts. ilango gave due importance to the dreams of Kannki and Kopperum Devi.

People had great faiths in Omens. The lizard chirping was considered as asariri. The rulers also consulted Omens before their expedition. The cawing of a crow in the

morning indicated the arrival of guests. Ghosts and spirits were believed and dreaded. importance was given to auspicious day and hours. The Yadagams written at the time of birth of a child was given due importance. The husband was not expected to leave his wife for long days. But he was not permitted to mingle with his wife during the period of menses and impurity.

Unit - 11

The Kalabhras and The Pandyas

The sangam age declined due to the weakness of chera Chola and Pandya in the middle of the third century A.D. From third century A.D. to sixth century A.D. Tamilnadu was ruled by the Kalabhras. The reign of the Kalabhras marked a turning point in the history of Tamilnadu. The reasons for the domination of the Kalabhras and the decline of the Chera, Chola and Pandya Kings were not known. The history of this period was obscure due to lack of source materials. Hence, Kalabhra period was called “Dark Age”. in the history of Tamilnadu.

Sources

The available sources which helped us to know the history of Kalabhras, were the literary and epigraphic evidences. They provided glimpses of the activities, the emergence and the rule of the Kalabhras. The literary evidences were Tamil Navbalar Charitai, Yapperukalam and Periyapuram. As these works were religious - oriented, they served little purpose. The Kasakkudi plates of Simhavishu, the Velvikkudi plates of Nedumjadayan, Kanchi Vaikuntaperumal temple inscription, the Kuran plates of Narasimhavaraman I and the Nerur plates of Chlukya Vikramaditya II were the important epigraphic evidences to know the history of Kalabhras.

Identification of the Kalabhras

Due to the political confusion caused by the Kalabhras the glories of the Sangam age declined. K.A. Neelakanta Sastri mentioned that “Kalabhras were, Mysterious and an enemy to civilisation”. The origin of the Kalabhras was a matter of controversy among the Tamil scholars. There were different views on the identification of Kalabhras.

1. Kalabhras - Muttaraiyars

T.A. Gopinatha Rao Identified Kalabhras with Muttaraiyars. It was based on the information. He got from the inscription at the Vaikunta Perumal temple in

Kanchipuram. Muttariya II who ruled the Kalbhra country had the little of “Kalvarkalvan”. The word Kalvan in Tamil perhaps became Kalabhra in Sanskrit. Further, it was pointed out that the Kadungo who restored the first Pandya Kingdom in 600 A.D. had conquered Muttarayyas. Muttaraiyar means people who ruled the three kingdoms or lands. The three kingdoms he meant were the kingdoms ruled by the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas. On his ground, T.A. Gopinatha Rao identified Kalabhras with Muttarayars.

2. Kalbhras - Vellalakkalappalar

M. Raghava Iyengar put forward this view. He identified, Kalabhras with the Vellala Kalappalar and not the Kalvar. He held the view that Meykandar the father of Achyutakalappalar was the author of Sivaganabodham, a text on Saiva philosophy, was a vellala. He also believed that Achguta Vikranta mentioned by Buddha data was the same as the Kalappalan. he never agreed the identification of Kalabhras with the Mutharaiyar. Again he advocated that the Kalabhras ruled Tamilnadu even in the third century A.D. and extended their activities throughout Tamilnadu in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries after the decline of the Sangam age. This view was not accepted by Dr.S.Kirishnasway Iyengar.

3. Kalabhras - Kalvar

Dr.S.Krishnawamy Iyengar equated Kalabhras with the Kalvar of the Venkatam region. He pointed out that, according to sangam literature, Puli of Venkatam was the chief of the Kalvar. Their profession was robbery. They settled in the Palai region. At this juncture, Samudragupta made an expedition towards the south and extended his power in Vengi, Kanchi and Kerala. It weakened the political structure of Tamilnadu. Utilising this opportunity, the Kalvar, who settled in the Palai region gathered their energy and invaded the Pallava Kingdom. After defeating the Pallavas they consolidated their power throughout Tamilaham and ruled upto 600 A.D. They even assumed the title Muttaraiyar. Certain Tamil scholars including Prof. R.Sathianathier accepted this view.

4. Kalabhras - Oliyar

T.V.Mahalingam attributed that Kalabhras were Oliyar. T.V. Mahalingam in his book, "Kanchipuram in Early South Indian History", held the view that the "Kalabhras were the Oliyar of Tondai Mandalam". "He quoted the Velvikkudi grant to support this idea But the geographical position of Oliyar made this identification unsatisfactory".

5. Kalabhras - Jains

T.N.Subramaniam, the editor of the "Pandyan Copper Plates". held the view that Kalabhras were Jains. He identified Vajranandi, who established Tamil Sangam in 476 A.D. at Madurai. He was a Kalabhra, who followed Jainism. On the decline of the sangam age the Kalabhras became victorious and occupied Pandyan Kingdom, he held that Kalabhras contributed much of Tamil literature However, this connection was not proved.

The above mentioned theories did not prove the original home of Kalabhras with concrete evidence. Even the most of the scholars Tamilnadu including Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar and Kalabhras were the descendents of Kalvar of Palai region.

Effects of Kalabhra rule on the Tamil Country

Though the scholars viewed the Kalabhra period as a dark period, they contributed much to literature, administration, religion and culture. The Kalabhra rule witnessed political unity in Tamilnadu. for the first time. Till the arrival of the Kalabhras, Tamilnadu was divided into three major political divisions. Though the Chera, Chola and Pandya rulers belonged to Tamilnadu. political disharmony existed among them. In all respects they were separated from one another. This system existed upto the third century A.D. From the third century to the sixth century A.D. the Kalabhras ruled Tamilnadu. The rule of Kalabhras was totally different from the traditional sangam rulers. Unlike the sangam rulers, the whole of Tamilnadu was administered by a single Kalabhra ruler. It led to the maintenance of political unity in Tamilnadu.

The Kalabhra rule also witnessed radical changes in administration. With a view to consolidating the conquered territories. Kalabhras introduced a system of administration in Tamilnadu. For administrative convenience, Tamilnadu was divided into a number of divisions or provinces. Each division was further subdivided into Nadu. Each nadu was divided into managalams or Kurrams. Kurram contained a number of traditional villages. This system continued till its decline and was adopted by the powers who ruled later.

The Kalabhras gave due importance to trade and commerce. Kaverippumpattinam was an important trading centre of this period. Like Yavanas and Tamil rulers the Kalabhras also minted and issued a large variety of coins of different shapes and sizes. The mints were established in Madurai, Kaverippumpattinam, Kerala and Srilanka. The coins contained the symbols of ship, fish, bull, elephant, tiger, horses, lotus, flower, plant, sun, moon and stars. The symbols indicated that the Kalabhra rulers gave importance to animate and inanimate objects. The coins were made of copper alloyed with zinc, lead and silver. Thus the gold coins were used to trade with foreign trade countries. Circulation of gold and local coins indicated the development of inland and foreign trade.

Kalabhras also contributed much to learning and literature. Tamil language was given due importance in education, learning and religion. Prakrit and Pali languages also received encouragement during this period. Pallis or schools and Periya Pallis or colleges were constructed to impart education. The Vedic schools also existed. But the admission to these schools were restricted only to Brahmins. Moreover, in the Kalabhra period a Tamil sangam was founded at Madurai in 476 A.D. by Vajiranandi to promote Tamil language and to spread Jainism. This in one way or the other, Tamil education was promoted.

This Kalabhra period, extending over three centuries, brought many changes in the Tamil society. The Pandyas and the Palavas emerged as political forces towards the end of the sixth century A.D. With their emergence, the Kalabhras went down for ever. The Pandyas emerged under Kadungon and founded the historical. First Pandyan

empire, likewise Pallava ruler Simhavishnu founded the Imperial Pallava dynasty. Thus on the decline of the Kalabhras, two new kingdoms emerged in Tamilnadu.

The kalabhra interregnum saw the morning star of Bhakti age. Hinduism had a setback under Kalabhras. But Hinduism successfully responded to the challenge in the form of Bhakti movement, ably led by Saivite Nayanmars and Vaishnavite Alvars. The Pallava, the Pandya and the later Cholas became staunch patrons of the Bhakti Movement. It led to the development of a new culture under the pallavas and Cholas.

Thus the Kalahra age was not really drak. There was progress in all directions such as religion education, society and culture.

The First Empire of the Pandyas

The political confusion that prevailed in Tamilnadu after the invasion of the Kalabhras ended in the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. This was mainly due to the emergence of the Pandyas and Pallavas. The Velvikkudi and Sinnamanur inscriptions of 7th to 9th century narrated the history of the Pandyas. Indika of Megastheneso also mentioned the Pandyas. The first Pandyan impire was founded by Kadungon. It lasted for more than three centuries, till the rise of the imperial Cholas under the Vjiyalaya.

Kadungon (590 - 620 A.D)

Kadungon put an end to the Kalabhra rule in the Pandya country. He founded the first pandyan empire. It capital was Madurai. He was a descendant of the last sangam Pandyan. Very little information was available regarding Kadungon regin. He conquered certain feudatories and destroyed their cities.

Maravarman Avani Sulamani (620 - 645 A.D)

He was the son and successor of Pandyan Kadungon. He was the first who assumed the title Maramarman and Sadayavarman. No other details were available about him. He maintained his power in the territories inherited from his father. He was succeeded by his son Sendan.

Sendan (645 - 670 A.D)

He was the third ruler. Velvikkudi plates praised his actions in war. He took the title of Vanavan. During the last days of his reign, the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang visited Kanchi. The account left behind him was useful to know the history.

Arikesari Maravarman (670 - 700 A.D)

he was succeeded by his father Sendan. He was one of the greatest rulers of the first Pandyan empire. His reign witnessed the expansion of the Pandyan Empire as far as Uriayur. he received saivite religion. He scored many brilliant victories at Pali, Nelveli, sennilam and Sangaramangai. He also defeated Pallavas and Cholas. He married Mangaiyarkarasi, the Chola Princess.

He was not only a great warrior but also a patron of Saivite religion. At first, he was a Jain. Later, he was converted to Saivism by Sambandar. he had defeated the Jain philosophers in religious debates and established the divinity of his religion. His period was described as an age of Saivite religious renaissance in the Pandyan country. Hiuen-Tsang mentioned that the Buddhist religion and monasteries began to decline during his period. He rendered meritorious services to Hindusim.

Kochadaiyan Ranadhiran (700 - 730 A.D.)

Arikesari was succeeded by his son Kochadaiyan. He was a great conqueror. He assumed the titles such as Vanavan, Sembian etc. He defeated the Chera, Chola, Chalukya and Kongars. he also defeated the Marathas at mangalapuram (present Bangalore), and the chieftain at Marudur, a place near Ambasamudram. He patronised Saivism.

Jatila Parantaka Nedunjadayan (730 - 765 A.D.)

He was the son and successor of Maravarman. He was the greatest imperialist of this dynasty. The Velvikkudi grant was issued in his 3rd regional year. It threw much light on Tamil history. It mentioned, Palayagasalai Mudukudumi Peruvaludi who granted a tax free village called Velvikkudi to a Brahmin Korikaikilan Narkotvan. Later the Kalabhras confiscated this village. So Nedunjadayan restored the same village to Narisingam, a descendent of the above Korikaikilan. This grant contained the

detailed accounts of the achievements of Nadunjadayan. His other inscriptions at Trich, Anaimalai, Kalugumalai, Ambasamudram, together with Madras, Museum Plates, give a lot of information about his regin.

He defeated the Pallavas at Pennadagam. He also defeated Adiharam at Ariyaveliyur. he drove out the Cheras and Pallavas, who supported Adihaman. He defeated and imkprisoned the ruler of Kongu country. the ruler of venad was also defeated. he destroyed the fortified city Vizhijam. He followed Vaishnavism. The Vaishnava saint Periyalvar was a contemporary of Nedunjadayan. He constructed a temple fo rTirumal at Kanchiperur.

Varaguna (815 - 836 A.D.)

Next ruler was Varaguna. He issued a number of inscriptions. He was a devotee of Siva. The Siva saint Manikkavasagar was his minister.

Srimara Srivallabha (835 - 862 A.D.)

he was the son and successor of Varaguna I. During his time the conflict between the Pandyas and Pallavas reached a high pitch. At Kudamukku, he defeated the forces of Pallavas, Gangas, Kalingas and Magadhas. In the battle of Vizhijan, her defeated the Cheras. He invaded Ceylon and destroyed Buddhist Monuments and captured the treasury. The defeated Ceyloness ruler Sena I fled to Malava. Finally, Srivallabha restored the Kingdom to him. In the battle of Arisilaru, the Pallava ruler Nirupatunga defeated pandyan and occupied the northem part of the country. Thus he lost the northern territories to the Pallavas.

Varaguna II (862 - 885 A.D.)

He participated in the Thiruppurambiyam battle in 880 A.D. In the battle, he was decisively defeated. It paved the way for the temporary disappearance of the Pandyas from Tamil Politics.

Parantaka Viranarayanan (885 - 905 A.D.)

After Varaguna, his younger brother Parantaka occupied the throne. In his 7th reginal year he issued the Dalavaypuram plates. The Sinnamannur plates enumerated

his achievements. He had friendly relations with Cheras. his wife Vanavanmahadevi was a Chera Princess.

Rajasimha II (905 - 920 A.D.)

Rajasimha was the next ruler. Parantaka I the Chola ruler defeated him. Vira Pandya was the son of Rajasimha II. He was the last ruler of the first Pandyan Empire, Aditya II defeated him. With him, the first Pandyan empire declined.

Unit - III

The pallavas and the Cholas

The genealogy and history of the early pallavas of Kanchi was controversial and problematic in South Indian history. Before the defeat of kalabhras, the Pallavas ruled only a small principality in and around Kanchipuram. The date of the early Pallavas was fixed from 280A.D. to 575 A.D. The history of the early Pallavas was constructed from the charters. Pallava history before 580 A.D. The history of the early Pallavas was constructed from the charters. Pallava history before 580 A.D. was divided into two periods. To know the history of the Pallavas of the first period, the Prakrit charters were useful. These pallavas patronised and issued Prakrit charters. hence, these Pallavas were called, Prakrit chartered Pallavas. In the second period, the Pallavas patronised and issued Sanskrit charters. So these Pallavas were known Sanskrit Chartered Pallavas.

Prakrit Pallavas

The Prakrit Pallavas ruled the Kingdom between 280-350 A.D. To know the history of the Prakrit Pallavas, four charters were available. They were the Manchikallu stone Inscriptions the Mayidavolu grants, the Hirahadagalli plates, and the British Museum plates of Queen Charudevi.

The first inscription was issued by Simhavarman. This inscription was the earliest of the four inscriptions. This period is assigned to about the first half of the 4th century A.D. The second charter was issued by Sivaskandavarman. The next Charter Hirahadagalli plates were also issued by Sivaskanda varman. They issued in copper plates in his eighteen regional year. They were found in Guntur and Bellari districts. He was the ablest ruler of the early Pallavas. Under his rule, the kingdom of Kanchi was extended Sivaskandavarman established his power from Pennar to the north of Krishna. He assumed the title of Dharmamaharaja and performed asvamedha sacrifice. He followed the Maurya system of administration. The British Museum plates were the last Prakrit charter. It was issued by Queen Charudevi. These plates mentioned

Vijayaskandavarman. Vijaya Buddavarman and Buddamkura. These copper plates also referred to the gifts to the temple.

From these Prakrit charters we do not know anything about the social or political or economic history of this period. They revealed only a rough idea about the early history of the Pallavas.

Sanskrit Pallavas

After the decline of the Prakrit chartered Pallavas, the Sanskrit chartered Pallavas ruled the early Pallava kingdom. They were assigned to the period from 350 A.D. to 550 A.D. The political history of Pallavas of Sanskrit charters became very obscure. The Sanskrit charters mentioned the genealogical list of more than sixteen Pallava kings. Among them Simhavarman, Kaskandavarman, Virakurucha, Kumaravishnu etc. were important. But their exact relations and the period of their rule were not clearly mentioned. The names suggested that Saivism, Vaishnavism and Buddhism were patronised by them. With the accession of Simhavishnu in 575 A.D. chronology and genealogy of the Pallavas became clearer,

Later Pallavas (or) The great Pallavas

Simhavishnu 575-600 A.D.

Simhavishnu inaugurated the Great or Imperial Pallava line. The history of the Pallavas became clearer with his accession. Mathavilasaprahasanam mentioned that he conquered several territories. The Kasakkudi plates affirmed that he defeated the Kalabhras, Malavas, Cholas and the Pandyas. He assumed the title Avanisimha. He ruled the Kingdom that lay between the river Krishna and Kaveri. Dr.M.Rajamanikkam viewed that Simhavishnu occupied Kanchi from the Kalabhras and saved the Hindu temple, the monasteries, and other educational institutions from the tyrannical rule. The Udayenderan plates mentioned him as a staunch devotee of Lord Vishnu. During his reign, he invited the Sanskrit poet Bharavi from the court of Vishnuvardhana, the Eastern Chalukya ruler and appointed him as his court poet. Simhavishnu was succeeded by his son Mahendravarman I.

Mahendravarman -I (600-630 A.D.)

Mahendravarman - I was the son and successor of Simhavishn. He was a many - sided genius. he was a great soldier, able administrator, poet, musician and builder. He wrote the Sanskrit drama, Mattavilasa prahasana. His rick -cut temples dedicated to Siva and Vishnu were very famous. Due to his contribution to fine arts and architercture, he earned the title 'Vichitrachitta'.

His Reigning Period

The regining period of Mahendravarman was a matter of dispute among the historians. R.Gopalan assigned that he ruled from 600 A.D. 63 A.D. But T.v. Mahalingam considered that he reigned between 610 A.D. - 630 A.D. K.A. Neelakanta Sastri in his book "A History of South India" mentioned that Mahendravarman ruled from 580 A.D. -630 A.D. Anyhow, it was accepted that he ruled upto 630 A.D. The kingdom of mahendravarman extended from the Krishna River in the North to the Kaveri river in the South. Nallur and Guntur were also included in his kingdom. His capital was the historical Kanchipuram.

Pallava - Chalukya Conflict

Mahendravarman I was a contemporary of Pulikesi II the Chalukya ruler of Vatapi. The Aihole inscription of Pulikesi II mentioned his expedition to Kanchi. Mahendravarman was not in a position to stand against the army of Pullikesi II. Hence. Mahendravarman has successuflly resisted Pulikesi II near Kanchi and Saven his capital from the Chalukyan invasion. The Pallava Chalukya conflict really started during his reign. His failure in the battle was compensated by his contrintion to art and architecture.

His Conversion

At first, Mahendreavarmen was Jain as a jain he persecuted Buddhist, and Saivist in his kingdom. He gave much trouble to the Saiva saint appar (Tirunavukkarasu). Later Apper converted Mahendravarman to Saiism. His conversion was a turing point in his life. He stood against Jains and began to persecute

them. He demolished Jain temples. In Short, he adopted the policy of revenge against Jains. It is said that he persecuted 9000 Jain monks in a single day at Madurai.

His contribution to art

Mahendravarman was both a warrior and a patron of art. His conversion to Saivism, marked a new epoch in the history of South Indian temple architecture. mahendravarman occupied a unique place in the field of art and architecture. The art which developed during his period was known as Mahendra style. He also encouraged music, dance and painting. (For further details refer to Art and Architecture)

Mahendravarman I was also a poet. He wrote two short humorous plays. They were, “Mattavilasaprahasanam” and “Bhagavadakujjiyam”. The great Sanskrit poets bhavavi and dandin adorned the court of Mahendravarman I.

The age of Mahendravarman I was an age of steady growth for Saivism and Vaishnavism. His period witnessed the steady decline of Buddhism and Jainism.

It is clear that the reign of Mahendravarman marked the beginning of an epoch not only in the history of the Pallavas, but also in the history of South India.

Narasimhavarman - I (630 - 668 A.D.)

Narasimhavarman ascended the throne after the death of his father in 630 A.D. he continued the imperial tradition of the Simhavishnu line. He was the greatest of the Pallava rulers. His achievement was so great that he became supreme in the whole of South India. The reign of Narasimhavarman was regarded as the golden age in the history of the Pallavas. He assumed many titles like his father, such as Mahamalla, Sribhara, Srinidhanajaya, Nayanankur and Atyantakama. His reign was famous account of the following four important events.

Conquest of Vatapi

Mahendravarman continued the Pallava Chalukya conflict. During his period, Pulikesi II, the Chalukya ruler marched towards south to defeat the Pallavas Pulikesi II came and threatened the Pallava capital. But, he was defeated by the Pallava King in three battles namely Paraliyam, Manimangalam and Vatapi. The most decisive battle among them was Manimangalam, located 20 miles east of Kanchi. The defeated

Pulikesi II, returned to his capital. The Pallava King Narasimhavarman I followed and attacked him. This battle was destructive in character. he destroyed the whole country. Paranjothi was the Commander - in - Chief of the Pallava army. In the battle near Vatapi, Narasimhavarman killed the Chalukya ruler Pulikesi II. This occurred in 642 A.D. or 643 A.D. There were reliable epigraphical and literary evidences to prove these victories. After the battle, the Pallava army brought with them the famous Vatapi Ganesa to Kanchi. Again, the Pallava ruler recorded his victory on a rock behind the Mallikarjune temple in the heart of Vatapi. To commermorate his success he assumed the title. "Vatapikonda"

Invasion of Ceylon

Mananvarman was a prince of Ceylon. He was driven out from Ceylon due to a civil war for the throne. He took regfuge in the court of Narasimhavarman and became a sincere and loyal attendant of the Pallava ruler. In his expedition to Vatapi Narasimhavarman was helped by Manavarman. So Narasimhavarman decided to help him to regain the throne of Ceylon. The Pallava king sent two naval expeditions to Ceylon from Mahabalipuram. The first expedition ended in failure and the second one achieved the obhect. The Pallava navy started from Mahabalipuram and invaded Ceylon and restored Manavarman to the throne of Ceylon. The Kasakkudi plates compared the pallava invasion to the famous expedition of Sri Rama against Ravana mentioned in the Ramayana.

The Historic visit of Hiuen - Tsang to Kanchi (642 A.D.)

Hiuen Tsang, the famous Chinese Pilgrim (Traveller) Visited Kanchi in 642 A.D. during the rign of Narasimhavaraman. He has given a clear account, relating to the character of the people, soil, climate, temples and especially the prevalence of Buddhism in the country. According to him, Kanchi was about 6 miles in circumference. He said that the region in and around Kanchi was called Dravida. There were about 100 Buddhist monasteries and more than 10,000 monks lived in the monasteries. Further, he also mentioned the activities of the Hindu temples. He mentioned in this account that there existed eighty temples in and around Kanchi. He also gave a true picture about the fertility of the soil. Hiuen Tsang, in his account

mentioned that Dharma - Pala the Vice chancellor of Nalanda University belonged to Kanchi. Again, the account of Hiuen - Tsang provided the contemporaneity of Harshavardhana in Northern India, Pulikesi in the Deccan and Narashimahavarama in South India.

Art and Architecture

He was Saivite. During his rule, Saiva revivalism continued unabated. During the day of Narasimhavarman I a terrible famine affected the kingdom in 650 A.D. This is mentioned by the Saiva saints, Appar and Sambandar. They contributed much to feed the people in their monasteries. He also encouraged the activities of the Hindu saints. As part of eliminating the social evils, he encouraged the spiritual life of the people. It was a wonderful and praise - worthy service rendered by him. In short, the reign of Narasimhavarman I, was considered as golden age in the history of Pallavas.

The Successors of Narasimhavarman I

After Narasimhavarman I, Nadivarman II, Paramesvaravarman I, Narasimhavarman II (Rajasimha) Paramesvarman II, Nadivarman II, Dandivarman, Nandivarman III, Nirupatunga and Aparahjitha ruled the Pallava Kingdom respectively. Most of the rulers were weak. More or less, they maintained relation with Western and Eastern Chalukyas. The rulers of the later period also maintained relation with Pandyas and Rashtrakutas. The civil war that took place in the Pallava kingdom after Nadivarman III, led to the decline of the Pallava kingdom and the emergence of the Chola Dynasty in Tamil Nadu.

The Battle of Thirupurampiam - 880 A.D.

The battle of Thirupurampiam was one of the important battles, fought in Tamil soil. This battle decided the fate of the Tamil Kingdoms and their rulers, like the first battle of Panipat, Talikota and Plassey. It paved the way for the permanent disappearance of the Pallava and the emergence of the power of the Cholas of the Vijayalaya line. The details of the battle were given in the Udayendren plate of Ganga Prithivipati III.

After Nadivarman III, a civil war broke out among his sons. He had four sons, namely Nirupatunga, Sankha, Aparajita and Kampavarman. Nirupatunga succeeded his father in 870 A.D. Among the four sons, Sankha and Kampavarman had no historical importance. Hence, the real struggle for power was held between Nirupatunga and Aparajita. It led to the interference of Pandyas and Cholas in Pallava politics.

In the battle for power, Nirupatunga sought the support of Pandya Varaguna II, while Aparajita secured the alliance of Chola Vijayalaya and Ganga ruler Prithivipathi I. As Vijayalaya was old, he did not take part in the battle and Aditya, his son took over. It was a decisive battle. When the battle was at its zenith, the Pandyan Varaguna II was defeated by his enemies. With this defeat, the Pallava ruler Nirupatunga lost his confidence in the battle. Though the Ganga ruler Prithivipathi I was killed, Aparajita emerged victorious in the battle. He was inefficient and hence found it very difficult to consolidate his success. Utilising this opportunity, Aditya was waiting for a chance to crush his own victorious but weak master, Pallava Aparajita. The chance came in 891 A.D. and the Cholas defeated Aparajita and annexed the Pallava Kingdom with Chola empire. Thus as a result of the Thirupurampiam battle, the Pallava Kingdom declined for ever and the Cholas emerged as superpower in South India.

Administration

The Pallavas ruled the kingdom that extended from Nellore in the north to the river Vellar in the South. They had a well organised system of Administration. The Pallava Kingdom was divided into different units for the convenience of administration. It was divided into several Rastras (Mandalams), which were subdivided into Vishayas (Kottams). The Vishayas were further divided into Nadu and Ur (Village). The early charters of the Pallavas indicated that the Rastras and Vishayas were administered by officers placed under the control of the central government. Generally, Yuvaraja looks after the administration of the mandalam.

The Kindship

The King was the head of the central administration. The Pallava Kingdom was hereditary. The legitimate elder son was eligible to succeed the throne. If the

monarch had no son, the Chance was given to the son of the brother of the ruler. Under extraordinary circumstances, the King was elected by the subjects, mainly to avoid anarchy in the state. The Vaikundaperumal temple inscription mentioned the election of the ruler, after the death Paramesvaravarman. The king was called Arasan. he occupied supreme position and was considered as an incarnation of god. He assumed a number of titles such as Maharaja, Dharmamaharaja and Maharajadhiraja and innumerable powers. At the time of coronation, he was given the special title Abhisekanama. The Pallava royalty was Bull or Nadi. The Pallava kings were well learned and highly cultured. For example, the Pallava ruler Mahendravarman I was a many sided genius. Due importance was given to Yuvamaharja of the Crown Prince.

The Ministry

The King administered the Kingdom with the co-operation of a group of ministers. The council of ministers was called Mandrimandalam. The Vaikundaperumal inscription attested the existence of a Council of Ministers of the Pallava Government. The council of Ministers more or less was modelled on the council of ministers of ancient India. Arthasatra mentioned a council of ministers consisting of thirty two members. It is assumed that the Mandrimandala of the Pallavas also possessed the similar number. The minister was called Amatya. The Prime Minister was described as Brahmasriraja. The Prohita occupied an important place in the ministry. They rendered their co-operation and service not only in internal administration but also in the foreign policy of the state. The persons qualified in Manu and Vedas and trained in warfare were appointed as ministers. The ministry was only an advisory body.

Secretariate

The inscription of the Pallava period mentioned the ministerial and executive officers as Namban and Uttamasilan. The executive officials were the secretaries. They assisted the ministers in their daily administration. They were divided into private secretaries and under secretaries. The private secretaries were known as Karumattalivar and under secretaries as Vayil - Kelpar. Like the ministers, they too possessed high qualification.

Judiciary

The King was at the head of the justice. He controlled the courts in the state. There were two branches of judiciary in the Pallava capital. The inscription of the Pallavas clearly mentioned the working of the civil and criminal courts in the state. Dharmasanam was the highest civil court presided over by the king. The highest criminal court at the capital was Adhikaranam. The Mattavilas Prahasana furnished much information about the Adhikaranam in the capital. The judges of the Adhikaranam were called Dharmathikarins. Courts existed in the towns and villages. The civil and criminal cases were conducted and decided on the basis of written documents, deposition of witnesses and with the help of actual occurrences. The criminals were fined heavily. The Kasakkudi inscriptions of Nadivarman mentioned Karanathandam and Adhikaranathandam, the fines imposed on the criminals. A system of appeal from the inferior to the superior court also existed in the Pallava period. Though the court adopted all formalities, it was not free from corruption. It is said that the justice was sold in the streets in the Pallava period.

The Army

The Pallava maintained a well - trained and highly organised army. It consisted of elephantry, cavalry and infantry. But there was no clear evidence for the existence of the chariot. The copper plates of this period threw much light not only on the composition of the arm but also on the war implements which the soldiers used. The soldiers used swords, shields, bows, arrows, javelins, clubs, lances and spears. The commander-in-chief of the army was called Senapati. The Pallava rulers also possessed a well-organised fleet. Mamallapuram was the principal sea-port of the Pallavas. The epigraphical evidences gave ample proof about the naval strength of the Pallavas. They also mentioned the two successive naval expeditions of Narasimhavarman against Srilanka.

Irrigation

The Pallava monarchs gave much encouragement to irrigation. As a part of the expansion of cultivation, the Pallava rulers converted the forests into arable lands. Hence, the Pallava rulers were called Kaduvetti. The river waters were utilised for

irrigation through channels. A number of irrigation tanks were constructed during this period. Among them, the Rajatadaka, Tirayaner, Mahendra tank, Chirtramegho tataka, Paramesvara tataka, Vairanegha tataka, Vali eri, Marippidugeru, Velleri, Tumbaneri, Madrukaku eri, Kanakavali tataka, Kaverippakkam tank were important. These tanks were constructed for storing water during the rainy season. Several wells were also excavated by the Pallava monarchs. The above mentioned channel, irrigation tanks and wells were properly supervised and maintained. Separate rules were adopted for the use of the water from the tanks. The irrigation of a village was carried out under the strict supervision of a committee called Erivariyam or tank committee.

Revenue

The revenue of the state consisted of several items of taxation. The chief among them was the revenue from land. Land taxes were levied after a careful assessment of the land. Each village was carefully surveyed and the boundaries were marked. The Pallava inscriptions of the period gave clear description about the survey of land by plough, Nirvartana and Pattika. According to plough system, a specific time was allotted to a person to cultivate the land with a plough and a pair of bullocks. The area covered by him was marked as a unit of land. Likewise, a man was directed to walk around the area in a specific time at an agreed pace. The area he covered was the Nivartana. Pattika was the unit of land used as a sheep pan. In certain place kol or rod was used to measure the lands the measured lands were fenced to prevent damage to the crops and to avoid boundary disputes. The land tax collected from the people was called Visakkanam. The state also collected professional taxes sales tax and excise duties. The tax collected from the goldsmith was called Lattukkayam. The manufacture of salt and sugar was state monopoly. The presentations to the rulers and the income from the courts were also included in the state revenue. A major portion of the revenue of the state was spent for the king, the construction and maintenance of places and army. The rest was utilised for the welfare of the people.

Local Administration

The administration in the villages was given due importance. The village was the smallest government unit under the Pallavas. Traditional form of administration

existed in the villages. The head of the village was called Nattar. The inscriptions of the eight and ninth centuries mentioned three types of villages or towns assemblies, namely the Ur, the Sabha and Nagaram. The Ur was a assembly that consisted of all classes of people who held land in the village. The Sabha was Brahmin assembly that of the land holders of the agrahara villages. In the nagaram, traders and merchants predominated. Members of these bodies were known as perumakkal. The members elected were divided into required committees. The committees looked after the day to day administration of the village. Especially, the committees concentrated more on the construction and maintenance of tanks, cultivable lands, roads, etc.

The Coins

The coins were in circulation in the Pallava period. The Pallava monarchs issued gold and silver coins. Most of these coins contained the figure of Nandi in certain coins. The reverse side of the coins contained the emblems of swastika, conch, wheat, fish, umbrella and lion. these coins revealed the political, social economic and religious life of the Pallava monarchs and people.

Social Condition

Though the division of society into Brahmanas, Kshatriyas Vaisyas and Sudras existed in India, it was adopted in the Pallava Kingdom in a modified form. The Pallava rulers enforced the caste rules based on Varnasramadharma. They strictly followed the hindu Sastras and had performed the Asvamedha and other vedic sacrifices. The Kuram record and the Kasakudi plates clearly mentioned the strict enforcement of the varnasramadharma in the Pallava kingdom. Hence, radical changes took place in Tamil society during the period of the Pallavas.

The Brahmins

Brahmins occupied an important place in TamilNadu. They migrated into Tamilnadu from the North. They were minorities. But as heads of the administration, they controlled the majority in society. They were steeped in Vedic studies and well - versed in all sastras. The Pallava rulers patronised them. They were respected by providing Brahmadeya a land gifts. These brahmadeya settlements existed in various

parts of the Pallava kingdom. they were provided with all facilities. The village assemblies looked after their daily administration. When the activities of the government and temples increased, more Brahmins were invited from the northern parts of Tamilnadu. As a result, the settlements of the Brahmins also increased. But most of them belonged to Andhra country. The Brahmins were utilised to conduct sacrifices and religious ceremonies.

Division among Brahmins

During the age of the Pallavas, Brahmins belonged to different gotras. Brahmins were divided into a number of divisions. They were Vaishnavas, Saivas and Vedic Brahmins etc. The Alvas were Vaishnavas Brahmins. The Nayanmars belonged to Saiva group. They even assumed the name of Sivacharyas. These groups adopted different types of worships in temples.

Education of Brahmins

The Brahmins concentrated more on studies. They began to study Vedas at the age of seven. The study of Vedas lasted for ten year. Sometimes, they dedicated their whole life for the study of vedic literature. The copper plates of Nandivarman mentioned the names of 108 scholars specialised in Vedas. At the same time the Tandantottam plates of the same ruler had mentioned 244 scholars. The state provided facilities for general and specialised studies which existed in different centres of the Pallava kingdom. The Ghatika at Kanchi and the college at Bahur were best examples. They were appointed in the temples for reciting Vedas. The Brahmins also sang the hymns of the Alvars and Nayanmars in temples and madams. It is said that temples flourished in almost all the towns and villages during the Pallava period.

System of Marriage

The inscriptions of this age were not useful to know the marriage customs of Brahmin community. But certain information available in Vaishnava and Saiva works enable us to have a rough idea about the marriage customs of the Brahmins in 7th and 8th centuries A.D. in the Pallava kingdom. These works had not mentioned anything about the Tali, which usually, the people used in marriage. The Brahmins of this

period married more than one wife and most of them were not confined to the Brahmin community. The system of marriage of girls from other communities was called pratiloma marriage. Likewise, Non - Brahmins also used to marry Brahmin girls. This system was called anuloma marriage. The society accepted the children born under these marriage.

Professions of Brahmins

The Brahmins were the highly educated persons. They were appointed as officials in the government departments and priests in the temples. The ministers and officials also hailed from this community. Brahmins also served in the village sabhas. They served in various committees and looked after the cultivation of the lands in Devadhana and Brahmadeya village.

The Position of the King and Queen

The Pallava rulers played an important role in the society. They were highly educated and well - known for their scholarship. Mahendravarman I composed Mattavilasa - Prahasanam. They were considered as an incarnation of God on earth. They assumed a number of titles such as Maharaja, Dharmamaharaja etc. The Pallava rulers had several wives. The queens were also cultured and pious. Their lives were closely connected with temple activities. They also provided gifts and endowments to the temples. Thus the status of the women in the upper section of the Pallava society was in satisfactory. But the women in the lower sections of the society had no such privileges. They were engaged in weaving, spinning and selling of flowers and mills. No evidence of sati was there in the Pallava society.

List of the people

The artisan classes engaged in occupations like carpentry and smithy. Jewellery - making with gold and silver was an attractive industry. Oil manufacturing was another important industry. A large section of the people were involved in cattle - breeding and pottery making. The people of the village got deeply involved in agriculture. They also cultivated foodgrains, coconuts, Sugar - cane, Flower etc.

Manufacture of salt was the monopoly of the government. The merchant class enjoyed a fair life.

The people of this age mingled freely in the society. For example, the Vaishnava and Saiva saints belonged to Brahmin, Ksatriya, Vaisya, Sudra, Vellala, Washerman, hunters, Shepherds, Fishermen, Parayal, Pana, Ilava and Saliya communities mingled freely with all people in the society. The privileged and the rich lived in attractive houses. Usually, they lived luxuriously. The poor lived in cottages and houses made of mud and thatched roof. The Pulayas and Chandalas were outcasts in the society.

Food

The inscriptions had not furnished any detailed account of the food habits of the people of the Pallava period. The saints and the religious people consumed rice with ghee. The use of betel after meal was common. In Tamilnadu, the devotees in the temples followed the Brahminical way of life and food. The Ksatriyas, artisans and other labourers used different forms of foods. Meat eating was common among the low castes.

Dress and Ornaments

The copper plates and stone inscriptions provided only scanty information about the dress or ornaments of the people used in the Pallava age. But the literary evidences proved that a large section of the people of the Pallava period used the ornaments and dresses similar to that of the Sangam age. But saints in this period used only simple dress and ornaments. The people of this period, both men, women and children used several varieties of ornaments. The chief among them were Olai and Todu. The sculptures of Mahabalipuram revealed that both men and women used necklaces and bangles made of gold, precious stones and shells. Among the leg ornaments silambu and salangai were important. The king and the Queen used crowns and varieties of attractive ornaments made of gold and precious stones.

Both men and women of this period used garments. The members of the royal family used costly and attractive dresses. The sculptures in Mahabalipuram showed the

women used very short garments. They never covered the upper parts of their body. The men of this period used different types of cotton garment. The warriors used a typical form of dress suited for military. The high caste people used red silk. But the ascetics wore yellow garments. The dresses of the common people were simple. The simple dress used by the labours was called Kovana Adai. It was tied across the waist.

Other Communities.

The Pallava records also mentioned certain popular communities flourished in the Pallava period. The vanigas or the trading community played an important role. This community was mainly responsible for the development of Inland and foreign trade. The Pallava had flourishing overseas trade with Indo - China, Indonesia, Srilanka and Persian Gulf.

The Vellalas were agriculturists. They utilised the landless labourers, the Pulayas and Parayas to cultivate the soil. These people were settled in mud huts. Usually, they settled closely to the cultivable lands. They were considered as the lowest in the social order. The high caste people considered them as untouchables. They were prohibited from getting education and government jobs. In short they were treated as serfs.

Ilavas were also a socially backward community. Today toddy drawing was their occupation. As drinking of toddy was common among the rich and poor, this industry flourished in the Pallava period. But toddy - drawing was prohibited in Agraharas. Drinking of liquor was very common among the Kapalikas. The rich people used foreign liquor. It was preserved in mud jars. Government collected taxes on toddy and wine.

Customs of the People

Keeping memorials for the dead existed in the Pallava period. The Madras State Archaeological department discovered a number of memorial stones that belonged to the Pallava period. These stones contained inscriptions. They revealed the heroic deeds of the warriors. The custom of erecting hero - stones continued after the Pallavas and became quite common in the Chola period. The custom of maintaining

portrait statues in the temples was common in the Pallava period. Much importance was given to the images of kings and queens in the temples. People used to worship them along with the god and goddesses in the temples. The habit of constructing shrines or even big temples in honour of the dead prevailed in the Pallava period.

The People in the villages had also adopted certain customs. The village temples had the practices of making sound through the conch to announce the early morning. The habit of maintaining a parrot in a cage was common among young women. It was given milk and fruit. Early in the morning, the ascetics used to go to their respective temples. The use of chappal and umbrellas was common. Ladies decorated their hair with flowers. Pavai -nonbu and margali neeradai were certain customs of the people. Importance was given to the vedic marriages in the Pallava period.

The Cholas: The Vijayalaya Line of Cholas

Unlike other dynasties of Tamilnadu, the Cholas had the lengthiest reign. Chola history can be divided into three major divisions, based on the capitals they used for administration. The early imperial Cholas (A.D. 850 - A.D. 1014) like Rajaraja I ruled the country with Tanjore as capital. They are called Cholas of Tanjore in history. Rajendra I succeeded Rajaraja I and ruled the empire from Gangaikonda - Cholapuram, the newly built capital. He and his successors were called as Gangaikonda Cholapuram Cholas. As there was no direct successor to the Chola throne after Adhirajendra, Kulottunga I was adopted from their closely related Chalukya territory to rule the empire. Kulottunga I and his successors ruled Tamilnadu till its decline with the title Chalukya Cholas.

Cholas of Tanjore (A.D. 850 - 1014 A.D.)

Vijayalaya

Vijayalaya founded the imperial Chola dynasty. He was the son of Kumarangusan, a feudatory of the Pallava monarch. The Chola inscriptions found in Ambil, Tiruvalangadu, Cape - Comorin and Anerimangalam plates and the literary evidences like the "Ulas" of Ottakkuthar, and "Kalingathupparani" of Jeyamkondar

confirmed that Vijayalaya was a descendant of the Cholas of the Sangam Age. He conquered Tanjore region from the Muttarayar with the assistance of the Pallavas and ruled it with Tanjore as capital. To commemorate his success, he constructed a temple at Tanjore for the war goddess Nishambasudani (Durga). Vijayalaya was alive, when the Sripurambiyam battle took place near Kumbakonam in the Tanjore District. As he was old, he did not take part in the battle and his place was taken by his son Aditya. Certain villages in Tanjore region like Vijayalaya Chaturvedimangalam and Vijayalayanallur were known by his name. The Vijayalaya - Chekesvaram temple was also erected during his administration.

Aditya I (A.D. 881 - 907 A.D.)

Aditya I was the son and successor of Vijayalaya. He was an ambitious and diplomatic ruler. As a remarkable warrior, Aditya I participated in the Sripurambiyam battle in support of the Pallava ruler Aparajita. The Pallava ruler emerged victorious in the battle. Aparajita was inefficient and inactive. Utilising this opportunity, Aditya defeated Aparajita in 890 A.D. and annexed Tondaimandalam from him.

The Chola ruler Aditya was diplomatic. He captured Kongudesam and western Ganga territory, with the support of the Chera ruler, Stham Ravi. Again to strengthen his relations with the Chera King, Aditya's son Parantaka I married one of his daughters. Aditya maintained cordial relations with Rashtrakutas and Pallavas also through matrimonial alliances. He married Illango Pitchy, the daughter of the Rashtrakuta ruler Krishna II and Tribhuvanamadevi, the Pallava princess. These marriage relations enabled him to consolidate his position. The Ganga ruler Prithivipati II had acknowledged the suzerainty of the Chola ruler. After the consolidation of the empire, Aditya introduced administrative measures to maintain law and order in the state.

Aditya I was a devotee of Siva. He constructed several stone temples for Lord Siva to spread Saivism. Among them the Adityaeshvara temple at Sripurambiyam and Tiruverumbur temples were important. Aditya died in 907 A.D. near Kalahasti in the Chitor district. To his memory, Parantaka I, erected the Kothandarameswara temple at the place of his burial.

Parantaka I (907 - 953 A.D.)

Parantaka I succeeded Aditya I. He ascended the throne of Cholamandalam with the title Parakesari. He was the first great ruler of the Chola dynasty. He ruled for 48 years and established a vast Kingdom by conquering the neighbouring states.

Rajaraja I (985 A.D. - 1014 A.D.)

Rajaraja I, was the most powerful ruler of the Chola empire. He was the second son of Parantaka I. His mother was Vanavan Mahadevi a Chera Princess. Thiruvalluvar plates described the Joyous occasion of his birth. Conquest and consolidation were his policies. this policy induced Rajaraja to concentrate more on wars both in land and in sea. the thirty years of his rule laid the foundation of Chola imperialism in South India. His glory and bravery in war, his tactics in diplomacy, skill in administration, great interest in architecture and art showed that he was a many sided personality.

Conquest of South

The Cheras, the Pandyas and the Ceylonese were the enemies of the Cholas. They threatened the empire, on his ascendancy to the throne. So the immediate task of Rajaraja was to subdue his enemies. The Thiruvalluvar plates gave a detailed account of the “digvijaya” of Rajaraja for the conquest of southern states. He defeated the Chera, and the Pandyas in war and assumed the coveted title “mummudi Chola”.

The first great conquest of Rajaraja was his invasion of the Chera country. It was a naval battle. The illtreatment and imprisonment of Chola envoy by the Chera ruler was the immediate provocation for this invasion. In this battle, he defeated and destroyed the Chera fleet at Kandalur Salai near Trivandrum. Gopinatha Rao equated Kandalur Salai with Valiyasalai in Tirivandrum. the words “Kandalur Salai Kalam Aruttarulia” found in his inscription confirmed that it was a naval expedition. The defeated Chera King, Baskara Ravi Varman Thiruvadi, fled to Quilon. He acknowledged the overlordship of the Cholas. Rajaraja erected a Siva temple to commemorate his success.

Then the Chola navy turned against Ceylon. this naval expedition was carried out between 1001 A.D. and 1004 A.D. The Chola navy defeated the Ceylonese ruler Mahindra V and destroyed Annuradapura his capital, constructed 1000 years ago. the defeated Mahindra V fled to the South eastern part of the island. Rajaraja annexed the northern part of Ceylon and converted it into a Chola province with Plonnaruva as its capital. To remember the “Chola occupation of Ceylon, a stone temple was constructed at Plannaruva and named as Vanavanmahadevi Isuram in memory of his mother. It is one among the ancient Hindu monuments still preserved in a good state. This expedition established the naval and military supremacy over Ceylon.

Then Rajaraja I turned against the Pandya Kingdom. In an encounter, he defeated the Pandya King Amarabhujanga and established the Chola authority in Madurai. The Pandya ruler was forced to pay tribute to the Cholas.

The capture of the strong fortress of Udagai (Ooty) was his next achievement. It took place around 1008 A.D. The immediate cause of the attack of Udagai was that its ruler insulted the ambassador of Rajaraja I. To take revenge upon this, the army entered udagai and destroyed it by fire.

Northern expeditions

After completing the southern conquests. Rajaraja I turned his attention to the north. He attacked and annexed provinces like Gangapadi, Nolambapadi and Todigaipadi in the southern Mysore region. After the success, Chola authority was maintained in these areas for about a century. The disappearance of the power of Rashtrakutas enabled the “Cholas to get complete success without much strain. Then the Chola army entered the Western Chalukya Kingdom. Western Chalukyas were the enemies of the Chola. The frequent interference of the Western Chalukyas in the border provinces of the Cholas caused unrest. The Cholas disliked the attitude of the Chalukayas and decided to punish them. In the decisive battle, the Chola army defeated Taila II, the Western Chalukya ruler and captured 150 elephants. After the conquest, Taila II paid tribute regularly to the Cholas. But Satyasraya, the successor of Taila II refused to pay the tribute and questioned the authority of the Cholas. So with a view to punish him, Rajaraja I sent an expedition under his son Rajendra I. The

armies of Rajendra fought and won the war against Satyasraya and captured his treasury. In this battle the Chola army violated the Tamil ethics of warfare and plundered the whole country, killed women, children and Brahmins and girls and many girls were molested and lost their chastity. The Chalukya general Kesava was imprisoned and insulted. The Tiruvalagadu and Karanthai plates gave a clear account of Rajendra's war against Stayasraya. As a result of the Western Chalukya War, Tungabhadra become the northern boundary of the Cholas.

Rajaraja I also interfered in the affairs of the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. After Danarnava, his two sons Sakthivarman and Vimaladitya quarrelled against each other for power Rajaraja I interfered in this issue and supported Sakthivarman to secure the throne. Again, he gave his daughter Kundavai in marriage to Vimaladitya. Ultimately the marriage paved the way for the union of the Cholas and Eastern Chalukyas. Thus through diplomacy, he prevented the joint endeavour of Western and Eastern Chalukyas against the Cholas.

Conquest of Maladive was the last expedition of Rajaraja I. It consisted of 12,000 islands. Though details were lacking, his conquest was sufficient indication of the strength of Chola navy. Rajaraja I also conquered Kalinga and Andradesa, and collected tribute from them. As a result of the above battles, he founded a vast empire which included the whole of South India upto tungabhatra the Maldives and a part of Ceylon.

Rajendra I (1012 A.D - 1044 A.D)

Rajendra, who succeeded Rajaraja adopted the same policy of his father in administration and conquest. It is said that, Rajaraja's great and solid work was the rock, upon which his son built and achieved unique success. He was the worthy son of the worthy father. he ruled for about 33 years. As a Yuvaraja, he had gained sufficient administrative experience. On his ascendancy to the throne, he proved himself to be a great warrior and an efficient administrator. According to K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Rajendra I was one of the greatest sovereigns of South India, a famous conqueror and empire builder and administrator of ability, a pious and tolerant man, a patron of art and letters and above all an amiable personality". The reign of

Rajendra I was divided into three divisions based on the nature of his conquests. 1. Consolidation of the South 2. Conquest of North and 3 Overseas expedition.

Consolidation of the South

Like Rajaraja I, Rajendra also entered into a career of conquest and consolidation and increased the power and glory of the Chola empire. The conquest of Ceylon was his first achievement. He prepared a fine navy for this purpose. His mission was a thorough success and he defeated the Sinhalese ruler, Mahindra V and annexed the whole of Ceylon. Mahindra V was captured and brought to Tamilnadu as a captive and he died after 12 years of imprisonment. Rajendra constructed many Siva and Vishnu temples in Ceylon. He converted Ceylon into a Chola province and consolidated it by effective administration. But soon, Ceylon was reconquered by Kashyapa, the son of Mahindra V.

The conquest of Pandya Kingdom was his next target. With a view to conquer Pandya Kingdom, the powerful Chola army attacked it. The defeated Pandyan King fled to Malaya mountain for refuge. Then Rajendra I installed his son as viceroy of the Pandyan country. He ruled the country with the title 'Chola Pandya'. As the Chera Kingdom was already subjugated by Rajaraja, there was no need for Rajendra to reconquer it.

The Rajendra I fought against Jayasimha II of the western Chalukya. Jayasimha II refused to send the tribute and challenged the authority of the Cholas. Rajendra I sent his army into the Western Chalukya Kingdom to teach him a lesson. The defeated Jayasimha II left the country and got asylum at Musangi. After his victory, Rajendra assumed the title "Jeyamkonda Chola". During his Chalukya expedition, the Kalinga ruler supported Jayasimha I against the Cholas. So the army of Rajendra invaded Kalinga also.

Conquest of North

After the southern conquest was over, the Chola army marched to Ganges through Kalinga. At this expedition Rajendra I entrusted the charge of the army in the hands of his general Dandanatha. Historians had differences of opinions with regard to

the cause of his expedition. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri in his 'The Cholas' attributed that this expedition was nothing more than a pilgrimage to the Ganges'. The fetching of the water of the Ganges was the object of the expedition. No doubt, the Cholas had a political motive also being this expedition. An exhibition of the power of the Chola empire and a demonstration of its strength to the rulers of Northern India was the secret motive. The expedition lasted for nearly two years. So many rulers between Vengi and Bengal was defeated. The Chola army crossed Godavari, Orissa and reached West Bengal. The most important achievement of the Chola rmy was that it defeated Mahipala I, the Pala King of Bengal. Rajendra I erected a 'liquid pillar of victory' in his capital with the waters of Ganges after this war. he also assumed the title Gangaikondan. and constructed a new capital Gangaikondan Cholapuram to commemorate this success.

Over Sea Expedition

In 1025 A.D., Rajendra sent a naval expedition to Kadaram and Srivijaya. Srivijaya was a Kingdom in Sumatra. The exact location of Kadaram was not known. Scholars identified it with Malaya peninsula. But Srivijaya was under the control of Kadaram at the time of this expedition. The reason for the naval expedition was that srivijaya commanded all the trade routes between India and China. when the Cholas were keen on maintaining a constant contact with Far East. Another Cause was Rajendra's desire for a unique "Digvijaya' across the sea. The relations between the two countries were broken. Rajendra I organised a grand expedition which proved to be a complete success. The King of Srivijaya was defeated and the Kingdom of Srivijaya and Kadaram were brought under th fontrol of the Cholas. Sangrama Vijayagottungavarman, the ruler of Kddaram acknowledged the overlordship of the Cholas. So he was restored to his kingdom. To commemorate his victory. Rajendra I assumed the title of "Kadaramkonda Chola".

Suppression of rebellions

The last days of Rajendra witnessed rebellions in Pandya, Chera, Ceylon and Chalukya territories. Rajendra put down these revolts with the assistance of his son Rajadhiraja I Rajadhiraja I undertook a campaign against Somesvara I the western

Chalukya ruler. he adopted barbarous methods to win the battle and caused untold miseries to the people.

Rajendra I was not only an excellent warrior but also an efficient administrator. He was active for about 32 years in extending the power and prestige of the chola empire. he assumed titles like “Mudikonda”, “Gangaikonda”, “Kadaram Konda” and “Pandita Chola”. He was a patron of art and education. He constructed a fine network of canals for irrigation. He maintained cordial relation with China. The above achievements proved that he was the worthy son of the worthy father. he died in 1044 A.D. (his contribution to art, see Chola Art). (For education - see Education).

Successor of Rajendra

Rajendra I had three sons, namely, Rajadhiraja I, Rajendra II and Virarajendra I and one daughter by name Amangadevi. She was married to the eastern Chalukya ruler Rajaraja, the father of Kulottunga I. Rajadhiraja who came to throne in 1044 A.D. had sufficient administrative experience. During his period he had conflicts with Ceylon and Chalukya Kingdoms. He ravaged the Chalukya Kingdom and ransacked its capital. He died at the battle of Koppam in 1052 A.D., in an encounter with Somesvara I, the Chalukya ruler. Rajendra II (1052 A.D. - 1064 A.D.) Succeeded Rajadhiraja and continued the struggle with the Chalukyas. He died in 1065 A.D. Leaving the Kingdom to his brother Vira Rajendra I. He also followed the same policy towards Chalukya and defeated Vijayaditya. He died in 1070 A.D. Adhirajendra was his son and succeeded Virarajendra. he reigned for a few weeks and met with an unnatural death. He had no issue to succeed to the throne.

Kulottunga I (1070 A.D - 1120 A.D.)

Kulottunga I was the first ruler of the Chalukya Chola line. His father was Rajaraja I, the Chalukya ruler. To distinguish him from Rajaraja I, the Great, he was called Rajaraja I the Narrendra. Amangadevi, the daughter of Rajendra I was his mother. Thus Kulottunga I was closely associated the Chola family. He ascended the throne of the eastern Chalukya Kingdom in 1060 A.D., when his father died.

When Adhirajendra died without a heir the direct line of the Cholas to the throne ended. So confusion prevailed in the Chola empire in the selection of ruler. The wisemen of the capital assembled and finally decided to adopt Kulottunga I from Eastern Chalukya Kingdom. He had close association with the Chola empire through his mother and grandmother.

Kulottunga III (A.D 1178 - A.D. 1218)

Kulottunga III was the last great ruler. He succeeded Rajadhriraja II. He protected the kingdom from its deterioration. It was during his reign, the Pandya ruler Maravarman Sundarapandya invaded Chola Kingdom and came as far as Fhidadambaram. The defeated Kulottunga III ran to Hoysala Kingdom with his son. The Hoysala ruler intervened in this issue and made a settlement between the Pandyas and Cholas. The Chola accepted the suzerainty of the Pandyas and paid the tribute. Based on this, the conquered territory was given to the Cholas. Kulottunga III also patronised art. the Pudukkottai inscriptions and the Sanskrit inscriptions of the temple of Kampaharesvara at Tribhuvanam enumerated the contribution of Kulottunga III to art and architecture. He also patronised poets. He rendered assistance to write the stories of Nayanmars.

After Kulottunga III, the Chola kingdom was ruled by Rajaraja III and Rajendra III. They were weak rulers. During their rule the kingdom declined completely.

The Chola Administration

The Kingship

The central administration was in the hands of the ruler. He ruled over an extensive empire. The kingship was hereditary in nature. Generally, the ruler selected his elder son as their apparent. The their apparent was known as Yuvaraja. He was given the highest available civil and military trainings. the teachers of the royal family were known as Rajaguru. The Yuvarajas were usually appointed as governors in the provinces mainly for administrative training. This system was even violated in the absence of a efficient successor. The system of adoption existed, in the absence of a

direct successor. For example, Kulottunga I was adopted as the ruler of the Chola empire. As the head of the state, the king enjoyed enormous powers. But he never behaved like a despot. The statement that “the law was above the king, and not the king above the law”. proved that, the ruler was a law abiding monarch. the kings toured the country frequently to understand the requirements of his subjects. Royal camps were fixed in temples and mandapas. the Kings also attended the periodical festivals in certain important temples at Chidambaram, Thiruvarur and Kanchipuram.

The Kings were more concerned about the welfare of their subjects. The people too considered them as the representatives of god on earth. They respectfully called them as Chakravarthikals or Thipuvana Chakravarthies. But the official records mentioned them as Udaiyar. They assumed titles like Rajakesari, Parakesari, Sivapathasekara, Mummudikonda, Heyamkonda, Kadaramkonda, etc. The titles enhanced the powers and prestige of the Chola rulers. They lived luxuriously in the palace. It was constructed at the centre of the capital. They even possessed additional palaces at Thiruvarur, Chidambaram and Kanchi. These places were constructed mainly for administrative convenience.

The nature of the palaces, decorative anthapurams, attractive donations, costly velvis, the strength of the army, the size of the chariots, the number of servants and the extension of the Kingdom enhanced the position of the rulers. The Tanjore place contained nearly three thousand dancing girls and servant to look after the king. They donated lands to the temples and Brahmins. Arts were patronised by them. They even constructed temples in their names. People used to worship the idols of the kings and queens in the temples. For example, people worshipped the images of Parantaka II Rajaraja and his queen, Lokamahadevi in the Tanjore temple. An image of Sembiyan Madadevi, the wife of Gandaraditya was also worshipped.

The Chola rulers administered their extensive kingdoms with the assistance of ministers. The ministry was an advisory body. It assisted the rulers. The council of ministers and other high officials maintained close association with the king. So they were termed as Udankuttattar. The advisory body consisted of Perumdarams and Sirutharams. They were equated or compared to the gazetted and non gazetted

government officials of the present day. The ministry was hereditary in character. Most of the ministers and high officials of this period were Brahmins. They were not given monthly salaries. But the government assigned lands to them based on their position. The number of ministers of the king was not definite. But, a thirteenth century Chinese traveller had mentioned that the Chola monarch was attended by four ministers. The officials executed, controlled, supervised and regulated the oral orders of the king.

Revenue

The state was more concerned about its revenue. The government required money to implement its schemes for the protection and the internal administration of the country. The state collected a major portion of its revenue from land. So due attention was given for the collection of land tax. The land tax was known as Kanikadan. It was fixed on the nature and fertility of the soil. The land was surveyed carefully and classified it into different grades. Based on the grades, land tax was periodically reassessed in accordance with changes in cropping fertility and so on. Usually, 1/6 of the total produce was collected as land tax. On certain occasion it was enhanced. Rajaraja I assessed 1/4 of the total revenue as land tax due to heavy expenses on wars. It was remitted in cash or kind. The lands donated to the temples and Brahmins were exempted from taxation. Government authorised or appointed officials or agent to collect land taxes. They adopted oppressive measures to collect them. Severe punishments were given to those who had not remitted the tax in time. From records, we understood that tenants even migrated from one place to other due to the fear of punishments. Ladies too were not exempted from this. A lady committed suicide by taking poison due to the harassment of a revenue officer. The revenue collected from court as fine was called Thandapanam. The income from mines, forest and alloms were also added with the state revenue. Sungam was collected from foreign trade. The looted and plundered wealth through wars, the tribute from subordinate rulers and the presentations given to the king were also treated as state revenue. A major portion of the revenue of the state was spent for the personal use of the ruler, maintenance and construction of palaces and temples and military. A

considerable amount was allotted for the construction of roads, kulams, canals, hospitals, education and socio - cultural activities. The account and audit system prevailed in the state controlled corruption and misappropriation of funds to some extent.

Justice

The state paid special attention to maintain law and order in the state. The administration of justice was purely a local affair. The village assemblies were entrusted with large judicial powers to deal with the civil and criminal cases. The inscriptions mentioned that the court of Justice of the king was dharmasana. Learned Brahmins. Well versed in law, assisted the king in the court. At the first instance cases were tried in the village court. If the people were dissatisfied with the verdict of the village court, the case was appealed to the court in Nadu. Fines and imprisonments were the punishments to the minor offences. The robbers who stole the idols, ornaments etc. which belonged to the temples, were given severe punishment. The property of such persons was confiscated and sold in Public action. The amount was remitted in the royal treasury. Likewise, offenses like theft, adultery and forgery were seriously viewed. They were declared unfit to serve in village committees. In the case of murder the murderer was directed to endow 60 cows or 96 sheep for perpetual lamp in the neighbouring temple to honour the dead. The offenses against the king and his close relatives were dealt with by the king himself and heavy fines were collected from them. In certain cases, the culprits were tied to a wooden frame and given fifty or more blows with a stick. The cases like treason were tried in the royal court and the traitors were trampled to death by an elephant. Such cases increased in the later period of the Chola administration.

Army

The Cholas maintained a strong standing army and navy. It functioned under the direction of the ruler. It had numerous regiments. Venkayya, who published the Chola inscription, mentioned the existence of 30 regiments during the reign of Rajaraja I. It was expanded in due course. Each regiment had a corporate life of its own and was free to endow benefactions or built temples in its own name. Certain

regiments were distinguished by territorial names like Pandipadai. the Chola army consisted of infantry, cavalry, elephantry and navy. The army was well drilled and disciplined. Reuired horses for the cavalry were imported from Arabia. The inscription of Vijayabahu at Polonaruva mentioned several regiments of bowmen and swordsmen in infantry. The army contained several thousands of soldiers in three divisions. The army was stationed all over the country in local garrison and cantonments called Kadagams. the elephantry confined the strength of the army. At the times of the conquest of west, the Chola ruler utilised six thousands war elephants. Generally, the army was used for invasion and to suppress revolts. The state also possessed hereditary, mercenary and tribal troops. The hereditary army protected the ruler and received regular pay from the treasury. The Kaikkolar were recruited in this wing. The tribal army was called as Nattuppadai or Janapadai. It was mainly used for local defence. The mercenary army was raised at the time of emergency. The temples also maintained local army for its protection . It reveived endowments for the maintenance of this army. The inscriptions had not mentioned the method of recruitment of the army. the commander - in - Chief of the army was termed as Senapthi or Mathanda nayaka. The ruler led the army in certain important Battles.

The Cholas also maintained a fine navy. It helped to establish the chola domination in Ceylon, Kadaram, Srivijaya, Maladives and Malainadu. Ships were utilised in the navy. Ship building was a common industry in Tamilnadu. Sometimes, it acted as a subsidiary force to the army. Harbours were used for the free movement of the navy.

The army wrought untold miseries to civil population during marches and operations Molestation, insulation, mudoring, plundering, looting and destruction of properties were the atrocities committed during wars. The army adopted various techniques to win the battle. The captives in the war were treated mercilessly. In short, the army determined the strength of the Chola empire.

Contribution of Literature

The Chola period witnessed the development of both Tamil and Sanskrit literatures. Most of the works of this period were religious oriented. they revealed the

political, social, economic, religious and cultural activities of this period. The prasasties of this period were also treated as literature. They had historical values.

Sivaka - Sindamoni

Among the five great epics, Silappathikaram and manimekalai belonged to the Sangam period. Sivaka - Sindamoni, Valayapathi and Kndalakesi were written in the Chola period. Sivaka - Sindamoni was out sanding among the Tamil epics. It was a Jain work. Tiruttakkadevar composed this work. He was a contemporary of Sekkilar. It was very popular and composed for a specific purpose. It was composed in the 10th century. It contained the social, political, cultural and religious life during the age of Tiruttakkadevar. Both native and western scholars praised this work. This was the first unique epic written in Viruttam verses.

In this work Sivakan was described as an adventurous character. he lived a life of pleasure in the company of eight splendid queens. All of them possessed exquisite beauty and immaculate virtue. He love them immensely. He plunged deeply into sexsuous pleasures and greatly enjoyed himself. Finally he married Sindamoni. After knowing the hollowness of human life, he left the throne his son and went to the forest leaving all his luxuries. Finally through meditation he attained salvation. This story was attractively depicted in this epic. Though it was a traditional story, it was considered as a devotional story by the Jains. This work contained 3145 stanzas and each had four lines. Actually, only 2700 stanzas were written by Thiruttakkadevar. The remaining 445 stanzas were the additions of his guru, Neccinarkkiniyar. Its style, diction, noble sentiments, fascinating descriptions and above all its grandeur were in an appreciable manner.

Valayapathi

Valayapathi was a Jain work. It contained 65 verses Sufficient Particulars about Valayapathi were not known, since it was lost.

Kundalakesi

Kundalakesi was a Buddhist work. Mathakuttanar composed this work. It vehemently criticised the Jain religion and its principles. The heroine of this story

was Kundalakesi. She defeated the scholars of vedic and Jain religion in religious debates and gave a new life to Buddhism. This work was written in Viruthapa. Hence, it was also called as Kundalakesi Virutham. It was mainly used for religious debate. This work emphasised that sexual life was mainly responsible for the miseries of the people. It was mainly based on Manimekali. It had the same theme. This work also stressed pure ascetic life.

In one occasion, Kundalakesi saw a young and attractive thief walking on the street accompanied by royal guards. She fell in love with him. Finally, She married him. As a thief, he had an eye on her ornaments. He decided to murder her, to get all her ornaments. For this, he adopted a technique. She was brought to a temple for worship in a mountain. Knowing the intention of her husband, the bold Kundalakesi pulled him down. She got disappointed over her family life and embraced Buddhism.

Kalingattuparani

Jeyamkondar composed Kalingattuparani towards the close of the reign of Kulottunga I. It was a historical work. The Kalinga war of Kulottunga I was the theme of this work. It narrated the expedition of Karunakarathondaiman, the Commander -in - Chief of Kulottunga I against Anandavaram, the ruler of Kalinga Kingdom. It also gave valuable information of the Chola geneology. Kanakasabhai translated certain parts of the poem into English.

Periyapuramam

Periyapuramam or Thiruttondar Puranam was composed by Sekkilar. He was born at Kunrattur in Kunraivanlandu, a sub divisions of Puliurkkotam in Tondaimandalam. He was also called Svaikavalar and Ganga-Kula-tilaka. He belonged to Vellala community. Sekkilar started his career as a government official and was promoted to the rank of minister within a short period. Kulottunga III, the Chola ruler conferred on him the title Uttamachola - Pallavan. On the direction of the Chola ruler, Sekkilar wrote Periyapuram, the life stories of 63 Nayanmars. The ruler promised to provide all facilities to undertake the task. Sekkilar, then retired to Chidambaram and stayed in the mandapa of the historical temple. He started the work with the divine grace of god. The progress of the work was with the divine grace of

god. The progress of the work was reported to the ruler then and there. It highlighted the life stories of the Nayanmars in a most attractive manner. It contained 4253 stanzas. Peiryapuranam was considered as the fifth veda in Tamil. It was also considered as the twelveth thirumarai of Saivism. the ruler honoured him with the title Tondar Sirparavuvvar.

Ramayanam

The celebrated author of Ramayana was Kamban. This work was the greatest epic of Tamil literature. Though Kamban adopted Valmiki, he handled the subject matter with a mastery and originality and a depth of poetic experience seldom equalled in Tamil literature. He wrote this work with historical background. He was a contemporary of Sekkilar. The contemporary Chola ruler patronised Kampan and granted him land. It was called Kampanadu. He also conferred on him the title Kivacakravarti. Besides the Ramayanam, Kamban also composed Erelubatu, Sadagoparantati, Saraswathyantati Lelsmiyantati etc.

Ulas

Ottakuttar composed three Ulas on the three successive rulers Vikarama Chola, Kulottunga II and Rajaraja II, who followed Kulottunga I. The Ulas were like the Parani, a conventional literary form. If the Parani was par excellence a war poem, the Ulas were just its opposite. they gave an account of the achievements of the Kings and their ancestors. They also provided much information about the administrative achievements of the Chola rulers. Besides the three Ulas, Ottakuttar also wrote the Kulottunga - Cholan - Pillaitamil, a child poem on Kulottunga II.

Nalavenba

Pugalendi wrote Nalavenba. He was born in Kalathur. One of the most melodious works in Tamil poetry was Nalavenba. It narrated the story of Nalan and Damayanathi. This work contained three Kandams namely Suyavar Kantam, Kalitodar Kandam and Kaliningu Kandam. It revealed the social and religious conditions which existed in those days. It highlighted the recognised Suyavara system of marriage that existed in the Kingdom.

Nalayiradivya Prabandam

Nalayiradivya Prabandam was another remarkable work which contained the Vaishnava canon of the 'Four Thousand Sacred Hymns'. It was compiled by Nambi Andar Nambi. It highlighted the history of Vaishnavism in South India. It was considered as the eleventh Thirumarai of Saivism.

Ambikavathi, the son of Kambar also contributed to Tamil literature. He wrote Ambikavathi and ambikavathikkovai. They contained love and romance.

The Saiva Sidhanta Sastras also belonged to this period. They were fourteen in number. These works were composed immediately after Sekkilar. They possessed agamic and devotional principles. They were considered as the theology of Tamil Saivism.

In addition to the above works, certain minor works were also composed during this period. In short, literature of this period highlighted the political, religious and social activities of the Chola period.

Thiruvilaiyadal Puranam

It was written by Perumbarrap - Puliur Nambi. He belonged to a Brahmin family at Panaiyur in Tirunelveli district. It contained legends centering around Madurai. It described the Sixtyfour miraculous sports of Siva. This work was composed at the request of the contemporary Pandya king. His spiritual Guru was Vinayaka Chidambaram. The date of the author was not clear.

Virsoliyam

Buddamitra wrote Virasoliyam. this work was composed during reign of ViraRajendra. This work was full of interest for a student of the history of grammatic theory in Tamil.

Chola Art

The history of art in the Tamil country began with the rise of the Pallavas of the Simhavishnu in the seventh century. The Chola continued and developed the art tradition of the Pallavas. The cholas kings loved art and spent a major income of the

state for the development of art. they constructed attractive structural temples palaces and buildings based on the Dravidian style through out their empire. These monuments reflected the attachment of the Cholas towards art and architecture. The artistic tradition of this period was famous for its purity and perfection. these temples were varied in style and structure. They were classified into three major divisions based on their structure, style and date.

The temple of early period

The temples of early period were constructed between. A D. 850 A.D. 985. The inscriptions of this period mentioned the size. Most of them were structural temples. The Vijayalaya Cholesvaram temple constructed at Nattamalai was the first temple of this period. This temple belonged to the period of Vijayalaya, the founder of the Chola empire, It was erected in memory of his success over the Muttarayas. The pillars in the front mandapas of the temple were erected on the Pallava style. But the arms of the divarapalaka resembled to that of the Pallava monuments. Now, the temple is in a deteriorating condition due to lack of maintenance and protection. Another important temple of this period, was the Balasubramanya temple constructed at kannanur. The Nagesvara temple constructed at kumbakonam also belonged to this period, It contained the portraits of contemporary Chola princes and princesses. The Sundaresvara temple at Thirukkattutalai and Mahadeva temple at Tiruccendurai were the most important temples constructed during the reign of Aditya I. The Agastyesvara temple at Panaagudi also belonged to this period.

The Koranganatha temple constructed at Srinivasanallur in Trichy district was the most attractive temple of this period. Parantaka I constructed this temple. The length of this medium sized temple was 50 feet. It contained many sculpture statue of Hindu gods and goddesses on the wall surface of the Vimana. Prominent among them were the statues of Sarasvathi and Lekshmi. they were very attractive. Below the statue of Kali, the statue of Asura was placed Parantaka I also constructed the Brahmapurisvara temple at pullamangai in Tanjore district. It resembled to that of Nagesvara temple at Kumbakonam in many ways. The mahalingaswami temple at Tiruvidaimarudur in Tanjore district was constructed in 910 A.D. This temple was

constructed in the fourth regional year of Parantaka I. Again, Muckundesvara temple at Kodumbalur, Bhaktajanesvara temple at Tirunamanallur (S.Arcot), Vatathirthanatha temple at Andanallur (Trichi), the Kdabavanesvara temple at Erumbur (S.Arcot) also reflected the contribution of early Cholas to art and architecture. The Muuvarkoil temple at Kodumbalur was constructed by Bhuli Vikramakesari, a feudatory of Parantaka II, in the later half of the tenth century. The several forms of the sculptures of Siva on the walls of the Vimanas were example of early Chola temple architecture. The inscriptions also mentioned the names of various other temples of this period.

Temples of Middle Period

The Temples constructed between A.D. 985 A.D. 1070 belonged to this period, Rajaraja I and Rajaendra I who reigned in this period constructed medium size and big structural historical temples. The Tiruvalisvaram temple at Brahmadesam in Tirnelveli district was the best example of the medium sized temple. It was square in shape (form). This temple contained figures of animals and gods. The walls of the temple were decorated with some comic features like lion or monkey and scene of dancing or mockery. Music was humorously portrayed in this temple. In the first storey of the Vimana contained a number of beautiful and attractive sculptures. It expressed the sculptural skill of the artists. Rajaraja I also constructed the Uttarakailasa temple at Tanjore district. Vaidyanatha temple at Tirumalavadi, the twin temples of Siva and Vishnu at dadapuram in all these temples were medium sized.

Tanjore Temple

The maturity of the Chola temple architecture was found in two great historical temples constructed at Tanjore and Ganaikonda Cholaapuram. A new chapter in the history of art and architecture developed during this period. Rajarajesvarar Brihadisvara temple at Tanjore was the tallest of all Indian temples. It was constructed during the reign of Rajaraja I. The work of this temple was started in 1003 A.D. and completed in 1010 A.D.

It was a symbol of the magnificent achievements of Rajaraja I. It reflected his splendour. He made numerous endowments for the temple. In this magnificence, he

was joined by not only the member of his family but high officials and noble men. Rajaraja I also utilised most of his loots from foreign wars for the construction of this temple. Several large images and bronze and gold were presented to this temple in addition to ornaments and lands. The ornaments donated to the temple were described in detail in the inscriptions. Most of the images and all the jewels were now not found in the temple.

Again, he donated a number of Devadhana village, for the regular functioning of the temple. The annual income from the lands set apart for the temple alone was estimated as one hundred and sixteen thousand Kalams of paddy. Adequate lands were also granted for the maintenance of the dancing women in the temple. Rajaraja I constructed two long streets for the accommodation of four hundred dancing women attached to the temples.

The walls of the temple contained innumerable historical inscriptions. They revealed the personality and achievement of the emperor. The inscriptions also mentioned the cooks, Gardeners flower gatherers, garland makers, musicians, drummers, dancer dance-masters, wood-carvers, sculptors, painters, choir-groups for singing hymns in Sanskrit and Tamil, accountants, watchmen and host of other officials and servants of the temples, Again around the inner walls of the first floor of the temple contained a fine series of one hundred and eight dance-poses. They form an invaluable document in the history of Indian art.

The temple was constructed of granite. The plinth of the central shrine was 45.72 square metre and the shrine proper was 30.48 square metre, The walls of the temples were covered throughout with inscriptions and deities such as Siva, Vishnu, Durga, Ganesa, Sri-devi, Bhudevi, Lakshmi, Nadesa, Dvara Palas etc. At the centre of the temple, there was a Kopuram or Mandapam with the height of 216ft. It contained 14 Storeys. At the top of the kopuram, there was a huge stone with the weight of 81.284 tones. This stone was dragged on to the by making elevation from Sarapallam 6.44 K.m. away from the temple.

In front of the temple, there was an attractive, huge monolithic Nandi. The height of the Nandi was 12 feet. The stone brought from Pachachaimalai was used

for this purpose. The temple had three entrances namely Keralathankan entrance, Rajaraja entrance and Thiruvanukkan entrance. The copper Kalasa in the top of this Vimana was dedicated in the name of Rajaraja. The images of Rajaraja and his queen were installed at the entrance of the temple. A compound wall was constructed around the temple for its protection. Kuruvur Devar, the contemporary poet gave clear description of the temple in one of his poems.

Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple

Another important historical and religious monument famous for Chola architectural beauty was the Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple. Within twenty years of the completion of the great Tanjore temple, the Gangaikondacholapuram temple was built. It was planned on a grand scale than that of the Brihadisvara temple at Tanjore. Rajendra I, donated a huge amount for the construction of his temple. It is rectangular in shape with 340 feet long and 100 feet wide. The mandapas of this temple was 175 feet in length and 95 feet in breadth. It had 40 pillars for its support. The strong compound wall around the temple, protected the temple. This temple was more beautiful than the temple at Tanjore. This fully matured attractive temple was the masterpiece of the Chola art. Ponneri, the water reservoir constructed about 3 K.M. to the west of the temple supplies water to it. The required fire works for the temple festivals were collected from vanadipattam, a village situated 1.5 K.M. to the south of the temple. Like Tanjore temple, Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple was also a landmark in the history of Indian architecture.

Temples of later period

The temples of later period were constructed between 1070 A.D - 1250 A.D. During this period, the Chola rulers constructed numerous temples. Most of the temples of this period were small and resembled one another. In 1113 A.D. Kulottunga, I constructed Amirtaghatesvara temple at Melekkadambur in the shape of a chariot with two wheels on each side. He also constructed a temple to the sun god in Tanjore district. This suriyankoil was named as Koluttungachola Marttandalayattu Suryadevar. Vikrama Chola, who ruled in this period donated a considerable amount

to improve and beautify the Chidambaram temple. This temple was fully remodelled and completed by his successor, Kulottunga II.

Rajaraja II constructed the Siva temple at Tirupandal and Darasuram in Tanjore in the early half of the 12th century. The five storied Vimana in the Dharasuram temple gave more attraction to it. The Tirumandapam of this temple was shaped like chariot on wheels drawn by elephants. The scenes of Periyapuram were depicted attractively on the walls of the temples. Kulottunga III was the last great builder among the Chola monarchs. He constructed Kamahareswara temple at Tribhuvanam. The figures of Bharata natya accompanied by drummers and musicians, lions and elephants made this temple more unique. In short, the Dharasuram and Tribhuvanam temples preserved the characteristics of Chola style of architecture.

The temples constructed during the Chola period acted as a source of religious inspiration for the people. The art developed in this period had great influence of other countries especially on the Hindu states of Indo China and Far east. The active trade relation of the Cholas with these countries enabled the migration of this art.

Palaces

The palaces constructed by the Chola rulers highlighted the development of art and architecture of this period. The Chola rulers lived luxuriously in the Palaces. The palace in the capital was given much importance. They also possessed additional palaces at Pazhayarai, Chidambaram and Kanchi for the convenience of administration. The palace of Rajendra I was constructed at Olkottai in Gangaikonda Cholapuram on a grand scale. It was constructed on a mount. The mount was called a Maligaimedu or palace mount. The compound walls around the palaces gave protection to them. The palaces were provided with all facilities, including the Chitrakudam, the Anthapuram, etc. The walls of the palaces were decorated grandly with sculptures, painting and with pictures of animals and birds. A few of the palaces were in good condition.

sculpture

The temples and palaces of the Cholas were decorated with sculpture made up of stone, iron, bronze and gold. The sculptures in the temples and the sculptures kept preserved in the museums of London, Paris, Madras and Amsterdam were best examples for the study of iconography of this period. The sculptures moulded the sculptures of gods, Goddesses, saints, people, birds, dancing figures puranic stories and animals in an attractive and typical form by using stones and metals. Most of the sculpture in Pullamangai temple and the Nataraja sculpture in the Chidambaram temple were noteworthy. In the Vasihlava temple, the sculpture of Dakshinamurti in Korankanatha temple, the Durka sculpture in Pullamangal temple and the Nataraja sculpture in the Chidambaram temple were noteworthy. In the Vasihlava temple, The sculpture of Thirumal was portrayed in three different styles. Moreover, the sculpture of Kings and queens were also placed in the temple. For example, the images of Rajaraja I and his wife were placed in the entrance of Tanjore temple. Numerous sculptures in the Tanjore temple were decorative in nature. Among them, the bronze sculpture was popular. The Tanjore inscription also described the technical details of the bronze sculptures, representing the stories of the lives of 63 Nayanmars, Sculptures on the Darasuram temple depicted stories from Periyapranam. The Siva temple at Thiruvallisvaram in Tirunelveli district contained magnificent sculptures of Siva in his various forms. The Nataraja image in its various forms naturally holds the first place among the Chola bronzes. The bronze sculptures of this type are not only spread over the museums of the world, but are still under worship in the live temples of South India.

Painting

Like all other forms of Chola art, the Chola painting was also a continuation and development of the Pallavas and Pandyas. The artists of the period selected black, Yellow, brown, red, blue, green yellowish and light blue coloured paints to beautify the temples, palaces and other buildings. The temples located at Tanjore, Nattamalai, Malayadippatti, Thirumayam, Mamandur and Chittannavasai were decorated with attractive paintings. Most of the paintings in the temples had religious

background. Certain pictures of the scene in Periyapuram, Thiruthondarpuram were portrayed beautifully on the walls of the Tanjore temple. The marriage scene of Sundarar was very attractive. The paintings of dancing girls and Devakanniyar revealed the social life, custom, ornamentation, religion, culture and civilization of the people.

Music

Music is closely associated with song, dance and expression. The sacred hymns were considered as sacred music. The rulers and the high caste people encouraged and enjoyed drama, kutta (dance) etc. The musicians used drums, Flute, fiddle etc., as music instruments Yal and Veena were also used. In the temples, the songs of the Alvar and Nayanmars were sung systematically. The songs induced bhakti among the people. Almost all the temples possessed beautiful sculptures of musicians with their instruments. Music had great appeal among the people.

Dance

The Chola temples patronised dance. The dancing girls or devadasis appointed in the temple danced before the deities. They also danced in the mandapas of the temples. They performed Tamilkuttu, Aryakkuttu, Sakkakuttu on important occasions. Separate dance theatres were maintained on important temples. The rulers and the ruled patronised them by giving donations and presentations. The dancing figures were also carved out in the temples.

Drama

Drama was another popular art. The dramas were acted in Natakasalai or drama theatre. The Thiruvudimaruvoor inscription mentioned the existence of drama theatre in the Cholas kingdom. The drama theatres possessed all facilities, Rajarajavijayam and Rajareajesvara Natakam were the important dramas acted in big temples during the reign of Rajaraja I. Stories of Nayanaman and Alvars were also staged. The heroic and religious dramas had encouragement among the public. Thus encouragement given to the development of Sculpture, painting, music, drama and dance determined the development of art and architecture of the Chola period.

Socio Economic

Agriculture, industry, trade and commerce determined the economic condition of the Chola period. Chola rulers bestowed special attention to the economic development of the state. But the Kingdom achieved slow progress in these sectors due to peculiar geographic conditions, economic stagnancy lack of technical skill and nature calamities.

Agriculture

Agriculture was the largest sector of economic activity in the Chola kingdom. The system of cultivation of the Cholas varied with the Physical features of the country. As the vast majority of the people in the state depended on agriculture, the state paid special attention to its development. The state encouraged agriculture by providing adequate irrigational facilities.

Water Supply

Most of the agriculturists of the Cholanadu depended on monsoon for cultivation. But the water from the rainfall was inadequate to meet the requirements. Moreover, the monsoons betrayed the people frequently. Hence, provisions were made to construct channels, to utilise the water from the natural streams. For example, water from the Kaviri river was brought to the ruler areas by constructing channels. Moreover, the Chola rulers paid special attention to construct tanks. the Chola inscription mentioned the construction and maintenance of various tanks in the Chola kingdom. Among them, the Kaliyan eri near Anmalai in Madurai. Kallinagaikulam in Cholapuram, Vairmeghatatakamin Uttamerur. Big tank in Bahar, Rajendera Chola Periya eri in Punganur etc., were important. The local village assemblies maintained and regularised water supply of these tanks. In certain particular areas, bulls were also utilised to lift water from wells where the benefits of tanks had not reached. The above water supply systems enabled the agriculturists to intensify the cultivation. As a part of extensive cultivation, the state paid special attention to the reclamation of forest and waste land.

Land System

A typical land system existed in the Chola period. Broadly, the lands were divided into Vellan Vagai, Eleemosynary tenure and service tenure. The normal type of a tax paying village was the Vellan Vagai land. The agriculturists had hereditary right over these lands. They were known as Iraikudigal. Those who owned vast area of land were known Perumkudigal. they paid tax to the government. On certain occasions, these lands were converted into Brahmadeya or Devadhana lands. In these cases, the taxes were paid to the temples and not the government.

The land donated to the temples and Brahmins were called Eleemosynary tenure. Probably, the most fertile lands were assigned to them. These Brahmin settlements were known as Chaturvedimangalam, Brahmapuram, Agrahara and Bramadesam. The lands assigned to the temple were known as Devedhana lands. These lands were tax-free lands. On certain occasions a small amount known as Iri -ili -kasu was collected from these lands. Common people and slaves were utilised to cultivate these lands without giving any specific remuneration.

Lands were also assigned to the public as remuneration for their services. Service tenures were of various types. The lands assigned to the government servants for the services were called "Jivitham lands", "Bhogam lands", were given to Brahmins, Vaidyans and artisans for their services. Archana Bhogam lands were assigned to the Brahmins for conducting Pujas or Archanas in the temples. The lands donated to the physicians were known as vaidhya Bhogam. Nrita Bhogam mainly went to the artisans. Again, Vritti lands were exclusively donated to the Brahmins for their teaching in the temples. Lands were also allotted to dancers, singers and musicians. These lands were known as "Kani". "Puram". Lands were assigned to Sabhas and temples for charitable and cleaning purposes. Lands were also provided to the successors of the soldiers who lost their life in the battles. Such lands were called as "Patti" "Patti" lands were also assigned to the maintenance of tanks. Parru lands were given to the feudal lords for supplying soldiers to the ruler as the time of wars.

Methods of Land Tax Collection

As land tax was the main source of income to the state, the government paid special attention to its collection. To collect and tax effectively, lands were surveyed accurately and carefully. Patta was given to the peasants to confirm their right on lands. Based on the survey, lands were classified into more than twelve grades or taram. Taxes were assessed based on the fertility of the soil. For instance, during the reign of Rajaraja I 30 kalams of paddy per veli was collected as tax on fertile lands, whereas 28 kalams of Paddy was collected as tax from ordinary land. But the Tanjore inscription revealed that the revenue from agricultural lands was periodically reassessed, and the classification of the land was revised from time to time in accordance with changes in cropping, fertility etc. Generally, 1/6 of the total produce was collected as tax. On certain periods, the rate was increased. Rajaraja I collected 1/3 as tax due to heavy expenses on wars. He announced a royal award for the regular tax payers. Government appointed officials to collect tax. They even adopted oppressive measures to collect tax. People even sold their lands to remit their land tax. They also migrated to other places due to cruelty of taxes. Even women were also punished. An officer demanded some tax from a woman in the third regional year of Rajaraja II. When she denied her liability, the officer humiliated her. So she committed suicide by taking poison. The officer was punished to endow a lamp of 32 Kasus. The corrupt revenue officials were also punished severely.

Cattle Farming

As the development of agriculture was closely connected with live stocks, the Chola rulers bestowed special interest to protect them. A vast majority of agricultural lands were ploughed with the help of bullocks and buffalos. They provided the needed manure too. So, due importance was given to protect the live stocks in general and agricultural economy, in particular. The shepherds of the period maintained cattle forms.

Industry

The progress of a state largely depends on the growth of its industries. Hence, the government bestowed special interest to develop industries in the Chola Kingdom.

Most of the industries utilised the locally available raw materials and produced commodities needed for local markets. The highly organised mercantile corporations functioned in various parts of the country and they maintained brisk internal trade. When trade developed, much encouragement was given to the industrial sector.

Important industries

Metal Industries

In the Chola period, the metal industries had reached a high state of perfection. The rich people in society used various household articles made up of metals. Various types of the images of god and goddesses made up of bronze, copper and brass in the Tanjore and other temples, highlighted the development of the metal industries. Jewellery making was another attractive industry. The Jewellers produced varieties of attractive jewels and ornaments of gold and precious stones. The Tanjore inscription revealed that the Jeweller's art reached its high water mark under the Cholas. The Tanjore jewellers produced most attractive and pleasing ornament by using precious stones and pearls. The accumulation of wealth in the Chola temples in the form of Jewels revealed the development of Jewellery - making art in the society.

Salt

Salt preparation was another industry. The manufacture of salt was carried on under government supervision and control. The salt pans of Markanam, Kanayakumari, Variyur and Ayturai were among the most important centres of salt manufacture. It was a widespread industry all along the sea coast. On certain occasions the salt pans were destroyed due to sea erosion.

Industry Related to Court and Temple

In addition to the above industries, certain industries got royal recognition mainly to produce commodities pertaining to court and temples. The weavers of Kanchipuram were utilised to produce royal garments. During the reign of Uttama Chola, they were appointed to the management of the financial affair of the temple of Uragam in Kanchipuram. The weavers also looked after the management the temples and maintained temple accounts properly and submitted to monthly audit.

The agriculture and the industrial products had great demands in local and foreign markets.

Trade and commerce

The Chola rulers provided adequate facilities to improve trade and commerce. All the important trading centres and markets were linked with proper roads or paths. The roads or paths existed throughout the length and breadth of the state enabled the free flow of commodities and people. A well organised mercantile corporation in various parts of the country too boosted the trade and commerce at a considerable level.

Road System

As the state had very little scope for natural water - ways special attention was given to road transportation. The inscription of this period described the existence of roads in the state. The roads were known as Valis. The foot paths (Valis) in rural areas had only limited scope for wheeled traffic. These valis served to bring local commodities from village to the local markets. The village assemblies looked after the maintenance and repair of the valis. The Peru-Vali or the trunk road connected the various divisions of the country. Vadugapperu Vali or the great roads were the most significant of all roads. These roads had twenty four feet breadth and mainly used for military and trading purposes.

Inland Trade

The road system existed in the state enabled the free flow of commodities from one place to another. Carts were utilised to transport commodities. Markets were used for internal trade. All facilities were provided to the merchants in the markets. A particular commodity was sold only in the specific place. Punishments were given to those who violated this system. People exchanged commodities through barter system. The merchant moved from one place to another, in caravans due to the fear of robbers. Provisions were also made for keeping separate army to protect the merchant. The merchants were expected to tell truth in their business. Such truth-tellers were called Satyavachakas or Dharma Vaniyar. The merchants who had trade with other countries

around Tamilnadu known as Nanadadesi yat-tisai-ayirattam nurravar, Marinkira matter involved trade with coastal village and cities. Makarattar concentrated their trade at important cities. Traders from Tirunelveli were known as Valanjiyar. Anjvvanatta or Muhammadans concentrated their trade on Nagappattinam. The merchants were god fearing people and donated huge amounts to the constructions, maintenance and festivals of the temples. Due to shortage of fund, The agriculturists and the businessmen borrowed money from the local temples. The agriculturists even mortgaged their lands for this purpose. Pronote system also existed. As they had to pay considerable income as interest, it affected their future development.

Religion Condition

The temple and the Matha were the two great gifts of mediaeval Hinduism to South India. These two institutions expanded gradually and consolidated their position in Tamilnadu. To a large scale, religion and temple controlled and regularised the activities of the people. The Chola period witnessed the growth of Saivism and Vaishnavism, the two branches of Hinduism and the development various religious philosophies.

Saivism

The Chola period was the age of South Indian Saivism and Vaishnavism. The Chola rulers patronised Saivism and constructed a number of Temples. Most of these temples were dedicated to Siva. The queens of the royal family also showed keen interest towards Hinduism. They even constructed temples and granted endowments. The contribution of Sembian Mahadevi, Vanavam Mahadevi etc., to Saivism was noteworthy.

Likewise, the Saiva saints Nayanmars dedicated their life to Saivism. To pay homage to them, their images were installed and worshipped in most of the Siva temples. Festivals were even conducted in their names. Their images were also taken in procession of festival days. In the name of Nayanmars, Mathas were also established at important places like Kanchi, Valivalam and Thiruvaligai. The hymns of the saints were sung in the temples. As the hymns were written in the language of common people it penetrated into their without much strain.

The Saivites of Tamilnadu maintained cordial relation with the saivites of North India. It enabled them to intensify religious activities in the Chola kingdom. The saiva saint Nambiyandar Nambi, the contemporary of Rajaraja I and Rajendra I compiled the twelve Thirumaris of Saivism. Again, Saivasiddhanta Philosophies developed on the principles of Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Mainikkavasagar. Saints who belonged to changarachariyar groups, interpreted the philosophies of this religion for the convenient understanding of the people. Among them meykandar. Arul Nthi maraiganar and Umapathy were important. References were also made to siva followers like Kapalika and Kalamukar.

Vaishnavism

Vaishnavism and Saivism were the two eyes of Hinduism. But in the chola period equal treatment was not given to Saivism. It had only limited temples. Still, this religion flourished due to the dedication of certain saints and scholars. Among them, Nadamuni was noteworthy. Vaishnavism faced various vicissitudes of fortune under Cholas.

Nadamuni

The Vaishnavites, who worshipped Thirumal, were known as Achchariyas. They preached the vaishnaa principles by singing songs in temples madams and even vaishnavism houses. The important contribution of Nadamuni to Vaishnavism was that he compiled Nalayira-Divya Pranandam. It was sung in the Vaishnava temples. He stayed in Sirangam and derived Niyayathuva philosophy. His ideas deriated the Vaishnavites from the main stream and had great appeal in the Hindu society. The new branch established by him was known as Srivaishnavism

Yamunachariyar

His successor was Yamunachariyar. He had a deep involvement in Vaishnavism and defeated a scholar in the court of the Chola King, so the King honoured him with a title Alavanthar. He evolved the famous Visista Advaita philosophy.

Ramanuja

Vaishnavism face difficulties at the time of Ramanuja. He was born 1010 A.D. at Sriperumbudur in Chingleput District. While staying at Kanchi, he adopted the Advitha Philosophy of Sankara. It failed to console his mind. He wrote a number of religious works, when he was in Srirangam. Famous among them, were Vethands Saram, Vethands Camkirahm and Vethantha Deepam. He, also interpreted Brahmasuddiram and Bhahavathgita. He vehemently adopted the revolutionary Visista Advitha Philosophy. He attracted common people through his revolutionary philosophies. He opened the gates of the Hindu temples to the untouchables and made radical religious changes. Adirajendra condemned his activities and punished him severely. Finally, he was persecuted during the reign of Kulottunga I as he exceeded the limits. Thus, he became a martyr to his faith.

Vadakalai and Tenkalai Sects

After Ramanuja, there arose a schism among the followers of the Visista Advith Philosophy of Vaishnavism. they were known as Vadakali and Tenkalai based on their differences in language, region and doctrine. the founder of the vadakalai sect was Vedantadesika. He composed 95 works in Sanskrit and 25 in Tamil. It contained the Vadakalai doctrines of Vaishnavis. Kanchipuram became the head quarters of the Vadakalai sect. The followers of the vaddakalai sect emphasised the caste distinction and the superiority of the Brahmins over other castes. the Vadakalai Vaishnavas adorned their preheads with a particular form of naman and used to ring bells while doing worship

The leader of the Tenkalai sect was Manavala Mahamuni. he was born in 1370 A.D. He constructed a hall of discussion called Tirumalai Alvar mandapa, mainly to preach Tenkalai doctrine. Srirangam was the head-quarters of the Tenkalai sect. They maintained the equality of Bahmins and non Brahmins before god. The mamam of the Tenkalaiyar was different from that of Vatakaliyar. They avoided ringing of bells at the time of worship. The followers of both the sects were found throughout South India.

Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy

Meykandar, Arulnandi, Umapati and Manavasagam were prominent in evolving the Siva Siddhanta Philosophy.

Meykandar was the son of one Achyuta Kalappala of Pennadam in South Arcot district. he was the a student of Paranjothi and learnt the essentials of Saiva Siddhanta. He was called as Meykandar. His masterpiece was Sivagnanabodham. He belonged to the period of Rajaraj III.

Arulnandi was a native of Tirutturaiyur near Villupuram. He was a student of Meykandar. He was the author of Unmaivilakkam. The next Saiva Siddhanta philosophers were manavasagam and Umapathi. The Saiva Siddhanta Philosophical system was based on the three essential fundamental of Pali, Pasu (soul and Pasam.

Vira Saivism

Vira Saivism had its origin in the Karnataka region. Then it spread to Andhara and Tamilnadu reigons. They worshipped Siva in the form of Linga and rejected the authority of the Vedas. They had no faith in the doctrine of rebirth. They opposed child marriage and recognise the remarriage of windows. it stood against the interest of the Brahmins. This religio philosophical movement became popular at the expense of Jainsim and Buddhism in the Kannada region. It also led to the enrichment of Kannada literature.

Saiva-vaishnava Conflict

The Saiva and Vaishna relations were cordial in the early part of Chola history. In certain places, the Saiva and Vaishnava temples were constructed very closely. We can see this at Chidambaram. Again, the habit of installing the Vaishnava image in Siva temples and Siva images in Vaishnava temple was common tration in the Chola period. Likewise, the storeis of Devarms, Thiruvagasam and Nalayiradivya Prabandam were depicted in all vaishnava and Siva temples. These instances revealed that religious toleration existed among them.

But later, these religions abused each other acted as enemies.Each religion reacted strongly to the other. During the reign of Vikrama Chola, he removed the idol

of Govindaraja for Nadaraja in Childambaram temple. This was extended even in other temples located at Tirumaiyan, Pudukkottai, etc. the Vaishnava and Siva saints also quarrelled each other in certain places. Due to dispute the temples in certain places were suspended. Savites were instructed not to mingle with Vaishnavites in certain places. Severe punishments were given to those who violated this instruction. With view to maintaining discipline in the state, the government adopted severe measures. The revolutionaries were persecuted and other were driven out of the kingdom. Still then, the Cholas rulers never forgot to extend their assistance to the Vaishnava temples.

The Madams

Besides the temples, the Chola rulers erected madams through out the country for religious purposes. Religious meeting and conference were held in madams. Madams were also used for educational purposes. They taught grammar, medicine and religion. They provided food for the Brahmins and saints. Like temples madams also possessed landed endowments. On certain occasions, it supplied salt, drinking water and light freely to the travellers. Medical assistance was given to the patients.

Buddhism and Jainism

The revival in Hinduism caused the decline of Jainism and Buddhism in Tamilnadu. The Chola rulers paid equal treatment to all religions. The inscription of this period showed the donations of the Chola rulers to the Jain temples. Though Buddhism and Jainism declined, they maintained their control in certain centres in Tamilnadu. The Nagamman temple at Nagercoil was a Jain centre till 11th century. At Tanjore, a Jain shrine was constructed with the assistance of Kulottunga I generally, the Chola rulers never adopted negative attitude against the Jains. But in certain places Jain areas were converted into Hindu centres. Even at the time of its decline Jainism rendered meritorious services to the growth of Tamil language. Thiruthakkadevar was a Jain who composed Sivaga Chindamani. Perumkathai also belonged to this period. Unlike Jainism, Buddhism declined rapidly in this period. Though it declined, its contribution to Tamil literature and society cannot be underestimated.

Ammankoilis

Amman worship was not a new innovation of the Chola period. The Tamils were very familiar with ammal since the sangam period. It was revived in the Chola period and they constructed a number of temples known as Thirukamakottam for this deity. The habit of constructing temples for this deity became popular since Rajaraja I. Separate places were provided for Amman in Siva and Vasihna temples in Tamil Nadu. People worshipped this deity to get protection from evils.

Vinayaka Worship

Vainayaka was new to Tamils. It was not found in the list of gods of Dravidians. The Aryans who invaded the Tamils also disliked it. It was introduced into TamilNadu during the reign of Narasimhavarman I, the Pallava. He brought this deity from Vatapi as a monument to his success in the war against Pulakesin II. Vinayaka was not permitted in any of the temples in Tamilnadu till the reign of Rajasimha. Since then, it was given due importance in Hindu temples. The temples at Pangakudi, thruppanthalur and Thirukkattalai gave importance to this deity by providing separate place to it. Now it is a popular deity in Tamilnadu.

Navagraha Worship

Navagraha worship became prominent in Tamilnadu during the Chola period. The Chola rulers had the practice of conducting festivals on their birthdays. In similar manner, the Navagraha worship was also practised in the Chola kingdom. When it became popular, separate temples were constructed for the worship of sun. Kulottunga I provided facilities for the arrangements of a festival of this deity. Provisions were also made to conduct festivals at the time of solar eclipse. This Chola period witnessed the Domination of various religions in Tamilnadu.

Unit - IV

Pandyas of the Second Empire

The Pandyas occupied a subordinate position and paid tribute to the Cholas till the end of the rule of Kulottunga III in 1218. The Pandya power was revived during the beginning of the 13th century. They threw off the Chola yoke and proclaimed their independence. Inscriptions were the main source of information for the study of “the age of the second Pandyan empire” Literary evidences and foreign account of Pandyas were also scanty and they supplied not much information about this period.

Jatavarman Kulasekhara I (1190 1215 A.D.)

Jatavarman Julasekhara, the son of Vikrama Pandya revived the Pandyan dynasty and authority. He remained a feudatory to Kulottunga III. He ruled over Madurai, Ramnad, Thirunelveli and Knayakumari areas. Just before his death, he nominated Maraavarman Sundara Pandya as the crown - prince.

Maravarman Sundara Pandya I (1216 - 1238 A.D.)

He was the second ruler of the second Pandyan empire. He was ambitious and competent. He was the contemporary of the Chola King Rajaraja III. He invaded the Chola country in 1219 and defeated Rajaraja III and annexed a part of Chola Kingdom. To commemorate this victory, he assumed the title “Chonadukondarulia”.

The rise of Hoysala power in the north of the Tamil country was another important event of this period. They had matrimonial alliance with the Cholas. So they wanted to help Cholas by defeating the Pandyas. Hoysala ruler Vira Narasimha helped Cholas against the Pandyas. As Rajaraja II failed to pay the tribute, Cholamandalam was invaded by Sundara Pandya in 1231 and he annexed Trichi and Pudukottai regions. Sundara Pandya also entered Kongudesam and annexed certain portions.

Jatavarman Kulasekhara II (1238 A.D.)

Maravarman Sundara Pandya I was succeeded by Jatavarman Kulasekhara II. In the opinion of Milakanata Sastri, “he might have been the crown prince towards the closing years of Maravarman Sundara Pandya I and might have predeceased (died - before) him”.

Matavarman Sundara Pandya II (1238 - 1257)

After the death of Jatavarman , his brother Maravarman Sundara Pandya II ascended the throne. Sundara Pandya II kept his empire intact and maintained friendly relations with the Hoysalas. His Chola contemporary was Rajendra III. He invaded Pandya country and compelled Sundara Pandya to pay tribute. But due to the intervention of Hoysala Virasomeswara the Pandyan king was restored to power.

Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (1257 - 1268 A.D.)

The Successor of Maravarman was Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I. He was the most distinguished member of the later Pandyas. The pandyan kingdom reached its zenith during his rule. This empire extended from Nellore to Cudappah districts in the north. He assumed the title “Emmandalamum Kondarulia”.

His first achievements was that he defeated the Chera King. Then he defeated the Chola and Compelled Rajaraja III to pay the tribute. He also defeated Hoysalas and capture their stronghold Kannaur - Koppam. Next, he invaded Ceylon and compelled its ruler to pay tribute. A large number of elephants and horses and pearls were taken. Then he attacked the stray fortress of Sendamangalms and its ruler Kadavakopperunjinga became his subordinate. Then he defeated Banas and Kongu ruler. The Telugu Chola chieftain, Gandagopala was defeated and killed. Kanchi was occupied. the invasion of Ceylon was his next achievement. He gave endowments to the famous Hindu Temple at Chidambaram and Sriangam. He beautified it with the treasures he got from his wars. The Shrines of the above temples were provided with golden roof. Hence, he was known as ‘Kovil Ponveynta Perumal’. He also gave endowments to several Jain shrines. Jatavarmam Sundara Pandya I may be considered the greatest among the Pandyas of the second empire on the basis of these conquests.

Maravarman Kulasekhara I (1268 - 1310 A.D.)

Matavarman Kulasekhara I was the last great Pandya ruler. he enlarged his kingdom by conquering Kollam and Ceylon. He assumed the title Kollamkonda after conquering Quilon from Cheras. His invasion of Ceylon was destructive in nature. It was during his period that the Venetian traveller Marcopolo and the Muslim historian Wassaf visited the Pandyan kingdom. They left behind valuable accounts. They helped to understand the political and social conditions.

The power of the Pandyas began to decline after the death of Maravarman Kulasekhara Pandya I. The last days of Kulasekhara. I were clouded with unpleasant events. He had two sons. The elder son Sundara Pandya was a legitimate son. The younger son Virapandya was a son of a mistress of the king. So he was illegitimate. A war of succession started between the two sons. But Kulasekhara arranged for the succession of Virapandya. So the rightful heir Sundara Pandya assassinated his father, drove his brother from Madurai and ascended the throne. Taking advantage of the rift in the royal family, Malikkafur, the general of Al-uddin Khilji invaded Madurai in 1311. The civil war and Muslim invasion greatly undermined the Pandya prestige and power. Finally, the Pandyan empire was incorporated with the Vijayanagar Empire in the 3rd quarter of the 14th century.

Administration and Social life Contribution to Art and Architecture

Economic Condition

Agriculture, industry, trade and commerce determined the economic development of the Pandya period. The state provided adequate facilities to improve irrigation. The industries which existed in the Pandya period were traditional. trade and commerce also flourished during this period.

Agriculture

Agriculture was the main occupation of the people. Majority of the people lived on agriculture. Vaigai and Tambarabarani rivers gave fertility to the soil. As the waters of these rivers were in adequate to irrigation, the state constructed a number of tanks to shore the water at the time of monsoon. The lands utilised for cultivation were

divided into three. The lands cultivated traditionally by the people were called Vellan Vagai lands. These lands were directly controlled the people. Tax was collected from these lands. People remitted tax regularly to the government. The lands granted to the Brahmin and temples were called Brahmadeyam and Devadhanam lands. These lands were the most fertile. It possessed all facilities. Taxes were not collected from these lands. Lands were also given to the people for their service in the villages. Soldiers were given lands as remuneration for their service in the army. Besides these Bhogam, Virichi and Kani lands were given to certain sections of the people.

The state provided adequate facilities to improve irrigation Tanks and channels were constructed. The copper plates of this period mentioned that the people belonged to Ur and Sabha also constructed tanks and lakes with the assistance of government officials and the ruler. The Erivariyam constituted in the village looked after the tanks and lakes. They depended and cleared them periodically. They also regularised the supply of water. To extend the area of cultivation barren lands were also reclaimed and brought under cultivation.

Industry

Industries also flourished during this period. Most of the industries of this period were traditional in character. Spinning and weaving were important industries. Women were engaged in these industries. People used to spin thread from cotton. These industries flourished in Madurai and other important cities. The silk and pattu garments produced in Tamilnadu had great demand in foreign countries. The Kaikolars were involved in weaving. They paid taxes like tari irai and panchu peeli to the government.

Oil was in great demand in those days. It was utilised in temples and army. Oil was also used to prepare medicine. Oil manufacturing was a cottage industry. Chekku was used to manufacture oil.

Fishing, pearl fishing, conch shells cutting and salt manufacturing were common industries in the coastal areas. Fish was commonly used by all the people except Brahmins. Pearl fishing was an attractive industry. The pearls produced in Pandya kingdom were exported to foreign countries. Marcopolo gave a clear account

of the pearl fishing in the coastal area. Bangles were prepared out of conch shells. The archaeological department discovered a number of bangles of conch shells at Korkai. Salt manufacturing was another important industry in the coastal areas. The Paradeva community concentrated more on this industry. Government controlled this industry.

Ornament making was an attractive industry. Goldsmiths were in great demand in society. They made various types of attractive ornaments for kings, queen, and rich people. Blacksmith made war weapons, household articles and agricultural items. Almost all the villages contained these industries. Carpentry was another industry. It was utilised to construct places, temples, houses and to manufacture household articles. Pottery making was also an industry. The manufactured potteries were sold in the local markets. The sculptor made sculptures. They were used to decorate temples, places and houses. The sculptures of the gods were placed in temples. People used to worship them. Thus, local industries produced commodities required for the local population. Most of these articles were sold in the local markets.

Development of Trade

Both inland and foreign trade flourished during this period. The agricultural and industrial commodities manufactured in the rural area were sold in the markets. Barter system prevailed in the local markets. Coins were also used. Gold coins were used for foreign trade.

Certain commodities produced in Pandya kingdom had great demand in foreign countries. The trade guilds existed in the country promoted foreign trade. The merchants involved in foreign trade were Nanadesikan and Nangarathar. They maintained trade relations with South East Asian Countries like Malaya, Sumatra, Java Srilanka and other countries.

Harbours and ships were used for foreign trade. The harbours were provided with all facilities. Ship building was common. Much protection was given to the merchants. Kayal port was a famous harbour in Pandya Kingdom. Commodities were imported and exported through this harbour. Ornaments, spices garments, sandal, gums, pearls, etc. were exported for foreign countries. Among the commodities imported horses were given much importance. Arabian merchants imported horses

from Arabia and sold to the emperor. The Pandya ruler Kulasekhara maintained cordial relations with the Chinese ruler Kublekhan. He sent an emissary in 1281 A.D. to China, for trade agreements. Thus foreign trade flourished during the reign of the Pandyas.

Social Condition

Position of the Brahmins

Social conditions of the Chola period continued to exist in the Pandya kingdom too. The Pandyan ruler granted various privileges and concessions to the Brahmins. They occupied an important place in society. They settled in separate places. They were known as caturvedimangalam and Agraharams. The Dalavoyppuram and Velvikkudi copper plates mentioned the new colonies which were assigned to the Brahmins. The ruler assigned lands to the Brahmins mainly to promote them. The Pandyan ruler Maravaman Kulasekhara I granted a village to 138 Brahmins. It was called Avaruvedacadurvedimangalam. The Pandyan ruler Parantaka Viranarayana also granted Brahmadana land to the Brahmin consisting of two villages namely Thirumangalam and Somacikurichi. In 1267 A.D. Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I granted a Cadurvelimangalam to one hundred and twenty one vedics. Like the rulers, the queen also granted lands to the Brahmins. The lands donated by the Pandyan queens were called Avani Muludutiaya Cadurvedimangalam, Kothandaraman Cadurvedimangalam et. The Brahmin occupied an important position during the reign of the Pandyas.

Condition of the farmers

Farmers were the Vellalas. The inscription mentioned them as sons of the soil. They had their own organisation. It was called Chitrameliperinnattar. Cultivation of the soil was their main occupation. Besides cultivation, they hold higher positions in the court as well as in the army. They earned the goodwill and sympathy of the Pandyan rulers.

Cowherds

The cowherds of this period did not hold any high position in the state. They had respect among the people. They were religious and cultured. They even maintained the endowments of the temple. They worshipped Lord Krishna and Balarama. Ayar women performed fasting during the month of Margali. During this month they never took milk and ghee. They used to take bath early in the morning.

Nagarathar

The merchant community of this period was called Chetiar or nagarathar. Their main profession was trade. They were involved in import and export. They had trade contacts in all directions. Hence, They were called Nanadesikar. They lived in groups in separate streets. These streets were called Nanadesikar street or Ainuruvar street. Sometimes they were settled in the whole of a village. Records mentioned that they purchased the Rajasekarapuram village and settled there. There were various types to Nagarathars. They settled themselves in different parts of Tamilnadu. Artisans like blacksmith, goldsmith, carpenter, coppersmith, sculptor also lived in the society.

Right and Left hand Divisions

The Valankai and Idankai divisions which existed in the Chola period also prevailed in the Pandyan Kingdom. The rupture between the two divisions continued as in the Chola period. (For detail see the Chola history).

Account of Marco - Polo

Marco - Polo, the Venician traveller, gave a clear account of socio - economic life of the people of the Pandyan Kingdom. When Marco - Polo visited Tamilnadu, the Pandyan kingdom was ruled by Maravarman Kulasekhara Pandya I (1268 - 1310). Though he was born in Venice, he served twelve years under the Chinese ruler Kubekhan. The Chinese ruler Kubekhan gave his daughter in marriage to the Persian ruler. Marco - Polo started his journey with the bride to Persia from the capital of China in the year 1292 A.D. On his way to Persia, he halted at Ceylon and toured the Tamil Country. He mentioned certain important features of the people which existed in the Tamil soil.

Pearl fishing

Pearl fishing was an important industry of the Tamils. Macro - Polo in his account elaborately mentioned pearl-fishing. It began in April and continued till 15th of May. Both big and small pearls were available in the Pandyan Kingdom. At the time of pearl fishing, the first 10th parts were given to the ruler as his share. The eleventh part was given to the magicians. They used to chant mantras to protect them from danger. The rest went to the concerned party, who were involved in pearl fishing. These pearls were exported to different parts of the world. The rulers of Tamilnadu accumulates weath due to this trade. The pearls from the Pandyan Kingdom had great demand in foreign countries.

Horse -Trading

Macro - Polo clearly mentioned the horse trade which existed in the Pandyan kingdom. Tamil people never tried to grow horse because they did not know how to feed the horses. So they imported horses from other countries. They imported nearly two thousand horses every year. They were not familiar to the Tamil people. Lack of knowledge to deal with the horses, made them useless and stupid. Therefore, they used to import more horse every year. These horses played an important role in the cavalry of the Tamil army.

Dress and ornaments

Macro-Polo mentioned that the Mabar province had no tailors, because the people lived naked. The people covered certain portions of their body with the help of a small piece of cloth. The king also used a piece of cloth to cover the middle portion of his body. He said that the soldiers went to the battle field naked. They used armour, Vel and spear. Both men and women used ornaments. They decorated their body with ornaments. The King used to wear ornaments made up of gold, gem and pearls. Common people decorated their bodies with ornament made up of copper, iron and broken glasses.

Wives of the King

The palaces contained a fine harem. It had the wives of the King. The King approximately had five hundred wives. If there was a beautiful girl in the country, he used to make her his wife. When the king died, they also immolated themselves. The nobles who served under the king also died along with the ruler. They died with him to serve him after death.

Accumulation of Wealth

The Pandyan kingdom was noted for its accumulation of wealth. The temples of this period contained wealth in various forms. Due to the flourishing trade, the wealth from foreign countries poured into Tamilnadu. Moreover, when the king died, none of his children depended upon his wealth. Likewise the people who completed thirteen years of age started self-earning. They never depended upon the property of their parents. Hence, the wealth accumulated in the Tamil country was in abundance. This accumulated wealth attracted the attention of the foreign invaders in the later period.

Crime and Punishment

Severe punishments were given to culprits. The person who was sentenced to death by the government was given the option to present his life voluntarily to any god. Such a person was taken in procession by his friends and relatives. He was directed to make wounds with the help of twelve knives till his death. His body was cremated happily. After the death of the husband, his wife committed sati. Such ladies received great appreciation.

Certain customs of the people

People knew image worship. A group of people worshipped buffalo. In the Pandyan kingdom all the people, including the king used to sit on the floor. The people of this soil cultivated rice and not wheat. They washed their body twice a day. People used their right hands for good purposes. They never used to drink water using their lips. They used separate vessels for drinking water. Most of the people used to sleep in the streets. They prohibited toddy. The people who prepared toddy were not respected

in society. They also never accepted the statement of the drunkards. The illegal contact with a lady was considered a sin.

Astrology

People believed in astrology. They knew Samudrika. They assessed the character of a man by looking his body structure. They believed in Sakunam. If a child was born, they noted the Jadagam. People used to start their work after getting advice from the Jothidar.

Climate

Normally, the climate of Tamilnadu was hot. Some time the sun was severely hot. Rainfall started in June, continued till August,

Role of Devadasis

Marco-Polo also mentioned the worship in temple, the role of Devadasis, the method of worship and the purpose of worship. The devadasis were dedicated to the temple by their parents. They dance in front of the idols and satisfied the feelings of the Brahmin in the temples. People believed the male gods mingled with the female gods frequently. Marco-Polo also mentioned certain other customs adopted by the people. The account given by him was useful to know the social life of the people of Tamilnadu.

Impact of Muslim Rule

Till 14th century, Tamil had no cultural contact with north India. The people of Tamil Nadu were closely associated with Dravidian civilization, They dislike the culture of Muslims. They considered Muslims as their enemies. But in due course, two different types of civilization and culture came into close contact with each other. The close associations of these groups led to the emergence of Tamil Muslim community in due course. The Hindu and Muslim saints played a vital role to unit these enmical communities.

The rulers of Tamilnadu gave importance to luxurious life. They led princely life and possessed attractive courts. They spent huge amounts to make the ceremonies

more colourful. The Muslims who led simple life, later followed practices from the Hindu rulers.

As a result of the mingling of the Hindu-Muslim civilization the Muslims adopted many Hindu customs of daily routine life such as dress, daily bathing system, festivals and ceremonies etc. Likewise the Mohammadan dress and caremonies became a fashion in the Hindu society.

The arrival of Muslims completely spoiled the purity which existed in the Hindu society. As the Muslims were fond of sexual life they utilised the Hindu ladies for the sexual satisfaction. So the Hindus considered the birth of a girl as an inauspicious event. The losing of chastity at the hands of the Muslims became the order of the day. It affected the Hindu society to a larger extent.

Before the conquest of Muslims, caste system played a vital role in Tamilnadu. Brahmins were considered as the most privileged and highcaste in the society. They treated others as unprivileged. But after the arrival of Muslims, the position of Brahmins gradually diminished. The reduced status of Brahmins lightened the caste system in Tamil society. Moreover, the Muslims considered the Hindus as slaves.

The Muslims were more concerned about their religion. Like Christians, Muslims also gave due attention to spread their faith. They forcibly converted Hindus into Islamic religions. Temples were also neglected. The number of mosques increased. So with a view to reviving Hindusim, a religious movement was started against Islamic religion.

The Muslims rulers adopted certain administrative system from Hindu rulers. The revenue department which functioned effectively during the Hindu peirod, was adopted fully by the Muslim administrators. The system of maintenance of finance of the Hindus was also followed during the Muslim administration.

The religious, social adn cultural barriers were also removed as a result of the invasion Muslims. It enebled the Tamils to mingle freely with the people outside Tamilnadu.

Muslims during their administration prohibited the sale and use of wine. The Hindu nobles found it difficult to give up drinking. Hence, they protested against this policy. So the nobles were permitted to drink wine only in their houses. But, the sale of wine to the public was strictly restricted. Again, nobles were not permitted to organise social parties and arrange marriages without the prior permission of the ruler. It curtailed the freedom of the nobles.

The purda system unknown to the Hindus was introduced elaborately into the Hindu society. It was also strictly enforced in the royal harems of the Hindu rulers. It aggravated the situation.

The religious restrictions imposed by the Muslims wounded the feelings of the Hindus. They often plundered and looted the wealth. The concessions enjoyed by the Hindus were curtailed. The traditional properties of the Hindu were confiscated without their consent. Moreover, the Hindu gods were humiliated. The Hindus who stood against these, were massacred. The men were impaled on stakes, the women were strangled and tied to the stakes by the hair. The infants were butchered on the breasts of their mothers. Thus the attitude towards the Hindus was severe and cruel.

Irrigation works were in ruins. The coconut trees of Madurai had been cut down and in their places sullas (Iron tridents) were created with garlands of human heads. Thus the treatment meted out to the Hindus was very harsh.

The policy of over taxation wounded the minds of the natives. Fifty percent of the land revenue was collected as tax. Moreover, new taxes such as Jizya, income tax, house tax customs and excise taxes were imposed on the people. Even the wealthy Hindu revenue collectors and the village heads were not spared from the repressive measures of the rulers.

Thus the Muslim rule was considered as “dark age”, due to the decline of classical Hindu culture and facilitation of socio-Political disintegration. The pent up feelings of the Hindu found expression in a number of revolts against the authority of the sultans. The failure to maintain Hindu Muslim unity led to the formation of Vijayanagar empire in 1336 A.D.

Unit - V

Founding of Vijayanagar Empire

To recover Tamilnadu from the cruel yolk of Muslims, the Vijayanagar empire was founded. It was founded on the advice of the Hindu saint Vidyaranya on the banks of the river Tungabhatra very near to Chirunkerimadam in 1336. Chirunkerimadam was one among the six madams founded by Adhi Sankarachariyar. When the empire was founded. Vidyaranya served as its head. Thus prevailed close contacts between Vijayanagar empire and hindu religion.

The Vijayanagar empire founded in 1336 flourished in South India upto 1565, till its, decline in the battle of Talikota. The historically important Vijayanagar empire was ruled by the rulers of Sangma, Saluva, Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties. Among them the rulers of Sangama and Tuluva dynasties were prominent. The empire flourished during their administration.

Expedition of Harihara to Tamilnadu

Harihara was the first great ruler of the Sangama dynasty . He ruled only a portion of Telugu and kannada territories. The Vijayanagar empire was expanded during his reign. He annexed certain portion of Hoysala and Kadamba Kingdoms with his empire. They the Vijayanagar army invaded Tamilnadu. Scholars viewed that this expedition took place between 1336 and 1346. The inscriptional and numismatics evidences belonged to this period confirmed the views of the scholars. When Qurbat hasan Kangu ruled Madurai, Vijayanagar invaded Tamilnadu. He was an autocratic ruler. The aim of the invasion was to protect the people from his autocratic tute. To visualise his aims, he sent his brother Bukka I to Tamilnadu with an army. The army defeated the Madurai Sultan and enforced law and order in Tamilnadu for a short period. Soon after the return of the army, Adil shah, the Sultan of Madurai, disobeyed the orders of Vijayanagar empire and acted indipently.

Conquest of Tondaimandalam.

During the administration of Harihara, the sultan of Madurai Defeated the ruler of Sambuvaraya Kingdom and imprisoned him. So with a view to protech him. Harihara sent an army to Sambuvaraya Kingdom. The army defeated Madurai Sultan and enthroned the Sambuvaraya ruler on the throne. After the occupation of the throne he refused to accept the supremacy of Vijayanagar ruler. So Harihara was waiting for an opportunity to teach him a lesson

War with Bhamini Kingdom

Bukka I succeeded Harihara I, During his reign war started between Vijayanagar empire and Bhamini Kingdom. At this critical situation, the Sultan who ruled Madurai supported Bhamini Kingdom against Vijayanagar empire. So after the completion of north and north east expeditions, Vijayanagar ruler invaded Tamilnadu with a view to punish Sambuvaraya of Tondaimandalam and to annex the Sultanate of Madurai. At this expedition, Bukka I sent an army under the command of his son Kumarakampana.

Kumarakampana

Kumarakampana was the son and successor of Bukka I by his queen Depayi. His wife was Ganagadevi. To know the Historical southern expedition of Kumarakampana, literatures and inscriptions served as evidences. Madhuravijayam, a Sanskrit work written by Ganagadevi gave a complete account of his life and achievements. Saluvabhayudayam written by Rajanatha Dindima also served as evidence to know more about the southern expedition of Kumarakampana. Again, the inscriptions numbering about 132 found at various centres of South India revealed more information regarding his expedition. Further the inscriptions found at Tondaimandalam also gave valuable information about the southern expedition of Kumarakampana.

Conquest of Rajagambirarajyam

Tondaimandalam ruled by Sambuvaraya was called Rajagambirarajyam. Virinchipuram was its capital. They served as chieftain under the Chola empire. After

the decline of the Chola empire they got independent. They became popular after the expedition of Malikka and founded the Kingdom. Tondaimandalam. It comprised of the present districts of Chengelpet and north and southern portions of Arcot districts. The rulers of Tondaimandalam assumed the title 'ventumankondan'. The first ruler who assumed the title was Ekambaranathan or Venrumankondan. He was the founder of the Kingdom. He ruled the Kingdom between 1321 and 1339 Tondaimandalam flourished during his administration. The next ruler of the kingdom was Rajanaroyana Sambuvaraya (1339-1369). He was the son of Ekembaranathan. It was during his period Kumarakampana made an expedition against Tondaimandalam.

Kumarakampana with an army started his expedition from Mulbagal. He crossed Palaru and reached Virinchipuram, the capital of Tondaimandalam in 1363. In an encounter, Rajanaroyana Sambuvaraya was defeated and virinchipuram was captured. The defeated Rajanaroyana took refuge at 'Padaiveedu' the hill fortress at Rajagambiramalai. The army of Kumarakampana surrounded and ravaged the fort. Rajanaroyana came out from the fort and fought a duel with kumarakampana. Madhuravijayam mentioned that in the duel Rajanaroyana was murdered. But the contemporary inscriptions repudiated the death of Rajanaroyana Sambuvaraya. On the other hand, they accepted that Rajanaroyana was forced to accept the supremacy of Kumarakampana. With the conquest of Tondaimandalam, the northern boundary of Vijayanagar empire was extended upto Kollidam.

Conquest of Kongudesam

The Vijayanagar army entered Kongudesam after the conquest of Tondaimandalam, without much difficulty. Kondudesam was brought under the domination of Vijayanagar empire. At this venture, Kumarakampana was ably assisted by his general Gandarakulimaraya Nayaka.

March towards Madurai

After the conquest of Tondaimandalam and Kongudesam, the Vijayanagar army entered Madurai to put an end to the autocratic rule of the Muslims. During the expedition of Kumarakampana, the people of Madurai lived miserably. The Hindu religion was reflected in worship in Chidambaram, Srirangam and Madurai temples

were also neglected. Due to negligence, Chiladmbaram temple looked like a desert and tigers lived there. Hence, Chidambaram was called Perumpatta Puliur. The same condition prevailed in the Srirangam temple also, Again, due to lack of maintenance, most of the Madapam, Kopuram and Karppagraham were ruined. The sound of Kuran and animals was heard instead of the sound of Barathanattiyam. The coconut trees were cut down and the heads of the Hindus were cut off. those who lost their properties wander here and there along the roads. Muslims considered the Hindu women as toys for their sexual pleasure. Those who refused to yield to the interests of the Muslims were murdered. So the Hindu parents found it very difficult to protect their women from the cruel clutches of Muslims. It was in this confused stage, Kumarakampana marched towards Madurai to maintain law and order.

In 1370, the army of Kumarakampana started its Journey from Chenji in South Arcot district. The Hindu army defeated the Muslim forces decisively at Samayavarm near Srirangam and Captured Kannanur Kuppam, one of the strongest fortress of the Muslims. In an encounter between Tiruchirappally and Madurai, the Sultan of Madurai Bakhrudin Mubarak Shah was defeated. He was murdered in April 1371, in a duel fight. It held between Kumarakampana and Mubarak Shah Madhuravijayam and Ramabhyudayam gave a clear account about this battle. With the conquest of Madurai, the autocratic rule of Madurai sultans came to an end. As a result of the conquest of Madurai sultanate, the authority of Vijayanagar empire extended upto Ramesvaram.

Tamil Country under Vijayanagar Empire

Talikota Battle

In the History of South India, 23rd of January was an important date. A historical battle was held at Talikota on this date. This battle determined the fate of the Vijayanagar empire. The battle was held at Rakshasi - Tangadi twenty five miles away from Talikota. Hence, the Talikota battle was also known as Rakshasi - Tangadi battle. This battle decided the destiny of the Hindu and muslim kingdoms in Tamilnadu.

In the battle, the allied forces of the four Sultans of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Golkonda and Bidar fought against the Vijayanagar empire with a grand army. It consisted of 50,000 cavalry, 30,000 infantry and 6000 Maratha horsemen. The Muslim army was stationed at Rekshasi - Tangadi.

At this critical situation Ramaraya ruled Vijayanagar empire. He faced the situation gallantly with the support of his brother Thirumalai and Venkatadri. He also collected a grand army. It contained 70,000 horsemen and 90,000 infantry. He also possessed a considerable number of elephants and guns.

Tamil people participated in the battle on a large scale. The Nayaks of Madurai, Tanjore and Chenji sent major portions of their army to Talikota in favour of Vijayanagar empire. Surappa Nayaka of Chenji and Ariyanatha of Madurai participated in the battle directly.

Ramaraya had full confidence in his army. With a view to strengthen his position, he sent his brother Thirumalai on the banks of Krishna river with an army. The rest of the army was entrusted in the hands of Venkatadri. Before the battle started, the Vijayanagar and Muslim forces were stationed on the southern and Northern part of the Krishna River respectively.

In a preliminary encounter, the Vijayanagar forces defeated the armies of Nizam Shah and Kuthubshah. Knowing their inefficiency to win the battle directly, they followed strategy and conspiracy. To win the support and sympathy of the Muslims and mercenary soldiers in the Vijayanagar army, the Muslims made secret contact with them. Based on their secret agreement in a crucial battle, the Muslim and mercenary soldiers in the Vijayanagar army supported the Muslim forces. It was a rude shock to Ramaraya. Anyhow, he managed the situation with full confidence. But due to the cheating of two Muslim commanders, who were in charge of two battalions, the Vijayanagar army lost its confidence. Ramaraya was captured and murdered with the orders of Husain-Nizam Shah. Venkatadri disappeared from the battle field. Thirumalai who lost an eye returned to Vijayanagar. Without much resistance, the empire fell in the hands of the Muslims. Vijayanagar was looted and plundered for nearly six months. Muslims murdered thousands of Hindus.

Though in the battle, Vijayanagar army was defeated, it now destroyed completely, it survived to some extent or nearly fifty years, under Sriranga I and Venkata I. During their reign, the capital of Vijayanagar empire was shifted to Chandragiri, Penukonda and Vellore. With the support of the Nayaks of Tamilnadu, the Vijayanagar empire survived till Toppur battle in 1616.

Impact of the Vijayanagar Rule Administration

The Vijayanagar emperors ruled a vast empire. For the convenience of administration, the empire was divided into mandalams or provinces. Governors were appointed to look after the administration of the provinces. They enjoyed enormous powers and acted as kings. History mentioned them as Nayaks. They administered under the directions of the Vijayanagar ruler till the time of Tirumala. Tirumala was the first Nayak who usurped the domination of Vijayanagar ruler and formed the independent Nayakship in Madurai. The successors of Tirumalai were the independent rulers. They ruled the kingdom with the assistance of Polegars. The Polegars rendered military and financial aids to the Nayaks. The federal system of administration that existed during the time of Nayaks was comparable to that existed during the time of Nayaks was comparable to that of feudalism in Europe. The administrative system of Nayaks possessed certain important features.

The King

The rulers of the kingdom were known as Nayaks. They acted as kings. People gave them due respect. They were considered as god on earth. They enjoyed all powers. They even behaved like autocrats. Though the king was an autocrat, the influence of existing customs and traditions and the domination of Vedas and Dharmasatras had a telling effect on the administration.

The Nayaks adopted the direct line of succession to avoid civil war. Probably, the eldest son of the king succeeded to the throne. The Nayaks had the habit of having a number of illegitimate wives in addition to the queens. So to avoid civil war, the eldest son of the legitimate wife was elected as next successor

If the ruler did not obtain age, at the time of coronation, the system of appointing a regent prevailed in the Nayak kingdom. Tani Managammal was the best example. The system of adoption also existed in the Nayaks kingdom. If the ruler had no issue, a suitable person was adopted from among the close relatives of the ruler. For example Vijayakumara the son of Bangaru Tirumala was adopted after the death of Vijayanga Chokkanatha.

Due respect was given to ladies in administration during the period of Nayaks. The reign of Rani Managammal and Minakshi were the suitable examples. They proved their efficiency in administration and earned a place in history.

The Nayaks gave due importance to pomp and show. They lived luxuriously. They resided at the palace. The palace was constructed at the centre of the capital. It possessed all facilities including harem. The Nayak rulers had the habit of having illegitimate wives in addition to legitimate queens. The harem of Tirumala Nayaka contained more than two hundred wives. Among the wives the queens were alone given due respect. But Muthu Virappa was an exception. He lived satisfactorily with his queen alone.

The Nayaks ruled an extensive kingdom. In the day-to-day administration, the King was assisted by high officials and ministers. The Nayaks maintained close contact with polegars. They rendered financial and military assistance to the Nayaks at the time of emergency.

The rulers took keen interest in administration. They implemented various social welfare schemes for the benefit of the people. Most of the Nayaks were staunch Hindus. They constructed temples throughout the length and breadth of their kingdom for the development of Hindu religion and satisfaction of the people. As they were religious, they implemented religious oriented schemes and plans during their administration. Though the Nayaks were Hindus, they tolerated all religions including Christianity and Islam.

The Ministers

The Nayaks had an attractive avai. The avai contained ministers. They were highly qualified. Most of them were Brahmins. The ministers advised the king at the time of emergency. They were expected to give food advice. It was purely and advisory body. They never controlled the king. Generally, the ministry contained five members. They were dalawai, Pradhani, rasayam, accountant and sthanapathi. Among them the dalawai, pradhani and rasayam were important.

Dalawai

Dalawai occupied an important place in administration. He was the principal officer of the Kingdom. He controlled all civil and military administration. At the time of peace, he was deeply involved in internal administration and commanded the army at the time of war. Thus he enjoyed the powers of minister and senapathi.

He played a vital role in making the internal and external policies of the ruler. Ariyanatha of Visvanatha Nayaka. Ramappaiya of Tirnumalai Nayak and Narasappaiya of Rani Mangammal were the most efficient dalawais. They enjoyed both civil and military powers. Most of the dalawais of the Nayaks were Brahmins. From the time of Chokkanatha this office was held by a succession of Brahmins. Generally the dalawai enjoyed enormous powers and was only controlled by the constitution. the king also maintained an effective control over him. Normally, he was the supreme power in the kingdom. During the reign of weak rulers the dalswai acted as an autocrat and his powers were undisturbed by anybodyelse. The Jesuit missionaries considered them as the governor general of the kingdom.

Pradhani

Pradhani was the finance minister. He was the next important officer of the king. He was directly engaged in the collection of revenue and its expenditure. As the controller of finance, he held great influence in the internal administration of the state. Pradhan also exercised the powers of dalawai during his absent in the capital due to war and foreign visit. In this capacity he looked after both revenue and internal administration.

Rasayam

Rasayam was the chief secretary of the state. He was the next in importance among the ministers. He concentrated more on the administration of the state. Rasayam controlled the administrative machinery of the state. In this respect, he maintained constant touch with the ruler. The above mentioned three ministers played a vital role in administration and formed the trio of the king's council.

Kanakkan

Kannakkan was also a Minister. He was in charge of audit department. He was also considered to be an important official in the state. The king used to appoint only corruption free man to this post.

Sthanapati

The next minister was Sthanapati. He was the foreign secretary of the king in his dealings with foreign rulers. Usually, he maintained cordial relations with Polegars.

Other Officials

In addition to the above ministers, There were different categories of officials to look after certain specific works. Among them, Thirumandra Olai Naygam. Adappakaran, Junior and Senior grade officials were important. Thirumandra Olai Naygam wrote down the oral orders of the ruler. The orders written in the palm leaves were sent to various departments for execution.

Duties of the King

The Nayakas were the protectors of Hindu religion. They rendered meritorious services for its growth. people recognised and honoured the rulers who rendered meritorious services to Hindu religion. So most of the reforms introduced by the Nayaks were religious oriented. With a view to develop Hindu religion, the Nayaks constructed numerous temples and chatrams throughout the kingdom. These temples were renovated regularly and properly. Valuable donations were granted to them. Suitable priests were appointed to regularise the administration and religious services in the temples. The Nayaks patronised Brahmins. More and more Brahmins were

invited from the northern part of Tamil Nadu. As a result the number of agraharas increased. Particularly the Nayak rulers were more concerned about the welfare of the Brahmins. The passive attitude of the rulers, towards the Brahmin enabled to enforce varna system in religion and politics. Thus Brahminism flourished in Tamilnadu.

The Nayaks adopted religious toleration. Though the Nayaks encouraged Hindu religion, they never obstructed the development of other religions. They rendered various concessions to Christians and Muslims. Due importance was given to religious festivals. Special attention was given to the grand celebration of Navarathiri and Chitra festivals.

Revenue

The Nayaks maintained a well organised revenue system for the collection of taxes with care and promptitude. The revenue officer in the village was called Maniyakaran or Ambalakaran. The taxes collected from the villages were remitted to makanam. The head of the makanam remitted the total revenue to the royal treasury.

Land tax was wht major source of income to the state. Half of the produce was collected as land tax. the state also collected one third of the revenue from the polegars as tribute. People were over burdened with land tax. In addition to the land tax, the state collected property tax, the commercial tax, industrial tax and penalty (thandapanam) from the courts. The taxes collected from certain sections of the people in the society and tribute collected from the Polegars and vassal states were also included in the state revenue. The state received or paid an annual tribute of six to ten million francs. Payment of revenue in cash was adopted during this period.

Autocratic methods were adopted to collect land tax from the tenants. Severe punishments were given to those who delayed or refused to pay the land tax. Land tax was collected mercilessly even during the time of famine, flood epidemic and war.

Major portion of the revenue was utilised for war expenditure, construction and renovation of temples and palaces, donations, charitable works, luxurious life of the members of royal family and salaries of officials and other servants of army police

and judicial departments. A considerable amount was spent for irrigation and other public works.

Justic

Though the King was the fountain of Justice, the central government did not maintain an elaborate judicial establishment.

Villages played a vital role in the administration of justice. In the village three types of courts existed. Commonly the village officer administered justice in the village. There were two judges in the village court. Special courts were constituted for separate castes. These courts decided the cases pertaining to a particular caste. Such courts were constituted mainly due to caste restrictions. Temples had separate courts. They decided in cases among the temple servants. The inhabitants in the village gave due respect to the judges.

Special cases pertaining to social and religious rights alone were heard by king and his court. He gave verdict based on Dharmasastras.

Denerally, the pradhani controlled and regularised the activities of the judicial department. The court in the capital contained a few jedges. It tried only important cases. The person well- versed in law and Dharmasastras were appointed as judges. Most of the judges in the Nayak period were Brahmins. The courts in the Nayak period were not free from corruption. Judgements were given based on caste and social status. Generally, the judgement was partial. The judges utilised judiciary as a weapon to take revenge upon the low castes.

The procedure of enquiring the witness was followed in the court. Verdict was given based on witness and actual occurrence of the cases. Divine tests were conducted. Severe punishments were given to the culprits. Certain punishments were barbarous in nature. Persons involved in treason and those who plotted against the ruler were given death punishment. Those who acted against the members of the royal family were also given cruel punishment. Generally their eyes were removed. Those who committed severe crimes were totured or exiled. In certain cases, the properties

of were put in Jails. the convicts in the jails were treated inhumanly. The prisoners of war were humiliated.

Army

The strength of the ruler depended on the efficiency of the army. Though the Nayaks maintained a standing army, at the time of war, they depended mainly on the army of Polegars. the army of the Nayaks consisted of infantry, cavalry, elephants and camels. The Nayaks purchased the required horses from the Arabs and elephants from the Portuguese. Proper training was given to the army. They used bows, arrows, spears and swords. Guns were used to destroy the forts. They adopted all sorts of techniques to win the battle and even violated the ethics of warfare. Destruction of forts, looting the cities, torturing and murdering were commonly followed at the time of wars. Certain wars were fought mainly to take revenge upon the enemies. For example, Tirumala Nayaka at the time of his Mysore invasion used an instrument to remove the nose and upper lips of the enemies. The rulers awarded gifts and titles to the soldiers, who rendered meritorious services in the battle to save the kingdom. The commander-in-chief commanded the army.

The Nayakas also raised mercenary army temporarily at the time of emergency. when compared with the Nayak army, the mercenaries possessed less efficiency. As soon as the war was over they were dissolved.

The Nayaks gave due importance to spy system, Most of the spies were Brahmins. They roamed the country in disguise. they collected the secrets regarding the movements of the enemies.

The Nayaks paid little attention to navy. Lack of navy was a major handicap of the Nayak army. They met with major failure due to the lack of navy. Whereas, the Portuguese and Dutch strengthened their position with navy. They enriched themselves at the expense of the Nayaks and even tolerated their misdeeds.

Provincial administration

For the convenience of administration the kingdom was divided into provinces. The province was known as Chimai.

Governors were appointed to look after its administration. During the reign of Nayaks, governors were appointed in Trichy Tirunelveli and satyamangalam. They acted as per the directions of the dalawai. The provinces were further sub-divided into palayams. the governments enjoyed numerous powers. The Nayaks never interfered in the affairs of the provinces. The governors acted as link between the Nayaks and the Polegars.

Social Condition

Radical changes took place in Tamilnadu during the period of Vijayanagar and Nayaks due to political unrest caused by external attack and internal disorder. The rupture among the castes and sub castes weakened the society. The copper plates of this period mentioned that the Nayak rulers paid special attention to solve the problems among the various sections in the society. Though the Nayaks encouraged traditional caste system, scanty evidences are available to know more about their activities. The social inequality that existed in society threatened the safety of the people.

Brahmins

Like vijayanagar rulers, The Nayaks also enforced the varna system in Tamilnadu. When the activities of temples increased more and more Brahmins were invited to do religious services. Hence the settlements and influence of the Brahmins increased during the reign of the Nayaks. They were considered as high castes and they enjoyed all rights and privileges. The Nayaks provided brahmadeya lands to the Brahmins for their settlements. They were provided with all facilities. They existed in various parts of the Nayak kingdom. They occupied an important place in temples and politics.

As heads of administration, they controlled the majority in society. Important posts in the government and temples such as Dalawai, Rasayam, Prohita were occupied by the Brahmins. They also did the traditional works like chanting Vedas, performing yagams and conducting daily worship. The high caste Brahmins treated the agriculturists and other tax payees as unprivileged.. These divisions obtained social colours and there were quarrels among them, It affected the society adversely.

Kaikolas

During the reign of Nayaks, Kaikolas occupied a prominent place in Tamilnadu. Blacksmith, goldsmith, coppersmith, carpenter, sculptors were the five divisions among the Kaikolas. They were also called as 'Panchalas'. They were respected in the society. Among them, the Nayaks patronised goldsmiths and sculptors.

Kshatriyas

The rulers and warriors were considered as Kshatriyas. The Nayak rulers equated them with sun and moon races. Among them, there were high castes and low castes. Nayaks of Tanjore considered them as high caste. They treated the Madurai Nayaks as low caste. They even hesitated to maintain matrimonial relations. The people respected Kshatriyas because they protected them from danger.

Vaisyas

Vaisyas in Tamilnadu also occupied an important place. They dealt with trade and allied industries. Among Vaisyas, Chetties were prominent. They dealt with horse trade. Horses were imported for the cavalry in the army. The Chettiers who were involved in home trade, were called Kuthiraichettiers. Generally, they controlled both internal and external trade. They were settled in separate street in the town. Most of the Chettiers were rich. They lived luxuriously.

Sutras

Sutras were untouchables. They were not at all permitted to enter the temples. They were treated meanly. The Parayas who belonged to this caste lived in shacks. Civil rights were denied to them.

On certain occasions they revolted for their rights. But they were suppressed mercilessly by rulers and high castes. Separate works were assigned to them. They were not permitted to mingle with the high castes in society.

Marriage System

During the Nayak age, more importance was given to marriage. It was made ornamental. Inter-caste marriage was not encouraged. Priority was given to kulams

and kotrams at the time of the marriage of the members of royal family. Among the Nayaks the Tanjore Nayaks were considered as high caste, owing to their matrimonial relation with Vijayanagar empire. They ridiculed Madurai Nayaks as sutras and did not maintain any matrimonial relation with them. For example Chokkanatha the Nayak of Madurai desired to marry the daughter of Vijayaraghava of Tanjore. It was denied owing to caste distinction. So he waged a war against Tanjore and lost his life. Likewise, the desire of Vijayaraghava to marry the princess of Ceylon was also denied on the same ground.

Inter caste marriages and intermingling of high caste with low caste were totally prohibited during the time of Nayaks. Dowry system prevailed in the society. Child marriage was permitted. Property and ornaments were given as dowry. But during the time of Vijayanagar rule. The practice of getting dowry was not popular among Brahmins. They considered it as a crime.

Though monogamy existed, the system of polygamy also prevailed among the ruling family. For example, Tirumalai Nayak of Madurai had 200 wives. The Sethupathi of Ramnad also followed the foot steps of Tirumala and married 47 wives. But Muthu Virappa Nayaka III was satisfied with his only wife.

Sati

In the Naya period women were not treated on par with men. Women were treated badly. The cruel and out dated custom of sati prevailed in the society. Accordingly, the 47 wives of Kilavan Sethupathi, 200 wives of Tirumalai and 370 wives of Archuthappar died by sati. Society too recognised the sati which existed among high castes. The system of burial and cremation existed in Nayak period.

Devaradiyar

The Nayaks gave due importance to temples. They served as powerful social and economic entity and a source of religious inspiration to the people. The temples constructed during this period showed the involvement of the Nayaks in Hindu religion. These temples contained devadasis. they dedicated themselves to the service of the deva or deity of the temples. They performed dances in the temples. They were

treated as the chosen servants of gods and were known as devaradiyars. The houses of devadasis were located in the streets running around the temples. They were colourful young and attractive. Devaradiyars were experts in music, dance and other arts. They were used to promote cultural entertainment and to raise funds. They had an admirable place in society. The members of the royal family and rich men patronised them. They were honoured with titles and gifts. Lands were also granted to them for their maintenance. Among the titles, the most important was 'Naluthikkum Venta Manickam'. Sources mentioned that one devaradiyar by name Umayammai belonged to Rakkiyam village in Thirumeyyaham taluk was honoured with this title.

The devaradiyars mingled freely with the local population and maintained close touch with the royal families and the wealthy high castes. They utilised them for entertainment and sexual purposes. The money-minded devadasis were even involved in prostitution. The devadasis who lived around the temples were deeply involved in prostitution. Maintaining relations with devaradiyars were considered as a prestige. Most of the works of this period clearly mentioned the character of devaradiyars. Kalamegham in his work mentioned that the pleasure obtained from devadasis was true and everlasting. The rulers of this period also maintained close touch with these devaradiyars. It is said that the girl kidnapped by Madhuraveeran was a devadasi probably. The devadasis were found everywhere in the kingdom. But they were in abundance, around the temples at Madurai, Tanjore, Kalayarkoil, Trichy, Ramnad Rameswaran, Kumbakonam, Thiruvavur etc. The devaradiyars were also permitted to have married life. Records proved that a few devaradiyars became housewives after marriage.

Food

The various sections of the people ate various types of food. But vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods were common. The Saints and Brahmins consumed rice, milk product and fruits. The people belonged to low castes ate meat, fish egg, rice etc. Coconut and gingili oils were used to prepare food. The food prepared for the king was tested duly before serving. Drinking was common. The king used imported liquor in the company of his guests and relatives. While the king and rich people used imported

liquor, the poor used local toddy. Toddy preparation was a popular industry in Tamilnadu. It was manufactured privately. Liquor occupied an important place in the Nayak society. People used to take betel leaves after meals.

Dress and ornaments

People of this period had great fascination for dresses and ornaments. Both men and women used to wear ornaments. Various classes of people in the society used various forms and qualities of dresses and ornaments. The ordinary people in the society wore simple dress. They were always on the verge of nudity and were never concerned about it. The wealthy people concentrated more on costly dresses. The sowrastras who were experts in weaving were invited from northern parts of Tamilnadu. they settled at important weaving centres The dresses of the windows were simple and unattractive.

Due importance was also given to ornaments. Women adorned themselves with various of costly ornaments. The sculptors of this period revealed a rough idea about the garments and ornaments used by the people.

Women paid special attention to cosmetics. They bedecked themselves with flowers. The devadasis decorated warmly to attract the mass. Goldsmith and weavers were given due respect in the society.

Amusements

Music, dance and drama gave entertainment to people, with high aesthetic tastes. They also participated in various games and festivals. They enjoyed duel fight, hunting, horse race etc. Cock-fight, goat fight, swimming etc. were certain popular village pastimes.

Festivals

Much importance was given to festivals during Nayaks period. Temples of the Nayak period served as 'citadal' of festivals. Chitra festivals. Puthuthiruvizha. Theppathiruvizha were celebrated grandly in Madurai. Owing to frequent festivals, the Nayaks converted Madurai, as city of festivals. In addition to Madurai festivals were also conducted in the temples at Tanjore, Kumbakonam, Thiruvarur and

Chidambaram. Different kinds of festivals were conducted in these temples. Among them, purnamivizha, puthunila panchapavangal, sivarathiri, maharasaskirenti, edadesi theuvadasi, Srijeyanthi etc, were important. The most important festivals in Tamilnadu is Deepavali. It was introduced during the time of Nayaks. The performances of devadasis were given primary importance at the time of festivals. Those festivals were conducted with a view to protect the people from the devils. The villages had separate gods. Hero worship was common Ghosts and spirits were believed and dreaded. Brahmins were involved in religious activities.

New settlements

During the reign of Nayaks, the settlements of Brahmins, Muslims and Europeans increased considerably. When the activities of the temples increased, more Brahmins were invited from Northern parts of Tamilnadu. They settled in agraharams. The settlements of Brahmins increased based on their number.

As a result of invasion, the Muslims were also settled in various parts of Tamilnadu. They concentrated more on trade. Radical changes took place in Tamil culture due to the arrival of Muslims, Kammavar, Kavara, Uppili, Soniyar, Kampalathar, Ottar, Chakiliyar, Thember, Sowrashtas etc, were also settled in various parts of Tamilnadu. Most of them spoke Telugu language.

Nayaks also encouraged the spread of Christianity in Tamilnadu. Christian Missionaries from Portugal, Spain, France and England came and settled in various parts of Tamilnadu with a view to spread their faith. Due to the arrival of foreigners, radical changes took place in Tamilnadu in the field of education and religion.

Religious Toleration

Though the Nayaks were orthodox Hindus, Religious toleration existed in Tamilnadu. The Nayaks of Madurai gave due protection to the Christian missionaries. They were permitted even to construct churches and schools. Even then certain unpleasant incidents against Christian missionaries took place in certain parts of Tamilnadu. Missionaries suffered due to anti Christian attitude of Kilavan Sethupathi of Ramnad. John Britto and others were murdered. Many of them were imprisoned.

The letters of the Christian missionaries gave a clear picture about the attitude of the Nayaks toward Christians. The rupture among Hindus also continued.

Condition of Education

During the Vijayanagar and Nayak period, less importance was given for the growth of education. Even then education flourished at various centres. Local scholars and Christian missionaries rendered meritorious services for the growth of education.

Economic condition

During the period of Vijayanagar and Nayak periods the economic condition was determined by the nature of agriculture industry and internal and external trade. Yet, industry and trade were at their low ebb. The state paid priority to agriculture. The traditional system of agriculture existed in the vijayanagar and Nayak periods. The frequent wars, rebellions and famines affected the growth of agriculture considerably.

Agriculture

Agriculture was the main occupation of the people. It played a vital role in determining the economic growth of that period. People solely depended on the monsoons for cultivation. Generally the south west, South east and northeast monsoons gave fertility to the soil. In the fertile areas, paddy was cultivated. The monsoons were not always regular. sometime they betrayed the people. These prevailed cruel famines due to lack of seasonal rain falls.

Through the monsoons gave fertility to the soil on certain occasions, it caused destruction to the people. The sudden floods in the rivers or cyclones in the coastal areas caused untold miseries to the agriculturists. The cyclone, due to frequent low pressure in the Bay Bengal, was a permanent menace to the people of Tamilnadu. It not only destructed the agricultural products but also the residences of the people.

To protect the people from flood, dams were constructed across the rivers. The river water was brought for irrigation through channels. The Kaviri River in Tamilnadu played a major role in determining the economic condition of the people. Where there was no river water, the agriculturists utilised the water from the wells and

kulams for cultivation. These wells and kulams were regularly maintained by the local bodies in the village. In certain places, the agriculturists utilised spring water for cultivation.

Famines

Due to the betrayal of monsoons, there were great famines during the region of Nayaks. A Jesuit Christian missionary in his letter dated November 1622 mentioned the cruel famines which affected Tamilnadu severely. It caused untold miseries to the people. Thousands of people died. No one came forward to bury them. The accumulated dead bodies on the banks of the rivers were swept away by the river water due to flood during monsoons.

Due to the shortage of food, the prices of the grains increased tremendously. Particularly due to the famine in 1709, the prices of food grains raised to its zenith. It was recorded that prior to the famine eight maraikal paddy was sold for one panam. After the famine, one maraikal rice was sold for four panams.

Taxes

In 1529, Madurai came under the direct administration of Visvananthar. He and his successor followed the same system of tax collection of Vijayangar rulers, Manikaram of Ambalakaram collected the revenue of the village and remitted in the government treasury through the head of Makanam. During the times of Nayaks various kinds of taxes were collected from the people. Among them, land tax, property tax, trade tax and industrial taxes were important. Based on the fertility of the soil, taxes were collected. Mainly lands were divided into fertile and infertile lands. Records mentioned that taxes were fixed based on the nature of the land, type of harvest and total expenditure. Likewise, taxes were also collected from the house based on its size and facilities. Taxes were also collected from the domesticated animals such as cow, bull, lamp, etc.

In addition to the above taxes special taxes were collected for the maintenance of army. It was called 'Padaikodai' records mentioned that people used to pay taxes on bow and spear. The Valamkai and Idamjai groups were forced to pay their taxes to

protect their rights in the society. The people to pay their taxes to protect their rights in the society. The people in the society were more concerned about the festivals in the temples. So for conducting festivals, the temples collected special taxes from the people. This tax was called “Pidari vari”. Again at the time of marriage, the marriage parties were forced to remit taxes to the government. Moreover, the traditional taxes such as irrigation tax, boat tax. Padikaval, Kalappaivari, Nattukanakkuvvari etc., were collected from the people. The government also collected taxes from forests, courts pearl fishing etc. Again the Polegars and foreigners also remitted taxes to the government. Generally, one half of the product was collected as tax. They were remitted in kind or in cash. People suffered a lot due to the cruelty of taxes. Sometimes the government conceded their demands and reduced the taxes. Generally taxes were collected by force without any mercy.

Industry

The Nayaks paid less importance to industrial growth. Even then, the various sections of the people in the society followed certain traditional industries. Hence certain traditional industries like black smithy, Carpentry, Spinning, weaving, Pottery Making, oil manufacturing, garment making, fish catching, hair dressing etc. industries flourished in the Nayak periods.

Government used to collect certain taxes from these industries. Among them Tharikadamai, Chekkudamai, Arishannam, Ponvari, Chemponvari, Meychelvari, Pattucadai Noolayam, Marakkala Vari, Ulaivari etc were important, Certain plates belonged to this period mentioned that government also collected taxes from parattaiyar and salt. The state also collected professional tax. It was collected from judges, village heads and high officials of the state.

Trade and commerce

During the period of Nayaks, both internal and external trade flourished. Probably the foreign trade was under the control of the Europeans. They purchased the commodities produced inlands and exported to foreign countries. Likewise, they imported foreign goods and sold in the local markets. Government granted various concessions to them. Tax was not collected from them. So government concentrated

more on collecting taxes from local markets (Angadies). There were a number of established markets at the important centres of the kingdom. The commodities manufactured in the local areas were brought to these markets for sale. The merchants in the markets purchased these commodities. All markets were crowded with buyers and sellers. There were two types of merchants. The petty merchants used to collect and sell commodities by roaming here and there. Another group of merchants stationed in a particular place and sold their commodities. The merchants stored their commodities in the warehouses situated very near to the markets. The government collected commercial taxes from the merchants. Special officers were appointed for this purpose. The people highly respected the traders because they had great influence in the society. The traders were settled in separate places. Robbery was common in those days. The merchants were not free from the danger of theft and murder. So due protection was given to them. Due to highway robbery, the merchant moved from place to place in caravans. Local carts were utilised to transport commodities. Articles were also brought to the market on head. Tolls were collected from the cart on roads. Revenue officials collected these tolls. Roads available in the country were utilised for the transport of commodities. The roads leading to the markets were linked with important towns and trading centres. The frequent wars and famines disturbed the steady growth of trade.

Growth of Art

Peace existed during the administration of Vijayanagara rulers and it encouraged them to concentrate more on the development of art and architecture. They constructed a number of palaces, temples and mandapams throughout their empire. They beautified them with various types of attractive sculptures. The development of art of that period indicated the attitude of the Vijayanagar rulers towards art and architecture. In short, they reflected, the culture and civilization of the people of Vijayanagar's period.

Architecture

Vijayanagara empire ruled Tamil Nadu in the 14th century. They ruled Andhra and Karnataka in addition to Tamil Nadu. During their administration they patronised

art and sculpture by constructing temples. As far as Tamil Nadu was concerned, They constructed Manadapams, Gopuram, Kalyana Mandapams and a few small temples. Though they followed Dravidian style of architecture. The Indo-Sarasonic elements also occupied a prominent place in it.

Instead of concentrating more on the construction of temples. the vijayanagar rulers showed their interest in art by extending and beautifying temples of the Chola period by constructing Kopurams, Mandapams, Kalyanamandapams and Thirukulams. Among the mandapams constructed during this administration, Kanchi Varadharaja Perumal koil Kalyanamandapam, Vellore Thalakandasvarar temple Kalyanamandapam, Kuthiraimandapam in Thiruvaranagam temple were important. Most of these mandapams were constructed in a similar style.

The Vijayanagara rulers, during their administration also constructed historically important gopurams. Among them Kanchi Ekamparanathar Koil Kopuram and Kopurams at Nadaraja temple and Thiruvannamalai were attractive. Such huge kopurams were called as Rajakopurams.

The huge kopuram in the Kanchi Ekambarantha temple was constructed during the reign of Krishnadevaraja. The height of the Kopuram was 188 feet. He also constructed northern Kopuram of Chidambaram temple and Kalakasha Koil Kopuram. These Kopurams were beautiful and highly attractive. Again kulams were constructed in the premises of the temples.

Apart from mandapam and Kopurams, the Vijayanagar rulers constructed a number of huge and attractive buildings and palaces. They were big in size. They were constructed based on Indo-Sarasonic art. The construction of eight angled Thamari Mahal the curve shaped madams, kaval Kopurams forts, palaces, bathing centres at various palaces during the reign of the Vijayanagara rulers revealed the artistic beauty and talent of the architects.

Sculpture

Sculpture making was an art. It flourished during the Vijayanagara period. The sculptures were used to decorate the Koil manadapams and Kopurams constructed

during this period. We can see the reflection of sculptural beauty in them. The Kalyana mandapam of Varadharaja Perumal Koil at Kanchi contained a number of attractive monolithic pillars. They were arranged in lines. They contained numerous beautiful sculptures. The sculptures of horses and elephants with soldiers, attracted the attention of the people. Certain sculpture of soldiers sat on elephant and horses used sword, spear and shield to attack their enemies in the war field. The sculpture of soldiers decorated with jewels dresses head turbans and shield.

The talent of the artists reflected through these sculptures. The two pillars in the southern part of the mandapam contained the sculptures of God of Kama. He used to induce Kamam with his bow and arrow made up of flower. The avatharas of Thirumal like Kuruman, Varagamutrthi, Nachimmar, Thirvikraman, Kannan, Raman etc. The above mentioned religious oriented sculpture were very beautiful and they attracted the attention of the people.

The inner portion of the mandapam contained a few attractive pillars. They were made attractive with the help of the sculptures of beautiful girls. The middle portion of the mandapam contained a stage. There was an attractive sculpture of Koodaram at this stage. It was surrounded by the avathara sculptures of Thirumal, sculptures of warriors and sculptures of animals. It also contained several scenes of intercourse of two women with one man and one woman with two men. The four corners of the mandapam contained chains made of stone. It looked like iron chains.

The Jalakandesvarar koil at Vellore contained a Kalyanamandapam. The pillars of the mandapam were decorated with different type of sculptures. The sculpture portrayed Vaishnava Purana and epic stories. Again there were moulded sculptures of animal in an attractive and typical form.

Temples flourished in various centres of Tamil Nadu before the establishment of Vijayanagar rule in South India. Instead of constructing new temples, they beautified these temples with attractive sculptures. Among them, the sculptures of door keeper found in Jala Kandesvara temp at Vellore, and the door keepers on either side of the mandapam of Ekambaranathar temple at Kanchi were very attractive. Again, certain temples contained the sculptures of Siva, Umayevol. Thirumal,

Lekshmi, Vairavar, Kali and Chandesvarar. These beautiful structures attracted the masses. They were still in good condition.

Among the sculptures of this period, the bronze sculptures were popular. They were decorative in nature. The sculpture of Nandidevan and his Devi found in Siva temple at thirumullaivayil was in an attractive form. The sculpture of Devi was decorated with garments and ornaments. The folding in the garments made it more attractive.

Another important sculpture was the sculpture of Ganapathu found at Nagapattinam. It contained five heads and ten hands, and sat on a tiger. The bronze sculpture of Umayaval found in the art gallery at Tanjore, was very attractive and famous. It belonged to 16th century. The sculpture of king and queen with five and a half feet high found in Varadhavisaperumal temple at Kanchi was also in attractive forms. Various sculptures of Gods were beautifully portrayed in this temple. Again the sculptures of nayanmars. Alvars, Palakannan, Kaliyamarthanar, Narsimmar etc. also contributed much for the development of sculptural art in Tamil Nadu. Most of the sculptures of this period were religious oriented.

Painting

The art of painting also developed in this period. The inner walls of the temples and madapams were beautified with attractive paintings. The paintings of this period were found in the temples and mandapams of Kanchipuram, Thiruvarangam, Chidambaram and Kumpakonam.

The Sangeethamandapam found at Varthamana Mahavirar in Thiruparuthikunttam at Kanchi contained the paintings of Vijayanagar period. It belonged to 14th century. The life story of Mahavirar was portrayed beautifully on the walls of this temple. They were found in several rows.

The paintings of Vijayanagara period were also found in the Varadharja Perumal temple of Kanchi and Thiruvarangam temple. The paintings in Thiruvarangam temple belonged to 14th century. The siva temple in Thiruvazhimizhalam at Tanjore contained the paintings that belonged to 15th and 16th

centuries. The paintings of Vijayanagar period were in a ruining stage due to the lack of maintenance. Most of the paintings of this period were religious oriented.

Literary Development

During the reign of vijayanagara rulers various scholars contributed to the development of literature in Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada and Tamil. Due to lack of paper they selected palm leaves Elutanni was used to write on palm leaves. The bundle of palm leaves was called as suvadi. They were kept preserved in the temples. Separate place was allotted in the temple for the preservation. of suvadies. Such places were called ‘Saraswathi Panaarams’ For the preservation of such centres vijayanagara rulers granted lands.

The Vijayanagara rulers paid special interest fo the development of Sanskrit, Telugu and Kannada literatures. They showed less interest for the development of Tamil literature. Even then, Tamil literature developed due to the patronage of provincial governors. Religious oriented puranams and probandamses were also composed during this period. Most of them were philosophical and interpretative.

Iratti Pulavar

Elam Suriyan and Muthu suriyan were the Irattai pulavar one of them was blind and the other was lame. They travelled together. The lame sat on the shoulders of the blind. The lame directed the way. They denied pleasures of the world and were directed the way. They denied pleasures of the world and were devoted more to Hindu religion and literary activities. Their scholarliness never diminished due to the deformity. They sang a number of songs. The songs contained four lines. The first two lines were sung by one and the next two lines were sung by the other. The feelings of the first two lines were kept up in the reply. They also sung individual poems. It contained deep meanings. Some of them were poems of humour and ridicule. They became famous in singing kalambaham. The Sambagvaraya ruler patronised them. In addition to individual songs, they also sang thillai Kalambagam. Kanchi, Ekambaranatharula and Thiruvamuthu Kalambagam. Most of their works were religious oriented. they revealed the social and religious lifde and political history of Vijayanagar period.

Villiputhurayar

Villiputhurayar was another famous poet of this period. He was patronised by Thirukoalue Vakkaphakai Varapathi Yalkondan. He composed Bharatham. It contained four thousand and three hundred poems. He was famous in singing puram songs. The scenes of Bharathavar were depicted in Tamil with great precision. His poems contained a lot of word from north Indian language (Sanskrit). His works were religious oriented. They were useful to know the history of Vijayanagar period.

Vedantha Desikar

Another poet of this period was Vedantha desikar. He composed twenty five Tamil works in manipravala style. These works were useful to understand the social and religious condition of the Vijayanagar period.

Tholkappiya Devar

The next poet was Tholkappiya Devar. He had sung a collection of songs. Many of them were songs sung in praise of a God of Thirupathyputhoor. His poems were purely religious. The Irattai Pulavar praised his poems.

Kalamekapulavar

The most important poet of this period was Kalamekapulvar. He had a gift of singing poetry with full of pun. Saluva Thirumaliayar patronised him. He composed traditional poems like Thiruvanaikaula, Chitramadal etc. He had sung a few songs humourously and ridieulously, finding fault with Gods. His songs attracted the attention of the readers. He belonged to 15th century.

Athi Verrapandyar

Athi Veerapantyar was a ruler who administered. Thenkasi regions. He was a scholar in Sanskrit and Tamil languages. He belonged to 16th century. the songs he sung, brought to him fame and name. He translated hyshadam into Naidam in Tamil. It elaborated the life story of Nalan who ruled Nishdatha Kingdom. Kodampapuram and Sivalingapuram were his puranic works. He also composed Vettiverkai. It was a Neethinool. His work Kasikandam contained 2525 poems. It praised Kasi. His works

were religious oriented. His work Vettiverkai, Narunthokai had great appreciation from the people.

Paranjothi

Paranjothi wrote 'Thiruvilayadal Puranam' Scholars appreciated this work. The Viruthapakkal, he composed, were nearly 3360 in number. He described the nature attractively.

In addition to the above poets, Purana Thirumalainathar. Thattuva Prakasar, Arithasar, Kanchi Naaprakasar and Nallor, Veera Kavirasar also composed prabandams and individual songs. Most if the worked composed during the Vijayanagar period were religious oriented. These works rendered meritorious services for the development of Hindu religion. Generally Vijayanagara rulers patronised Sanskrit language. Hence North Indian language established their way during the administration of Vijayanagar rule.

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