



B.A. HISTORY - I YEAR

DJH1B - HISTORY OF TAMILNADU UPTO 1947 A.D

SYLLABUS

Unit - I

Pre History of Tamil Nadu – geographical features – pre historic sites and cultures- Historic Age: Sangam literature – crowned monarchs – chieftains – society – religion – trade and commerce – kalabhras – impact of their rule.

Unit-II

Pallavas and I Pandyan empire – political history of the Pallavas – society art and architecture – religion – literature I Pandyan Empire – Society and culture – Bhakti Movement – Alwars and Nayanamars – literature – impact.

Unit - III

Imperial Cholas and II Pandyan Empire – Raja Raja – Rajendra – over seas expedition – Temples – architecture – literary growth – administration – II Pandyan Empire – Civil War – Marco Polo's observation – society – muslim invasion – Madurai sultanate.

Unit - IV

Nayaks of Madurai and Tanjore – Nature of rule – Society – contribution to art and administration – Art and Architecture – society, Marathas and Nawabs – Marathas Society – religion – literary growth – Arcot Nawabs – administration – society, Sethupatahis of Ramanathapuram – society – religion – Christianity.

Unit -V

Polygari system – Kaval system – Palayakkarars – Kattabomman- Arrival of the Europeans – Portuguese, Dutch – French – English – Revenue system- South Indian Revolt – abolishing poligari system – Vellore revolt, Tamil Nadu and freedom struggle – civil disobedient movement – Quit India Movement – Salt sathyagraha V.O.C., Subramania Siva, Bharathi, Justice Party- E.V.R. – Rajaji – Sathyamoorthy – Kamaraj – Role of the Congress Party.

Reference Books:

1. A.Krishnasami- The Tamil Country Under Vijayanagar Rule
2. C.S.Srinivasachari- A History of Ginjee and its Rulers
3. –do- , British Diplomacy in Tanjore
4. -do- ,South Indian Rebellion
5. –do-, A real History of Tamil Nadu.
6. –do-, Rise and Fall of the Poligars in Tamil Nadu
7. K.Rajayyan- History of Madura, 1736-1801 A.D.
8. N.Subramanian- History of Tamil Nadu, Pt. I & II
9. R.Sathianathaiar- History of the Nayaks of Madura
10. Vridhagirisan- Nayaks of Tanjore.



UNIT – I : PRE HISTORY OF TAMILNADU

Pre History of Tamil Nadu – geographical features – pre historic sites and cultures- Historic Age: Sangam literature – crowned monarchs – chieftains – society – religion – trade and commerce – kalabhras – impact of their rule.

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF TAMILNADU

The importance of geography should not be exaggerated at the expense of the human factor. No doubt the physical features of a country exercise a tremendous influence on the life of the people. Hakeluyat says that “Geography and chronology are the sun and the moon, the right eye and the left eye of History”.

The division of India into three parts North, Middle, and South is better than into North and south. The Vindhya in the North and the southern fringe of the Deccan plateau in the South are the two lines which cut India into three parts. The third part in the South is Tamilam corresponding to Arya-Vartha (Later Hindustan) north of the Vindhya. The land in between these two i.e., the Deccan has distinctive characteristics like a high altitude and being boxed in between the Vindhya and the meeting points of the two Ghats. Of these three, Tamilam is the smallest in area.

Tamilam or Tamilnadu lies to the south of the Mysore Plateau in the North and Northwest. It is bounded on the west by the Arabian sea, on the south by the Indian ocean and on the east by the Bay of Bengal. The island of Ceylon is situated like a footrest to the southeast peninsular India. It is a geographical and cultural continuation of Tamilnadu. But politically it is an independent country.

The rocks of the Deccan plateau and the hills of Tamilnadu existed millions of years before the Gangetic Valley and the Himalayas took their present shape. Geological disturbance in the bowls of the earth, perhaps swallowed up large tracts of land to the south of Cape Comorin, the remnants of which are now seen in the surviving chain of islands from Madagascar through Laccadives, Maldives, Ceylon, Andaman and Nicobar islands, the strength from Sumatra to Bali and on to New Guinea. The lost land was called Lemuria since it is believed that it must have swarmed with lemurs. This loss of land was compensated by the Himalayas.

Tamilnadu lies at a depth of an average of 1500 ft. The Kaveri, (475 miles long) beginning its course at Coorg runs smoothly through Mysore but falls into the lap of the Tamil country at more than one point indicating a sudden loss of elevation. The Kaveri was very wild and destroyed more crops in ancient period. It was first tamed by the Chola Karikalan about nineteen centuries ago.

The western Ghats meet the Eastern Ghats in the Kongu country, attaining an altitude of more than 8000 ft. at Doddabetta in the Nilgiris. In its continuation there is a gap of 20 miles on the way called Palghat gap. The Palani, Anaimalai, Kodai and Podiyal hills are important points on the southern stretch of this mountain chain. Dainbam, Tekkadi and Anaimudi are considered as very attractive places for natural scenery.



The Eastern Coast is generally unbroken except for the Pulicat Lake north of Madras. This means that we have no natural harbours. But in modern times we were obliged to create a big artificial harbor in Madras. In Tamilnadu the rivers are not perennial; but hold sufficient sub-soil water for emergency use.

In Tamilnadu the monsoons are normally punctual and usually beneficent. The few rivers which give water to drink and to irrigate are naturally sacred to the Tamil.

Nature is very kind towards the Tamils. It has provided the Tamil Country with some unique natural products which have been in great demand in foreign markets; pepper pearls ivory, cloves, sandalwood, teak and rose wood, some gems like.

There was an excellent commercial contact between Tamilnadu and Middle East. The pearl fisheries of Korkai on southwestern coast were world famous. Besides coconuts, betel leaves and plantains have been cultivated by the Tamils. Moreover the Tamils are highly popular for their textiles.

Tamilnadu now discovers a lot of new potential for industrial development like iron ore magnesite and lignite. In addition to these natural resources like waterfalls have been utilized for industries and agriculture. Mettur symbolizes the effort to dam the waters of the Kaveri for its controlled use.

Pre History of Tamilnadu

The Pre-historic period is usually divided into the Paleolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic and early metal ages.

The Palolithic period is determined with the help of the stone tools used by the people who inhabited Tamilnadu. This age was followed by Neolithic age or the New Stone Age. It is related to finds as far south as the Tirunelveli district i.e., around Tirunelveli and Tuticorin. This age could well be a millennium before 6000 B.C.

The next age was the megalithic age. Some ancient people buried the remains of the dead in pots (either exposed on surface or imbedded beneath the surface) and raised a circumferential tomb consisting of large stone slabs. This is called the megalith system of burial. These megaliths occur mostly in Chingleput District.

The next most interesting pre-historic remains were discovered at Adichanallur near Tirunelveli. These remains, for the first time, give substantial information about the authors of this culture. Rice cultivation was known to the inhabitants of Adichanallur.

This age was followed by the metal ages. The remains discovered in and around Coimbatore give a graphic picture of this culture. From these findings we know the metal implements and vessels used by the people.

The dawn of Tamil history is indicated by references to Tamilnadu in early foreign literature especially Sanskrit and Pali. There are some dim references about Kumari, Madurai and Rameswaram and the Ramayana and Mahabharata. There are certain legends which are inextricably associated with the proto-history of the Tamils.



SANGAM LITERATURE

Tolkappiyam, which is assigned to the pre-Christian era is a work on grammar and poetics.

The literary productions that are attributed to the Third Sangam consist of Pathuppattu or the Ten Idylls and Ettuthohai or the eight anthologies. The idylls descriptive poems on different subjects, ranging from adoration of divinities and admiration of princes to depiction of love and description of romances. Among them are Madurai Kanchi and Pattinapalai. The anthologies, six of which known to have been composed during the Sangam period, deal with the private life of people and the adventures of the heroes. They are Ahananuru, Aingurunuru, Padirrupattu, Kuruntohai, Narrinai and Purananuru.

Among the 461 poets, who are represented in the Sangam literature, the most conspicuous are Paranar, Kapilar, Avvai and Nakkirar. Paranar attempts a variety of love themes, but all are not rendered interesting. Kapilar was associated with several of the rulers including Pari. Author of 206 poems, he wrote Kurinchipattu for instructing an Aryan prince in Tamil poetic traditions. Avvai, considered as a contemporary of Paranar and Kapilar was the court poetess of a chief, Adhihaman. She composed poems in Purananuru, dealing with politics and war. Nakkirar, the author of Nedunalvadaï was a younger contemporary of Kapilar.

The great works Tirukkural, Silappadikaram, and Manimekalai are ascribed to the later Sangam period.

The famous work, Tirukkural, discusses the three aspects of life dharma, artha and kama-virtue, wealth and love in 133 chapters and in 1330 couplets. Ilango Adigal, the brother of the Chera king Senguttuvan wrote the epic poem, Silappadikaram, also known as Kovalan Kathai.

SENGUTTUVAN

Senguttuvan (135-190 A.D), son of the Chera prince Imaya-varamban and the Chola princess Narchonai, was the greatest of the Cheras. The fifth song of Pathirupattu of the Sangam poet Paranar and the verses in this Silappadikaram of his brother Ilango Adigal sing in praise of this prince. Through conquests he made the Cheras an imperial power in the south. Expansion of kingdom, improvement of administration, promotion of trade and patronage of culture rendered his rule glorious.

The military exploits of Senguttuvan are extolled in the Sangam works. Early in his reign he strengthened the defences of his country. Nannan, a proud warrior and a feudatory to the Pandyas, caused frequent disturbances along the borders. Therefore Senguttuvan led an expedition against him and defeated his forces. However, Nannan, supported by the Pandyas and the Cholas, organized a second struggle against the Cheras. This led to a second expedition. The Chera army destroyed the rebel strongholds at Viyalur and Kodukur and suppressed the rebel forces. This decisive victory enabled the Cheras to maintain order along the eastern border land. In the west the Kadambas and Pirates presented formidable



challenges to his authority. They frequently looted the ships and intercepted trade. Therefore Sengutuvan attacked and subdued the pirates and freed the seas from their menace. As a result Musiri became a safe port. Foreign ships in large number sailed to the port and exchanged gold for pepper and other products. The Victory over the pirates won for Sengutuvan the title, Kadal Pirakottiya Kuttuvan-the Prince who drove back the sea.

Beyond the hills, Sengutuvan led two expeditions, one to KongunNadu and another to Chola Mandalam. He defeated the warlike tribes and extended his influence to Kongunadu. In the chola country he interfered on behalf of his brother-in-law Perunkilli. After the death of karikala Chola, a war of succession broke out and nine princess contested against Perunkilli. Thereupon Sengutuvan defeated the rival princess and enthroned his brother-in-law as the ruler of the Cholas.

To the north he led two expeditions, one religious and the other military. The first expedition was intended to consign the remains of his mother into the holy waters of the Ganga. On his way to the north he was intercepted in the Aryan powers, yet conflict was averted. The second expedition, as described in Silapathikaram was intended to punish the hostile princess in the north and to bring holy stone from the Himalayas for consecration of a Kannaki Temple. Accordingly, he made elaborate preparations and won the support of Satakarni, ruler of the Vakatakas. The chera forces marched through the lands of friendly powers, gained more of support and defeated in battle Kanakavijaya, lord of the Gangetic plain. Advancing to the foot of the Himalayas, Sengutuvan identified a stone, suitable for carving out the image of Kannaki. The stone goes that the defeated princess were made to carry the holy stone through the chera country. The consecration of the Kannaki Temple was an impressive function. The king of Malwa and Gajabahu of Lanka together with other rulers attended the ceremony. Through these exploits and diplomacy Sengutuvan made himself the most powerful ruler of south India and beyond.

THE PANDYAS – NEDUNJELIYAN

Of the early Pandyas Nedunjelian II who ruled around 210 A.D. was the greatest. He defeated a confederacy of the Cheras, the Cholas and five other kings in a great battle, that was fought at Talaiyalanganam near Thanjavur. Thereafter he was known as Talaiyalanganam Nedunjelian. In another battle he captured the Chera ruler Mantharam Cheral Irumporai as a prisoner and annexed the Velir territories. These victories made the Pandyas supreme in the Tamil Country. After this victory he defeated the Kongars and occupied Perur. Also he suppressed several of the minor powers and annexed more territories. Under him Kudal Nagar grew into a great city and came to be known as Madurai.

Because of the interest that he took in the promotion of trade, Korkai developed into an emporium of trade. As a man of letters, he extended his patronage to Mangudi Marudananar, who composed Madurai Kanchi. In course of time he came under Brahmanical influences. As a result he turned into a believer in rituals and ceremonies and performed Vedic sacrifices. This led to the rise of Aryan culture in the South and eclipse of Dravidian values. After the death of Nedunjelian, his successors carried on the imperial traditions, but the kalabras eclipsed the Pandyan authority.



The Cholas – Karikala Chola

The early life of Karikalan was marked by intrigues and troubles, created by his rivals. It is pointed out that his rivals in their bid to kill the young prince set fire to the house, where he stayed, but he escaped. In the process his leg was charred and hence he was called Karikalan- a person with charred leg. After his accession to the throne he shifted his capital from Uraiur to Kaveripoompatinam, and reorganized his army and navy in support of his exploits.

A great warrior, Karikalan directed his forces against a combination of the Cheras, the Pandyas and the Velir tribes. In a decisive battle that was fought at Kovil Venni near Thanjavur, he routed the rival powers. Unable to bear this shame, the Chera king Cheralathan committed suicide. The hostile powers reorganized their strength, but in a second battle at Kovi Venni he again defeated them and extended his sway to most of the Tamil Country.

The employment of prisoners of war for forced labour was a barbaric practice of the times. Karikalan fell a victim to this practice and with forced labour he erected embankments to check floods, constructed dams – the Upper Dam (Melaanai) and the Grand Anicut (Kallanai) and excavated canals for taking waters to the fields. By this process he improved irrigation. The ship building activity promoted trade.

THE SANAGAM POLITY

The polity of the times was centered on three crowned monarchs, the cheras in the west, the cholas in the north and the pandyas in the south. The territorial possession of a king was called mandalam and it was divided into nadus, nadu into kottaoms and kottam into kootrams. A kootram was divided into villages – a big village was called perur, a small village was chittoor, while a coastal village was pattinam. The king controlled the central government, while the local body maintained local administration. In fact the polity was based upon a hierarchical system.

The king and his court: Monarchy was an indispensable institution during this period. The king was called ko, while the heir to the throne as 'ilanko'. A ruler with imperial status was called vendan and an ordinary king was known as arasan. The chera, pandya and chola rulers were collectively called 'Mu vendar' of three emperors. The king possessed absolute powers. He was expected to extend to his subjects equal protection and justice before law but in practice this was seldom done. The ancient literature does not appear to record any instance of resistance by the people to the will of the king. This was because peace between the ruler and the ruled as that between father and sons was stressed upon. The essential functions of the king was to provide protection and safe guard the welfare of his people. This required him to be a warrior as well as an administrator, but cannot and nature of these qualities varied from ruler to ruler. The succession to the throne was from father to son. In case of any dispute an elephant with a garland was employed identify the ruler. The person on whom the garland fell was declared as king. The people did not appear to have had any



voice in the selection of their ruler, though elephants were given a role in cases of disputed successions.

Apart from the crowned monarchs there was subordinates feudatories, called velir. Among them were Adigaman of Tagadur kari of Kovalura and pari of parambu. They owned their loyalty to one or the other of the three monarchs, led the army to battle field and shared in the ups and downs of their fortune. Exercising a status of semi independence, they held possession of strips of territories, usually in inaccessible areas.

The royal court consisted of ministers and members of a council. The ministers were usually men of learning or generals, who established their mark in welfare. Perum Kadungo, a poet in the chera court, denounced an unsympathetic and tyrannical minister, who misled the king to oppress his subjects. There are instances in the sangam literature when learned men warned the king against oppressive taxation and unnecessary wars. Still the tendency among learned men was to flatter the king and get favors from him, the council of the king consisted of the princes high officials and learned men. Whenever the king and his queen appeared in the court, they were elegantly dressed with costly costumes and precious stones. Pomp and splendor attended their movements. The council had no power to make laws. On the other hand it respected the conventions and usages in the society to the extent that they served its interests. Apart from the council, there were advisory bodies, the committee of Five and the committee of Eight, each consisting of important officers of state in is no evidence to subscribe to the view of some scholars that the government was conducted with the aid of popular assemblies and representative councils, though representatives of towns found a place in the committee of eight.

The king conducted foreign relations through his ambassadors. They carried the messages to foreign courts and executed the work that was entrusted with them. These agents were to pass on secret about foreign powers, promote friendly relations and take care of commercial interests.

Administration of justice received a limited attention. Normally it was left to the local bodies. Yet the king's council functioned as the highest court. A distinction was made between civil cases and criminal cases. While witnesses were examined, trial by ordeal was also followed. Punishments were severe, for even the theft death penalty was frequently given. Still deceptions and murders were common.

Taxation: The Tamil kings raised a variety of taxes for the support of the government. Land tax was principal source of public income and it was one sixth of the gross produce. The territories of the cheras and the cholas being fertile, they yielded proportionately larger revenue than what the pandya territory did. In the event of failure of crops, remissions were permitted but it is not certain whether the benefit reached the peasants. Apart from land revenue there were other sources of public income which included tolls and customs duties. The tributes that were collected from the feudatories and booty of war obtained from hostile



powers also went to the treasury, But such an income was not always reliable, for when a king was defeated in battle, he was required to pay likewise to the victorious power.

The money that was collected through taxes was partly wasted on royal pleasures and pomp and partly spent on administration. Because of frequent wars mostly on petty issues, a large part of the public income was diverted for the construction of forts. Acquisition of arms and maintenance of armed establishment. As a result material progress was seriously affected.

SOCIETY

Family was the smallest unit of the society. Young men and women had freedom to identify their partners in life and hence love marriages were common. In the Kural, a treatise on moral and social ethics, Tiruvalluvar has devoted one of the three parts of his work to discuss love affairs. However, free choice was discouraged as it led to cheating by men or women. Parents began to arrange marriages for their sons and daughters and they were conducted with rites and ceremonies. In the towns and villages streets were set apart for harlots. Accomplished women were kept by the princes and nobles as their mistresses. Because of marital and extra-marital relations the Tamils of the Sangam age did not experience much of the monotony of life. Yet life in a family was considered as ideal and when a child was born, it was considered a blessing.

The ancient Tamils worshipped a number of deities and spirits. Each natural region of Tamilakam had its own god—Mayon and Tirumal for mullai, Vandan or Indra marudam, cheyon or Murugan for kurinchi and Varunan or Varuna for neithal and Kali or Durga for palai. While Siva was the prominent deity, Muruga was the popular god. In fact the ancient Tamils identified their gods with nature. With the growth of Aryan influence there developed an interaction between the two systems of nature worship. Incidentally Aryan deities too came in for worship. Indra, Varuna, Soma and Yama were worshipped as the guardians of the East, west, North and south respectively.

Sakti or Kortravai, considered as war goddess, was worshipped mostly in forests and deserts. Also the people believed in ghosts, demons and spirits, which roamed about invincibly. In memory of the dead they erected nadukkal or memorial stones and those who died in battles virakkal or hero stones.

The literary works of the Sangam age give sketches about the dress and ornaments of the people. The kind of dress varied from people to people. The workers and farmers roamed about almost nude. So also was the case of the hill tribes, for they covered portions of their bodies with leaves. While the inhabitants of marudam used cotton clothes, the nobles used high quality muslin. The women of the poor classes wore loin cloth covering the waist up to the ankle.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

The Sangam Tamils attached importance to trade, internal as well as external. Though there were no proper roads, bullock carts were employed for the movement of goods. Choultries were established for the welfare of traders and load rests were provided for the relief of load men. The usual practice was the barter system by which goods were exchanged



for goods. Rice, vegetables and salt were the important items of internal trade, while muslin, silk and pearls were those of foreign trade. Musiri, puhar, korkai, thondi and vanchi were the great port towns, which served as emporia of foreign trade. The sea men from the main land sailed in their boats and traded with the nearby tamil areas in lanka. The yavanas reached the coast in their large ships, which were described as the floating palaces. In exchange of gold the foreign vessels took home pearls ivory, silk, precious stones, pepper and timber. We learn from the sangam works and periplus that the rare products of tamilakam found their way to Babylon, Egypt, china, Greece and rome. Large quantity of gold and silver came to the country in exchange of goods. The roman coins mostly of the period of augustus, Tiberius and cladius were discovered in the sites of ancient sea ports. They bear testimony to the extent of trade with foreign countries. As a result sea ports developed and a merchant community emerged. However, it does not appear that the tamils developed their own ship building industry on a large scale. What is evident is that while the foreign merchants came and carried goods from tamilakam, the ancient tamils remained content with what they received from them. They were familiar with navigation of the high sea, but did not make use of this Advantage either for exploration of foreign markets or for colonization of overseas regions. As the early Aryans were not familiar with naval exploits, their growing influence on the tamil appeared as a deterrent to sea faring. Added to these, what the ancient tamils received from Greece and rome did not go to the benefit of the inhabitants. As the yavanas were employed in military establishments and they were depended upon for chariot technology and chariot building, most of what was received from them were not locally developed. This left the country poor and weak.

KALABHRAS

Original Home

The kalabras were a south Indian and Dravidan power but it not certain whether they were Tamil or Kannada by origin. A few scholars are of the view that the Kalabras were a local power in Tamilakam. S.Krishnaswami Iyengar identified the Kalabras with the Kalavar of Tiruvengadam Hills. T.A.Gopinath Rao is of the view that a Mutharaya chief was referred to as Kalavarkalvan and hence the Kalabras could be identified with the Mutharayans of Tamilakam. These scholars on the basis of similarity of names seek to find a Tamil origin for the Kalabras. Their view is that they were a tribal people who made the hilly tracts on the northern borders of the Tamil country their habitat. Though this theory cannot be dismissed as entirely untrue, it should be noted that they were different from the traditional Tamils in language, religion and customs.

Recent researches suggest that Kalabras were of Kannada descent and occupied the hill tracts situated between Karnataka and Tamilakam. Known as Kalavar, Kalabaru and kalabras these people inhabited the hill country referred to as Kalavar Nadu, Kalavappu nadu, Kalappira Nadu and Kalavarthirurahyam in the inscriptions of Karnataka. It should be noted that the words 'nadu' and 'thiru' were in common use both in Tamil and kannada speaking areas. An Inscription from Belur refers to the inhabitants of Kalappira nadu as kalabhora and this area is subsequently called sravana belgola. While the sangam works do



not mention the kalabras, as these works were of earlier period, the asokan edicts refer to them as Kalaburiar, Because of the kadamba invasions, the kalabras moved to Bangalore Kolar- Tirupati belt. Chandragiri situated in Kalavappu nadu, as his area came to be known, was also mentioned as Kalavappupeta.

By mid third century A.D the political and social conditions in the Tamil country appeared favourable for external intervention. The pandyas, the cholas and the cheras of the sangam age were engaged in frequent conflicts, which rendered the country weak and vulnerable to conquest. The Brahmanicals established their hold over the rulers, conferred on them titles and asserted their control over the administration. They acquired possession of villages and fertile lands at gifts and received rich presents from the rulers. The neglect of the language of the land and the favours that were extended to the aliens created wide spread unrest in the country. The Kalabras found possible to take advantage of local contradictions and to establish their rule.

The kalabra conquest

By mid third century the Kalabras moved into the plains of Tamilakam through the hill tracts of Puttur. This marked a continuous of a process of peaceful migration and armed incursion, attempted in the remote past by the Kurumbas and the Jains from the Up country in the north to the plains in the south. The tribes occupies the kongu country and over ran the chola, chera and pandya kings doms. The velvikudi Grant refers to these horders of invaders as brae and ocean like army and tells: "Then a kali king name Kalabran took possession of the extensive earth driving away numerous great kings (adhirajas)". It is not certain whether the traditions powers surrendered to the conquerors and accepted. The Kalabras authority. The Bhuddist and Jain literary traditions suggest that on Achuta Vikranta of Kalava Kula keptin prison the chola,Chera and pandya kings. At his orders the imprisoned monarchs composed the Navalar Charitai in praise of the Kalabras. The karnataks inscriptions refer to one kali deva and the Velvikudi Grant mentionone kaliarasan, meaning wicked ruler. He is identified with Vaduga karunattar, who conquered Madurai. Achuta appears to be family title of these rulers. The Pulankurichi Inscription gives the name of one of the rulers as Kochadan Kuvan, who ruled over the country by 442 A.D. He recognized the administration on the basis of large divisions like Kongu nadu, Chera nadu, Chola nadu and pandya nadu. Vijra Nandi, it is belived founded the madurak Dravida sangam by 470 AD for promoting the growth of literature and spreading Jainism.

At the height of their glory the akalabra kingdom included not only Tamilakam but also Lanka. It had its capital at Kaveripatinam which grew into a great centre of political, culturaland maritime activity. However by the sixth century the Kalabras began to decline. The pandyas, who retained their influence in different parts of the country, regrouped and made common cause with the Pallavas against the Kalabras. Kadungon of the pandyas and Simha Vishnu of the pallavas almost simultaneously attacked the Kalabras and wrested control of Madurai for the Pandyas and Lanchi for the pallavas. As the pallavas pushed southward, the kalabras made an alliance with the cholas, but again suffered reverses. Yet they retained possession of parts of Kongu nadu. Some of the later day rulers are mentioned



as Kandan, Kokkodanm Viranarayanan, Kokkadana ravi, Ravi kandan and Ravi kodai, Engaged in frequent wars against the pandyas, the pallavas and the chalukyas they made their exit from the political scene of Kongu nadu by the ninth century and were replaced by the Konattars.

THE KALABRA LEGACY

As it was mentioned the Brahmanical historians have declared the Kalabra rule as a dark period in the history of Tamilakam. This is because it represented a challenge to Brahmanical ascendancy, Vedic religion and the established order. These scholars are not prepared to accept a predatory tribe emerging into prominence, subverting the political order that developed under the crowned monarchs and Brahmin purohitas. No doubt, it was a dark period in the sense that the Kalabras did not leave behind them much of source material to throw light on their history. Perhaps they were destroyed. Despite this the available sources indicate that their rule represented a turning point in the history of the Tamil country.

For the first time in known history the Kalabras gave political unity to Tamilakam. They subdued the warring powers the pandyas, the cholas and the cheras and brought them under a common authority and extended their sway to the island of Lanka. The country was divided into large provinces or nadus for the preservation of historical identities. Each nadu was divided into mangalams or kurrams and kurram into uras for the convenience of administration. This system continued to remain and was followed by the later powers.

The Kalabras gave considerable importance to trade both inland and foreign. Kaveripattinam grew into a great emporium. Mints were established in Madiurai, Kaveripattinam, Kerala and Lanka and a large variety of coins of different shapes and sizes were issued. The inscriptions on the coins were usually Tamil or Brahmi script. The symbols included ship, fish, crab, bull, elephant, tiger, horse, lotus, flower, plant, sun, moon and star reflecting upon the importance that they gave to sea, forest and nature. If the Jainas were seated on the early coins, the Hindu deities like Siva, Muruga and Vinayaka on the later day coins. These also indicated the abiding interest that they took in trade, religion and local traditions. Made of copper alloyed with zinc, lead and silver the Kalabra coins compared well with the best Gupta coins in artistic elegance.

While the early Kalabras were Buddhists, the later were Jains, Kanchi was made a centre of Buddhism and Madurai that of Jainism. Buddhist viharas and Jain monasteries were built in large number. The Jain monks lived in the eight hills of the Pandya country. Among these hills were Anamalai, Tirupparankudram, Samanarimalai and Sittanavasal. Their viharas and pallis gave instruction in moral lessons, grammar, literature, philosophy and medicine. Saivism and Vaishnavism continued to exist, but as the new rulers refused their patronage, the temples and agraharas were neglected. In fact the Kalabras gave scant regard to the nobles, the Brahmins and Brahmanical deities, as they believed in human dignity, anti Brahmanism and Dravidan traditions.



UNIT II

UNIT-II : PALLAVAS

Pallavas and I Pandyan empire – political history of the Pallavas – society art and architecture – religion – literature I Pandyan Empire – Society and culture – Bhakti Movement – Alvars and Nayanamars – literature – impact.

ORIGIN OF THE PALLAVAS

The theory that held the field for decades was the parthian origin of the pallavas, as was propounded by Vincent Smith in his first edition of *The Early History of India*. V. Venkayya and a few other scholars supported this view. It was asserted that the Pahlavas (Sakas), after they were defeated by the Venkatas, migrated to the south and established their authority at Kanchi. This theory is based upon superficial resemblance of the words Phahlava and Pallava. J. Derbreuil, the French Indologist, has stated that the Pallavas were related to Suviska, the minister of King Rudradaman of Persia, while L. Rico has pointed out that the Pallavas were a central Asian tribe, but there is no evidence to conclude that the Pallavas migrated to the South. The customs and features of the Pallavas were different from those of the Pahlavas. Therefore Vincent Smith himself discarded this theory in his later writings.

Rasanayakam, a scholar of Sri Lanka, represented the Pallavas as a Chola-Naga origin. According to the tradition the first Pallava King was an illegitimate son of the Chola King Killivalavan by a Naga Princess of the island of Manipallavam. R. Gopalan attributes that the Pallavas were the descendants of Ilanthirayan of Manipallavam. These two scholars have claimed a Chola-Naga origin for the Pallavas. It is also stated that the word Pallava is derived from Manipallavam. But on the basis of similarities of words and in the absence of supporting evidences, no specific conclusion can be arrived at.

A few of the scholars have noted a tribal origin for the Pallavas. Robinson is of the view that the Pallavas were a group of North Indians, related to the shepherds. He stated that the Kurumbas and the Kallas, two shepherd communities, migrated from the north joined together, occupied Kanchi and established their authority. R. Sathanatha Iyer is of opinion that Pallava is another form of the word Palada, a variant of the Pulindas, a tribal people, mentioned in Asokan Edicts. But the tribal theory is rejected on the ground that unlike these tribes the Pallavas were much advanced in civilization.

Krishnasamy Ayyangar tells that the Pallavas were the Tondaiyars of Tondaimandalam. The Sangam literature refers to the Pallavas as Tondaiyars, their King as Tondaiman and their Kingdom as Tondaimandalam. They were related to the Nagas, who were not accepted. The Pallavas would have served in the Satavahana Empire but unlike the Nagas they were highly civilized.

H. Krishna Sastri finds a semi Brahmin origin, while T. V. Mahalingam a Brahmin origin for the Pallavas. Krishna Sastri is of the view that the Pallavas were an intermixture of the Brahmin and Dravidians. This theory is based upon a tradition that Skanta Sishya, a founder of Pallava dynasty, was the son of a Brahmin by a Naga woman. But this theory is not based on any specific evidence and is therefore considered as mythological. On the other



hand T.V.Mahalingam has observed that in the inscriptions it is recorded that the Pallavas belonged to the Bharadwaja gotra of the Brahmin. They were local chieftains, but with the fall of the Satavahanas by 174 A.D., they moved out of their territory in Masuipatam and established themselves in the Krishna Basin. Here they were subjected to depredations by the Ikshvakus of Vijayapuri. Therefore by the first half of the second century A.D., they moved southward and carved out a Kingdom of their own at Kanchi. This theory established that the Pallavas were Brahmins, who moved to the Tamil country from outside. As in the case of the Satavahanas their language was Prakrit but they extended their Patronage to Sanskrit language and Bhagmanical religion. These factors establish the acceptability of T.V.Mahalingam's theory.

MAHENDRAVARMAN I

Mahendrvarman I (610-630 A.D.): Also known as Mahendra Vikrama, Mahendra Varman succeeded to the throne by 610 A.D. and ruled over the country for twenty years. He rendered his reign glorious through his significant contributions to religions, art and culture. However, as a conqueror he was a failure.

The period was marked by bitter rivalry between the Pallavas of Kanchi and the Chalukyas of Vatapi for supremacy in South India. Both were great powers on land and sea. In between them there were the Gangas, who usually sided with the Chalukyas. The cause of conflict was political, for the Chalukyas entertained an ambition to extend their territory southward while the Pallavas northward. It is recorded in the Aihole Inscription that Pulakesin II, the powerful ruler of the western Chalukyas, defeated the army of Harsha Vardhana and made the river Narmada his northern frontier. After the victory he turned against the Pallavas in the south. In this venture he was supported by the Eastern Chalukyas and the Gangas. The advancing forces occupied Vengi and marched close to Kanchi. However, as recorded in the Kasakudi plates, the Pallavas defeated the enemies at Pullalur. Through Kanchi was saved, it marked the beginning of a prolonged conflict between the two powers. Having saved his Kingdom, Mahendra Varman found himself free to devote himself to the promotion of culture pursuits.

The reign of Mahendra Varman witnessed the growth of several religious sects in his country, marked by conversions and reconversions. Saivism, Vaishnavism, Jainism and Buddhism were popular during this period. In *Mattavilasaprahasanam* a person, who entered into feuds in the name of religion was to be laughed at, but in practice it was not so. Mahendra Varman was a Jain but became a Saivite under the influence of Appar, who himself was a convert from Jainism. Since his conversion the king persecuted the Jains. It is stated he destroyed the Jain palis and used the material there in for the construction of Hindu temples. To escape the fury of persecution the Jain made frequent exodus from hills to hills, yet many were burnt to death.

Since his conversion to Hindustan, Mahendra Varman devoted his reigns for the development of places of worship. He promoted what was called the Mahendra Style of architecture. In his inscription at Mandagapputhu he claimed that he erected temple for Brahma, Vishnu and Siva by excavating the rocks, without using bricks, timber and



mortar. This marked a revolutionary departure from tradition. Accordingly he was responsible for making rock cut temples at mandagapputhu, Mamandur, Mahendravadi, Trichirapalli and Pallavaram. The Pancha Pandava Cave Temples at Pallavaram and the Pillars in Ekambaranatha Temple at Kanchi are attributed to him. The sculpture of the period was marked by the representations of dancing girls, dwarapalas and avatars. There are remarkable for their elegance and realism. The musical inscriptions at Kudumiyanmalai and Tirumayam too are attributed to this period. The inscriptions and paintings of the cave temples reflected upon the progress that was achieved in these arts.

Mahendra Varman was a man of letters a patron of poets. He wrote two works, *Mattavilsaprahasana* and *Bhagavatajjukiyam* both noted for humour. *Mattavilsaprahasana* was a satire on the Buddhist monks and as such it is of interest to ascertain the social life of the people with reference to religion. It is believed that *Dakshina Chitra*, a Commentary on painting, was written at his instance. Added to these he extended his patronage to men of letters particularly Valmiki, an expert in music.

These suggest that Mahendra Varman was a ruler of many sided achievements, which were in the arts of peace and not of war. Through he lost a part of his territory to the Western Chalukyas, he preserved his hold over his territory in the Tamil Country. It is believed that he constructed the Chitrameha and Mahendravadi lakes for promoting cultivation. Yet it cannot be denied that he kept himself away from the people. What he did was for deities, Brahmins and Sanskrit and not for the common people and Tamil. In fact he employed the resources of the country in pursuit of his fanatical dreams and persecution of other religious sects.

NARASIMHA VARMAN- I

The greatest among the Pallavas was Narasimha Varman. The son and successor of Mahendra Varman. He distinguished himself as a conqueror, patron of Hindu religion and a builder. Widely known as Mamalla and Vatapi Konda, he extended his Kingdom, developed a powerful navy, promoted construction of cave temples and encouraged the growth of Vaishnavism. The Pallavas reached the height of their glory under the rule of this able monarch.

Early in his reign the Western Chalukyas in alliance with the Gangas sent an expedition to Tondaimandalam. The army of Pulakesin II advanced to Kanchi but at Manimangalam the Pallavas inflicted a crushing defeat. This victory is described in the Kuram plates. Not content with this, Narasimha Varman sent a counter expedition under his general Paranjoti. The army defeated the Chalukyas at Suramala and sacked Vadapi, their capital. The triumphant army left an imprint at Vatapi with an inscription about this victory and returned with the Ganesa image from Vadapi as the trophy of war. The Pallava expedition checked the growing power of the Chalukyas and saved Tondaimandalam. But it did not remove the threat of Chalukya invasion. Perhaps because of his pre-occupations in the south, Narasimha Varman made no attempt to destroy the Chalukya power.

In the Island of Lanka Narasimha Varman interfered in a civil war in support of his ally, Mana Varman. As he was driven out of the island Kingdom, Mana Varman took asylum in Tondaimandalam, supported the Pallavas in their northern expedition and sought Pallava aid for the recovery of his Kingdom. The Pallavas possessed a navy and made the port city of



Mamallapuram into a centre of maritime activity. Accordingly after his victory over the Chalukyas, Narasimhan sent two expeditions. The first expedition failed but the second resulted in the defeat of the Lanka army. Mana Varman was restored to the throne and Pallava influence was established in the island.

Taking advantage of the situation created by the Chalukya and Lanka expeditions, the Pandyas asserted their supremacy in Madurai Country. The Pandyan forces advanced to the bank of the Kaveri and defeated the Cholas of Uraiyur. Thereupon they won over the Cholas through a matrimonial alliance between the royal families. The combined forces marched against the Pallavas and defeated them at Sankaramangai. Narasimha Varman sought to throw back the invaders. But it does not appear that he was successful. Towards the end of his reign he interfered in a civil war, that broke out at Vatapi but there too he failed as the Gangas supported the rival camp. A severe famine that affected the country would have contributed to military reverse against the Pandyas and the Chalukyas.

Nevertheless the reign of Narasimhavarman was noted for growth of trade and construction of temple. As a result cities came up Kanchi was great city and Mamallapuram was a great emporium the Chinese Pilgrim Hiuen Tsang who visited south India during the times of Narasimha Varman found Kanchi about eleven kilometres in circumference with about eighty temples and hundred monasteries, Mamallapuram was visited by the sailing vessels from different regions. The Chinese pilgrim had noted that the soil was fertile and well cultivated and the inhabitants were courageous and trust worthy. (**I para pending**)

PALLAVA POLITY

The king claimed divine right and exercised absolute powers. He was the head of the state, combining in himself administrative, military and judicial authority. At his will he appointed ministers and commanders of the forces, collected taxes from the people and exercised judicial powers yet usually as per conventions, real or imaginary. Claiming descent from Lord Brahma, the Pallavas followed inheritance on the male line for succession to the throne. They lived in pomp and show at the expense of the subject population. A Council of Ministers advised the king on matters of administration. **Amethiya** was the principal minister, while the **Purohita** or chief priest was an influential member of the Council. There was also a private secretary to the king and he was called **Rahasyakartha**. There was no organized system of departments, yet secretaries were put in charge of revenue, survey, settlement and military. Justice received no due attention yet courts called **adhikaranam** and local bodies called, **panchayats decided** cases and settled disputes in their own way. **Mathavilasaprahasana** tells of courts that were free from partiality and corruption, but this is not convincing, as the Pallavas followed the Dharmasastras and enforced caste based codes. The people were not equal before law. As a result the courts served as agents for the enforcement of caste based inequalities and consequent oppression of the depressed classes.

The Pallavas collected a variety of taxes. Land revenue was the major source of income. Fields were surveyed and classified before assessment was fixed. As the rulers followed a policy of taking away lands from the peasants and giving them away as tax free brahmadeya and devadana villages to the Brahmins, taxation fell heavily on the low caste peasants. The idea was that let the Brahmins lead a life free from worries so that they could devote themselves to rites and prayers.



As representatives of Brahmanical culture, the Pallavas were strangers to the land. Army was needed not only to enforce their authority on the subject population but also to protect the country against hostile powers. As in the case of the Mauryas and the Guptas, the army consisted of Chathuranga-infantry, cavalry, chariotry and elephantry. Apart from these, as a sea power the Pallavas maintained a navy, that was frequently employed for their exploits over seas.

The Pallavas divided the country into provinces, districts and villages for convenience of administration. Province was called as kottam, district as nadu or kootrum and village as oor or grama. Members of the royal family and influential nobbles held the positions of viceroys and governors. The devadana gramas and the brahmadeya gramas were Brahmin settlements. Mahendra Varman II is credited with the association of local assemblies with the administration of the villages. The inscriptions refer to the uravai of urs and sabhas of grammas as being in charge of local administration. The sub committees of the uravai were known as varyiams and those of the sabha as samoohas. In fact the Pallavas promoted local self government. However, the uravai and sabha were not representative of the local population. This was because the social divisions and caste distinctions came in the way of equal representation.

PALLAVAS Society

The Pallavas as Brahmins believed in Varnashrama dhrama and upheld a caste based social structure. Four groups of people had status in society and in order of influence they were the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras.

The Brahmins were the highest community in the social order. They owned their status not only because of their religious profession but also because of political authority. They were divided into Saiva and Vaishnava Brahmins and local and northern Brahmins, who migrated from the northern regions in search of opportunities. Their functions were religious as well as administrative.

Below in status to the Brahmins were the Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. The Kshatriyas were not numerous, yet they supplied warriors to the army and fought battles for their king. Their method of warfare was traditional and it does not appear that they gave importance to adopting new methods and improved techniques. The Vaisyas were business people while the Sudras were cultivators. Despite their services to the populations, they commanded no respect in the society.

The merchants dealt with agricultural and industrial products. They were not free from danger of theft and murder. Because of high way robbery and frequent dacoity, the merchants used to move in convoys. Exports and imports kept maritime commerce going. The Arab and Chinese merchants maintained maritime contacts with the Pallavas. Coins made of gold, silver and copper and usually bearing the emblem of bull and two ships were in circulation.

Food and dress habits of the common people were quite simple for they had no other go, Rice and animal products formed the food of the inhabitants. The rich people had more



luxurious food. Coarse cloth gave cover to the poor, while silk and ornaments adorned to the attire of the wealthy.

Status of women varied from community to community and from class to class. Much depended upon poverty and wealth. While the rich women made their appearances with ornaments of gold and diamond, the poor contended themselves with palm leaves, beads and shells. As per tradition woman was dependent on her father, then husband and then son, hence was never independent. That was the case with the Pallava society too. Arranged marriages and early marriages were common.

PALLAVA ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The significant contributions that the Pallavas made to temple architecture and fine arts rendered their age memorable in history. They patronized and developed wonderful forms and styles in constructions, sculpture, painting and other arts. The cave temples, stone rathas and structural shrines are some of the glories of the age.

The Pallavas were builders of great temples and other monuments of art. The cave temples at Tiruchirapalli, the chariots of Mahabalipuram and the shore temples in Mahabalipuram Beach are noted for their unique style and artistic perfection. The Pallavas developed four styles of architecture. The Mahendra style, the Mamalla style, the Rajasimha style and the Aparajita style. Mahendra Varman I is credited with the Mahendra style of architecture. It is distinguished by its simplicity and is best represented by the cave temples and rock cut shrines at Pallawaram, Mamandur and Tiruchirapalli, Narasimha Varman I is associated with what was called Mamalla or Mahamalla style of architecture. It is marked by ornamentation in cave temples and cut out shrines and is represented by the Ten Mantapas at Mahabalipuram. The Rajasimha style named after king Rajasimha, represents a transition from stone to brick architecture. Instead of stone, brick and timber came to be used. It is marked by brick structure, lofty tower, and flat roofed halls and is represented in the Kailasanatha temple and Vaikuntaperumal Temple at Kanchi. The Kailasanatha Temple, the largest of the Pallavashrines, is not only well proportioned but also elegant in its appearance. The Aparajita style marks the transition from Pallava to Chola and is represented by the rock out shrines.

The sculptural descriptions of themes impart grandeur to the Pallava monuments. Human beings, animals like lion, elephant and monkey and legendary stories like Arjuna's penance and gangavathara are carved out on caves and walls with remarkable clarity. The figure of devas, nagas and flying angels that are depicted with masterly realism and variety to the sculptural beauty. An ascetic cat is represented as standing erect with uplifted hands, while trustful mice as playing at its feet. The sculptures of Surya and Durga, battle of Durga with Mahisha, Krishna raising the Govardhana Hill and Vishnu reclining on a serpent and the portrait of a monkey family are executed with elegance. In fact the legendary and puranic themes are found engraved with artistic realism.

The paintings of the period are found on pillars, walls and roofs of mandapas and temples. In the Mamandoor Inscription the keen interest that Mahendra Varman took in



painting is mentioned. Sittannavasal in Pudukkottai and the temples at Kudumiyanmalai and Thirukkokarnam are the best illustrations of Pallava paintings. Purnanic characters, dancing girls and veena players are the usual themes for painting. In the Kailasanatha Temple the dancing poses including the Tendava Dance of Siva are illustrated. The mandpas of temples were used for theatrical performances. The dancing girls performed dance and musical entertainments.

Education and learning received much attention. The Jains and the Buddhists maintained schools and imparted learning in Tamil language to scholars irrespective of caste. But because of persecution they declined. In the gadhikas-residential institutions maintained by rulers, admission was restricted to the Brahmin scholars. While philosophy, yogas, theology and medicine were taught in Tamil in the Jain and Buddhist pallis, the Vedas, Dharma Sastras, Itihas and Ayurveda were taught in Sanskrit in the gadhikas. The Jains extended their patronage to Tamil-the language of the common people. The Pallavas on the other hand extended their patronage to Sanskrit. Bharani and Dandin were the great poets in Sanskrit. Avantisundarakathasara, Kiratharuniyam and Mathavilasa Prahasana were the literary productions in Sanskrit. Kundalakesi, Neelakesi and Valayapathi were among the other works of the age.

THE FIRST PANDYAN EMPIRE

The Pandyas of the Sangam Age drifted into obscurity with the advent of the Kalabras. During the Kalabra ascendancy they remained as a local and subordinate power. However by mid sixth century the Pandyas in the south and the Pallavas in the north fought against the Kalabras and wrested control of the territories. By 575 A.D. Kadumkon, the chief of the Pandyas, asserted the independence of Pandyamandalam. This marked the beginning of the First Empire of the Pandyas and coincided with the rise of the Pallavas in Tondaimandalam. The successors of Kadumkon had to fight frequent battles against the Pallavas and the Chalukyas for the control of the Kaveri basin. One of these princes by name Sendan Cheliyan defeated the Cholas and the Cheras. He consolidated his authority and expanded the Pandya kingdom to the Kaveri.

Arikesari Maravarman, popularly known as Koon Pandyan, was a diplomat and warrior. He succeeded Maravarman by 640 A.D. and strengthened his position through marriage with a Chola princess. By religion he was a Jain, but after his conversion to Saivism he persecuted the Jains. Taking advantage of the Pallava-Chalukya conflict, he extended his empire northward; but it provoked a conflict with the Pallavas and there followed a prolonged war between the two powers. One of his successors was Maravarman Raja Simha. In a civil war in the Pallava kingdom he supported Chitrimeya against Nadvirman Pallavamalla. The defeat of Chitrimeya resulted in a Pallava invasion of the Pandya country. However, Raja Simha defeated the Pallavas and occupied Kongu Nadu. The war between the two powers continued under the son and successor of Raja Simha, Jatila Parantaka Nedunjadaiyan (765-815 A.D.) A great warrior, he defeated a combination of powers, who rallied to the support of the Pallavas. Thus he subdued the Muthurayars, Adigaman and the Aye king of Venad. As a result of these victories, he asserted the Pandya hegemony in the south and kept the Pallavas



under check. The successors of Nedunjadaiyan found it difficult to continue the war against the Pallavas and the Cholas. Parantaka Chola defeated the Pandya ruler Raja Simha II by about 920. A.D. and occupied Madurai. This marked the end of the First Empire. Rajendra Chola appointed one of his sons as viceroy in the Pandya country with the title of Chola Pandya and reduced the status of the Pandyas into a subordinate power.

BHAKTI MOVEMENT

The Bhakti Cult that assumed prominence in Tamilakam of the age of the Pallavas and the Pandyas represented a spiritual awakening, centred on Brahminical devotionalism. Between 600 A.D. and 900 A.D. the Pallavas held possession of the northern region while the Pandyas the southern region. The keen rivalry between these powers and the repeated wars, that the Cheras, the Cholas, the Muttarayas and the Ganges fought, spread destruction and desolation on an extensive scale. Jainism and Buddhism were the dominant religions but the conflict between these two added to the suffering of the inhabitants. In this period of gloom there emerged a group of devotees, who moved from temple to temple, singing and chanting hymns in praise of Brahminical and traditional deities. The musical element of the hymns was adapted to traditional tunes in Tamil. They called upon the people for a total surrender to the love of god and to take refuge at his feet as the only way for peace and happiness. This had its impact upon a people who were longing for a personal god to love, admire and worship during this period of turmoil. The wave of devotionalism that came therein represented a wide spread reaction against Jainism and Buddhism. As a movement the Bhakti Cult was both religious and literary and it worked through Saivism as well as Vaishnavism. To begin with the Saiva and Vaishnava saints worked in close co-operation with each other but when the challenge presented by Jainism and Vaishnavism disappeared, the two sects turned rivals.

The leaders of this movement were the Nayanmars of Saivism and Alvars of Vaishnavism. It is mentioned in Tiruthondaitokai that there flourished sixty three Nayanmars, of whom the most popular were Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Manickavasagar. Appar, otherwise called Tirunavakkarasar, was a Jain but he converted himself to Saivism and in his turn converted the Pallava king Mahendravarman I from Jainism to Saivism. The two converts did much for their new religion. Appar composed devotional songs, sang at temples, founded mutts and revived worship where it was neglected. His language being simple, lucid and sweet, the hymns that he composed became popular. Sambandar a follower of Appar was a great scholar. He held the Jains in contempt and ridiculed their way of living-shaven heads and ways of eating. From Jainism he won over the Pandyan prince Nedumaran and carried on a crusade against the Jains. Sundarar was noted for the variety and entertainment of his compositions. He carried his devotional mission to the Chera country, where he established a close association with King Cheraman Perumal. Manickavasagar was a minister to the Pandyas but renounced his position to become a devotee to Siva. With Chidambaram as the centre of his activity he wrote a series of works particularly the Tiruvasagam, where we discern the ripening of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. There were twelve Alvars of the Vaishnavite movement. Among them the well known were Nammalvar, Tirumangai Alvar



and Kulasekara Alwar. The Vaishnavites consider Nammalvar as the greatest among the Alwars because of his significant contributions to their scriptures. Tirumangai Alwar was a voluminous writer, who wrote in praise of Vishnu and his divine love. Kulasekara Alwar, a ruler turned writer, wrote verses on Rama and Krishna, the incarnations of Vishnu and contributed to the spread of Rama cult. Sankara who propounded advaita philosophy was born at Kalady in the Chera country. He visited the pilgrim centres of India and founded mutts at Kanchi and other places.

The tenets of the Bhakti Movement are found in the Thevaram and Thiruvachakam – two collections of songs of the Nayanmars and Divya Prabandham – a collection of songs of the Alwars. They sing in praise of a mysterious power whether it was Siva or Vishnu in the guise of human personalities for love and worship. People are to lift out of their base nature and through devotionism surrender to god and take shelter for divine love. The Nayanmars saw god in the form of love and love as siva. The Alwars saw Vishnu in the form of a child and a companion. Service to mankind, devotion or Yoga and learning or gnana were their ideals. They too stressed upon the need to control the senses and advocated total surrender to god. The songs of the Nayanmars and Alwars spread a wave of devotionism and led to a spiritual awakening in the land.

The Bhakti Movement represented a reform movement in Hinduism comparable to similar movements in Christianity and Confucianism. Jainism and Buddhism believed in the virtues of social equality, approached the people through their own language and practiced non-violence. Hinduism on the otherhand believed in social inequality, caste system, sacrifice and ritualism. However, under the impact of Bhakti Movement an attempt was made to approach the people through their own language namely Tamil and to give due recognition to the need for service. What added to the strength of the movement was the integration of Dravidian and Brahmanical concepts Still the caste based inequality was not abandoned and Sanskrit was not ignored.

The Bhakti Cult had far reaching consequences, both good as well as evil. It spread a new awakening and contributed to the revival of Hinduism. So long Brahminical religion remained dormant and weak. The Brahmin priests were preaching philosophy in isolated temples and performing rites in a strange language Sanskrit. These restricted the influence of their religion. Now the Brahminical religion accepted local gods and religious traditions of the Tamils and emerged as a powerful religious system. It won the support of the ruling powers the Pallavas and the Pandyas and consolidated its hold upon the people Temples, mutts, Brahmins and Sanskrit assumed a new importance. Old temples were renovated, new temples were built and all were equipped with endowments and devadasis. Temple emerged as the centre of cultural activity. Also it led to the development of devotional literature. The poets of the age composed devotional songs in Tamil, adapted to traditional Tamil tunes. This development brought religious poetry close to the people. Incidentally music passed almost completely under temple control. However, many of the consequences did considerable harm to the society. Devotionalism brought in its wake extreme fanaticism. As the rulers and priests joined together, they turned against the Jains and the Buddhists. They denounced their



religions, attacked them in public and there began an orgy of destruction and killing. Supported by the rulers, the fanatics plundered and burnt the pallis and viharas, chased rival religionists from place to place and hunted them down. Nambi Andar Nambi recorded that Sambandar committed 8000 Jains to the gallows. Like wise Tirumangai Alwar was responsible for the slaughter of the Buddhists. The Jains had their settlements at Vallimalai, Tirukattupalli and Nagamalai while the Buddhists had their seats of learning at Kanchipuram and Nagapattinam, but they disappeared in the midst of mole fury, directed against them. At the same time Brahminism with the attendant evils consolidated itself. The Hindu revivalism left the Brahmins at the top and they enforced the caste system and untouchability in their rigorous forms. The theory of racial superiority was ignored by the Tamils of the Sangam Age and it was condemned by the Kalabras, the Jains and the Buddhists. Now it raised its ugly head and dominated social relations. Carried away by spiritualism, the Tamils found themselves enslaved to an abnoxious system. The importance that was given to Sanskrit vitiated Tamil language too. Sanskrit words replaced Tamil words and flooded Tamil vocabulary. The result was development of manipravalam a hybrid language of Tamil and Sanskrit. In the Chera country the manipravalam transformed into a distinct language- Malayalam. In consequence the Chera country was lost to the Tamils. Worse still the Bhakti Movement jeopardised the intellectual and economic progress of Tamilakam for the best brains of the age engaged themselves in a futile search into the realm of mystery. Instead of turning to discoveries and inventions they turned to the composition of songs and hymns. The country produced devotees and exploiters and not scientists and contributors. Together with this kind of exercise the rulers and priests diverted the resources of the country for the construction of temples and mutts, equipped with endowments, agraharas and dancing girls.



UNIT – III : IMPERIAL CHOLAS

Imperial Cholas and II Pandyan Empire – Raja Raja – Rajendra – over seas expedition – Temples – architecture – literary growth – administration – II Pandyan Empire – Civil War – Marco Polo’s observation – society – muslim invasion – Madurai sultanate.

IMPERIAL CHOLAS

The decline of the Pallavas and the Pandyas contributed to the ascendancy of the Cholas. The Kalabras and subsequently the Pallavas ruled over Cholamandalam, yet they could not destroy the Cholas. The copper plates, stone inscriptions and literary works of the period frequently refer to the Chola princes of the period. In fact with their seat of power at Palayarai near Kumbakonam, they continued to hold on as tributaries. The aggressive wars waged by the Pandyas weakened the Pallavas and in between them the Cholas survived as a minor power. However in the ninth century A.D. inter-power conflicts of the Pallava and Pandya kingdoms presented opportunities for the revival of the Cholas, into a formidable power.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The sources of the history of the Cholas are not only numerous but also varied. Inscriptions, coins and literature throw considerable light on the history, administration, economy and related matters of South India under the Cholas.

The stone inscriptions and copper plates record the achievements of the rulers. Raja Raja I is credited with issuing a prasasti, giving an account of the work of the king. It was revised from period to period so as to include the subsequent developments. These prasastis are of help not only to work out the chronology of the Cholas but also to reconstruct their history. The important inscriptions are the Thiruvallangadu Plates, Sitamalli Stone Inscription and Uttiramerur Inscription. Apart from these there are the temple inscriptions at Tanjore. The inscriptions of the Pandyas, the Cheras and the Rashtrakutas too shed light on the history of the Cholas.

Apart from epigraphy, numismatics is of help to the historian. The Cholas issued coins in gold and silver, carrying the Chola symbol of tiger. Uttama Chola, Raja Raja I and Kulottunga I issued numerous coins. These coins yield information on administration and indicate the progress in metallurgy and the art of numismatics.

The literary sources are both local and foreign. The Sangam Literature yields much information about the early Cholas. The works of the Bhakti saints too give references to the Cholas. Thus the Thevaram and Thiruvachakam songs mention about the Cholas. Kalingatuparani of Jayamkondar describes the expedition of Kulottunga I to Kalinga. Periapuranam of Sekkilar deals with the times of Kulottunga II. The inscriptions of Asoke and Ramayana of Kambar mention about the Cholas. Ptolemy, the Greek geographer, too gives information about the country of this period.



The different sources have enabled the historians to work out the geneology of the Cholas and to ascertain the developments under their rule. The most celebrated of the Chola inscription is the Uttaramerur Inscription of the reign of Parantaka I. It is from this source that the working of local self government of the Cholas is studied. The literary sources supplement and complement the epigraphic and numismatic sources in giving an almost comprehensive account about the Cholas. Of added importance are the inscriptions of neighbouring and rival powers

REVIVAL OF THE CHOLAS – PARANTAKA I

The Cholas, who were languishing under the Kalabras and the Pallavas for long, came into political prominence under Vijayalaya during the later half of the ninth century. Taking advantage of the pre-occupation of the Pandyas in the island of Lanka, Vijayalaya (850—871 A.D) defeated the Muthurayas who were feudatories to the Pandyas, took Tanjore and made it his capital. His son Aditya I (871-907 A.D) married the daughter of the Chera king Sthanu Ravi and strengthened his position. He supported the Pallavas against the Pandyas and won possession of more territories as a reward. Confident of his strength, he turned against the Pallavas, defeated and killed their ruler Aparajita. This resulted in the annexation of Tondaimandalam with the Chola kingdom. After this victory Aditya occupied Kongu Nadu from the Pandyas and extended his kingdom to the western hills. However the conquest of Kongu nadu strained Cholachera relations for long.

Parantaka I (907-950 A.D), son of Aditya Chola, was the greatest of the Cholas of the Vijayalaya line. He followed the aggressive policy of his father with remarkable success and became the founder of Chola greatness. As his father did, he too entered into matrimonial alliance with the Cheras and through their support consolidated his influence. He fought against the Pallavas, now a minor power, and suppressed their influence. In the far south he conquered the Pandyas and occupied Madurai by 910 A.D. The Pandyan ruler Rajasimha II fled to Lanka and forging an alliance with the ruler of the island sought to avenge his defeat. But Parantaka led a second expedition to Madurai and defeated the rivals. Thereupon the Pandyan prince took asylum with the Cheras. After this victory he assumed the title. Madurayum Elavum Konda-the king who conquered Madurai & Elam, BY 911 A.D. When the Cholas were pre-occupied in the Iwar against the Pandyas, Krishna III, the Rashtrakuta king, advanced towards Thanjavur, but was defeated at Thiruvallur. As a result of these wars, Parantaka extended his kingdom from the Bay of Mannar to river North Pennar. To protect the borders he established military posts in the south and in the north. However, towards the end of his reign, he suffered defeat and humiliation. Krishna III in alliance with other powers sent a powerful expedition against Thanjavur. In the battle at Takkolam in 949 A.D. the Cholas were defeated and their crown prince Rajaditya was killed. The Rastrakudas sacked Thanjavur, ravaged the Chola country and annexed the northern provinces. This was a serious blow to the Prestige of Parantaka and the Cholas.

Despite his chequered career in war Parantaka took interest in arts, letters and local self government. A Saivite, he promoted construction of temples and erected a gold roofed tower on the Nataraja Shrine at Chidambaram. Due to his encouragement, Chidambaram



became a centre of religious learning. Extending his support to scholars, particularly Venkata Madhava, the king assumed the title, Pandita Vatsala. However, like the Pallava princes he too fell a victim to Brahminism. He made rich donations to Brahmins and his support to them led to the consolidation of Aryan influence in South India. Still a notable feature of the administrative system under Parantaka was the village self government. This is described in the Uttaramerur Inscription.

The Cholas suffered an eclipse under the successors of Parantaka. This was because of frequent expeditions of the Pandyas and the Rashtrakutas. Though the rulers became weak, they continued to make donations to the Brahmins and build temples for worship. As a result they frittered away the resources of the state and neglected the welfare of the people.

CHOLA IMPERIALISM – RAJA RAJA I AND RAJENDRA I

The reign of Raja Raja (985-1014 A.D) is remarkable for the many sided achievements of the Cholas in war, diplomacy, administration, architecture and arts. Son of Parantaka II, one of the later rulers of the Vijayalaya line, he was destined to become the greatest of the imperial Cholas. On his accession to the throne, he found his kingdom threatened by a combination of hostile powers-the Pandyas, the Lankans and the Cheras. Therefore he devoted himself to the reorganisation of the administration and consideration of his influence. Accordingly he improved his administration and strengthened his army and navy. After achieving this task, he embarked upon a career of conquests and expansion.

The Thanjavur inscriptions portray the military and naval exploits of the Cholas under Raja Raja. Early in his reign he invaded Then Pandi Nadu and subdued the Pandyas. Madurai and the rest of the Pandya country became part of the Chola Empire. Next it was the turn of the Cheras, who were allied with the Pandyas. Advancing through Aramboly, the Chola army as mentioned in the Suchindram Inscription, defeated the Cheras at Vizhinjam and annexed Venad. Assisted by the navy, the Chola army attacked and destroyed the Chera army and navy at Kandaloor Salai near Trivandrum. Bhaskara Ravi Varma, the Chera ruler, fled to Quilon. Thereupon the Chola forces advanced as far as Kodungallur and erected a Siva Temple to commemorate their victory. As a next step, Raja Raja decided to conquer the island powers, which were frequently allied themselves with the Pandyas and the Cheras. Taking advantage of military revolt in Lanka, he sent an expedition to the island. The Cholas occupied northern region of the island and renamed it as Mumudicholamandalam. The victorious army raided Anuradhapura and destroyed it. Polannaruvai was made the capital of the Cholas in the island and a Siva temple was built there. A naval expedition that was sent westwards led to the conquest of 12,000 Ancient Islands-the Maldives-as described in the inscriptions.

After consolidating his hold over the south, Raja Raja moved against the northern powers. He had to deal with the Gangas, Eastern Chalukyas, Western Chalukyas and Kalingas. The cause of war against the Gangas was their hostility against the Cholas and their frequent interference in the border provinces. The Chola army occupied Gangavadi and annexed most of the Mysore territory from the Gangas. In his war against the Western Chalukyas, he found



it necessary to win the support of the Eastern Chalukyas. There broke out a civil war between two brothers of the ruling dynasty and the elder prince Sathia Varman sought the aid of the Cholas. Accordingly Raja Raja defeated the rival prince, Bhima and assisted Sathia Varman to regain his throne. Also he gave his daughter in marriage to a Chalukyan prince. This alliance not only strengthened the Cholas but also led to the merger of the two dynasties. The Western Chalukyas now experienced humiliation at the hands of the Cholas. Raja Raja's army invaded their country and annexed the territories on the Tunga Bhadra In the north east the Cholas led an expedition to Kalinga. These conquests greatly expanded the Chola Empire.

Not only did Raja Raja annex extensive territories but also did take effective measures for their administration. Thus he divided the Empire into mandalams and Valandus for proper administration and entrusted the villages with the local bodies. In fact he promoted local self government and made it effective. Finances of the Empire received due attention. Accordingly, he improved the collection of taxes through proper survey and assessment. It was significant that he under took a land survey by 1000 A.D. To maintain order and to defend the land and sea borders he kept a large army and navy. They proved effective in the territorial and naval exploits of the Cholas. In his attempt to promote overseas trade he sent a trade mission to China.

Raja Raja possessed a historical sense much unlike the rulers of the times and took a keen interest in promoting learning, religion and arts. To his inscriptions he made it a practice to give historical introduction. In fact he sought to impart a peep into the past. He permitted Sri Vijaya, the Buddhist ruler of the Sailendra Empire in South East Asia, to build a monastery at Nagapatnam. As a Saivite he promoted his religion and patronised the compilation of Saivite literature. As a builder of temples, he immortalised his name in structural arts. Among the temples that he built the Great Temple at Thanjavur is the best known. Even today it remains as the most renowned specimen of Dravidian architecture. Despite these achievements, he like the other rulers of South India of his times fell a victim to Brahminical influence. The inscriptions suggest that he wasted the resources of the state on rich donations to the Brahmins and on the regular performance of Vedic rites and ceremonies. Incidentally he created an idle class of people, depending upon charity of the state. Because of his daring exploits he created a large Empire, but this was not followed by consolidation of authority. His successors had to fight a series of wars to hold it together and under weak rulers the provinces went apart, causing the disappearance of the Empire.

Rajendra Chola [1012-1044 A.D.] Son and successor of Raja Raja, Rajendra Chola was equally great as his father was in war, diplomacy and administration. Beginning with the imperial legacy that he inherited, he greatly expanded the Empire and made the Cholas the greatest power in India. The Empire reached the zenith of its glory, with vast possessions overseas, added to it.

The wars of Rajendra Chola were directed towards the achievement of a three fold purpose—1 consolidation of Chola influence over the traditional rivals – Pandyas, Cheras, Lankans, Gangas and Chalukyas, 2 extension of Chola supremacy from Kalinga to Bengal and 3 establishment of commercial supremacy in South East Asia.



Consolidation of authority presented a serious problem early during his reign, for the local powers revolted and presented challenges to Chola authority. The Pandyas, Cheras and Lankans, despite their defeat by Raja Raja, maintained their traditional alliance and proved defiant. Therefore by 1020 A.D. Rajendra sent an expedition to the Madurai country and suppressed the Pandyas. He appointed one of his sons as Viceroy at Madurai. From Madurai the Chola army moved southward and defeated the Chera forces in a series of battles that were fought at Kottar, Vizhinjam and Kandalur. King Bhaskara Ravi Varma escaped to an island. The Cholas brought the conquered territory under their direct control and made it a part of their Madurai province. However, the Cheras reorganised their defences and made an attempt to reassert their independence. Thereupon the Chola army took the field a second time and destroyed Mahodayapuram, capital of the Second Chera Empire. This victory gained for the Cholas control of western trade and territory. Yet to break the traditional alliance against the Cholas; it appeared essential to conquer the entire island of Lanka. The Karandai Plates give an account of the war against the island power. From Elam the Chola forces marched into the Sinhala territory, defeated the rival forces and captured King Mahinda V as prisoner. They conquered the island and declared it as a province of the Empire. This was in 1017 A.D. In the Maha Vamsa, a Buddhist chronicle, the destruction of the towns in Lanka by the Chola forces is mentioned. By this time the Chalukyas of Kalyani re-asserted their influence and regained possession of their territories. This required another expedition against them. In his bid to strengthen his position he gave his daughter in marriage to the king of the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi and won over his support. Thereupon he occupied Banavasi from the Gangas, crossed into the land of the Western Chalukyas and attacked them at Maski. In this battle the Kalingas supported the Western Chalukyas. The outcome of this war was not known; it appears that the Cholas suffered a defeat. However in a second expedition Rajendra defeated the Chalukyas at Maski. The Chola inscription states that Jeyasimha, the ruler of Kalyani, turned his back at Masagi [Maski] and hid himself and Rajendra assumed the title Jeyamkonda Chola. As a result of this victory the Tunga Bhadra frontier of the Chola Empire was made secure.

The hostile combination of the Kalingas with the Western Chalukyas forced the Cholas to undertake a major expedition to the north east. Determined to take vengeance, the Cholas invaded Kalinga and plundered the region. From Orissa the invading forces advanced to the Gangas, They defeated the rulers, Dharmapala and Mahipala and marched through Kosala. After two years of Warfare in the north the victorious army returned to the homeland. To commemorate these victories, Rajendra excavated a new lake, poured into it the water that was brought from the Ganga and called it Cholagangam. Also he assumed the title Gangaikonda Cholan and created a new capital called Gangai Konda Cholapuram. It was to the credit of this illustrious prince that he carried the Chola flag to the Ganga, but it is not certain whether he could consolidate his authority.

A more daring expedition was that he sent across the seas to Sri Vijaya (Kataram) in South East Asia. The causes were the restrictions imposed by the ruler of Sri Vijaya upon Chola trade with South East Asia. An opportunity came when Suryavarman of Kamboja sought the aid of the Cholas against his rival ruler. Accordingly Rajendra sent a naval



expedition. It landed on the island of Sumatra and defeated the forces of Sri Vijaya and captured its capital Kataram. The occupied territory was formed into a Chola province with a Chola prince as viceroy. In his attempt to secure the overseas possessions against external threats and to promote trade Rajendra sent expeditions to Burma and Malaya too and a good will mission to China.

In fact as a result of thrilling exploits Rajendra created a far flung Empire. He extended the sphere of Chola imperialism from Lanka to the Ganges and from Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean-a remarkable venture that no Indian ruler ever attempted. However, it cannot be said that consolidation proceeded together with expansion. In consequence Cholas found it beyond their means to exercise their authority and to keep their possession under their sway, for long.

To promote cultivation Rajendra executed irrigation projects. Cholaganagam Lake was intended for irrigation. The Kataram expedition was aimed at promoting over seas trade. As a lover of arts and architecture, he built the city of Gangaikonda Cholapuram and beautified it with shrines and monuments. Being a Saivite, he built Siva temples. As his father did he made rich endowments for the support of the Brahmins. Vedic schools were established and free feeding houses were established for them. However it can not be denied that this kind of treatment of a few worked against principles of social equality and public welfare.

The three sons of Rajendra succeeded one after the other to the throne. Their rule was marked by the outbreak of disturbances in different provinces. Rajadhi Raja died in battle at Koppam, fought against the Western Chalukyas. However, the second son Rajendra II defeated them at Koodalsangamam. Vira Rajendra continued the war against the Chalukyas and killed their ruler Someswara in the second battle of Koodalsangamam. Because of these victories the Chola Empire could be defended against the Chalukyas.

CHOLA CHALUKYAS – KULOTHUNGA I [1070-1120A.D.]

In the seventh decade of the eleventh century the Chola Empire passed under the control of the Chola Chalukyas. Rajadhiraja of the main line died childless and this led to the succession of Kulothunga, son of Raja Raja's daughter by the Eastern Chalukya prince. With his accession the Chola Empire and the Vengi Kingdom were united under a common rule. However he had to deal with disturbances created by internal and external powers. Through war and diplomacy he sought to maintain his extensive Empire; but without any relative success.

The Cholas under Kulothunga had to fight frequent wars against the subordinate powers – the Pandyas, the Cheras and the Lankans. Taking advantage of the internal troubles of the Cholas, these powers formed themselves into an alliance and sought to assert their independence. This development led to wars in the southern region of the Empire. The Chola army took the field against the Pandyas. At the critical moment the expected assistance from Lanka did not reach, as a result of which the Pandyas submitted and paid tribute. The war against the Cheras appeared a difficult task because of mountain terrains and the death squads



employed against the Chola forces. The rival powers fought a series of battles at Kottar and Vizhinjam and the Cholas marched up to Kollam; yet the Cheras could not be subdued and military posts were to be set up for protection, of the conquered territories. In the island of Lanka Vijayabahu reoccupied the southern provinces. The next ruler Virabahu re-occupied the territories extending upto Anuradhapura. In consequence the Cholas lost possession of most of the island. Against Kalinga Kulothunga sent two expeditions. The first expedition that was sent in 1096 A.D. quelled the revolt in South Kalinga, that was then part of the Vengi province. The second expedition that was led by Karunakara Tondaiman marched across a number of rivers, and defeated the forces of Kalinga. This was a significant victory and it is narrated by the Jain poet Jayamkondar in his work **Kalingattupparani**.

However, as years passed by Kulothunga found it more and more difficult to control the situation. Lanka island and the Chera country asserted their independence. During his last years he lost more of the provinces. The Western Chalukyas occupied Vengi. The Hoysalas gained control of Gangavadi and made incursions into Cholamandalam. Kulothunga maintained friendly relations with Varanasi and Kanouj. In 1070 A.D. an embassy came from Sumatra in connection with a festival in the Buddhist monastery at Nagapatnam.

Though the Empire was reduced in extent Kulothunga ensured for the Cholas a century of peace. He conducted a land survey in 1086 A.D. and abolished a number of burdensome taxes. Further, he promoted the growth of commerce and culture. Trade with China and Sri Vijaya continued to flourish. The court consisted of several men of letters – the Jain poet Jayamkondar, the author of Kalingattupparani, Sekkilar the author of Periyapuram and several others. The Vaishnava saint Ramanuja lived during this period. As a staunch Saivite, Kulothunga built temples and gave rich donations for the promotion of music, dance and worship. Among the Chola monarchs, Kulothunga was perhaps the most benevolent and he came to be called **Sungam Thavirtha Cholan** – the Chola who gave relief from taxes.

The successors of Kulothunga were Vikrama Chola, Kulothunga II, Raja Raja II, Rajadhi Raja and Kulothunga III. Some of these rulers were able, but they found themselves engulfed in increasing disorders. In the absence of a common enemy in the Jains or the Buddhists, the Hindus came to be divided into two warring groups – Saivites and Vaishnavites. Frequently the external powers sided with one section or other in their conflicts. The situation appeared much similar to that in the Christian world when it divided into Catholics and Protestants and Islamic world when it divided into Shiah and Sunnis. The conflicts, though were confined to influential sections, weakened the Chola Empire. Besides, the Cholas lost the sympathy of the common people. Entrenched in power for long, they allied themselves with the high castes and were lost in pleasures, worship, rites and ceremonies. Interest in the masses and progress of economy received no attention. Added to these, the Cholas never made any serious attempt to create a power structure in which the fellow Tamils – the Pandyas and the Cheras could identify themselves. At the same time they never succeeded in destroying the influence of defeated powers – whether they were the Pandyas or the Chalukyas. These rendered the collapse of the Cholas inevitable. By 1279



A.D. the Pandyas under Jatarvarman defeated the Chola ruler, Rajendra III and wiped out the relics of the Chola Empire.

ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE CHOLAS

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

In the imperial system of the Cholas the king called himself emperor and was considered as an incarnation of Vishnu. With the titles like Rajakesari and Parakesari he possessed absolute powers and headed the administrative system. Succession to the throne was from father to son. In an attempt to render it orderly the king appointed a Yuva raja as heir apparent and gave him training in administration, diplomacy and warfare. As the Pallava kings did, the Chola rulers too lived in pomp and toured the provinces with all paraphernalia of splendor. In the administration of the Empire the ministers particularly the chief priest guided the ruler. The officers of state were of two categories – of higher grade called Perunthanam and of lower grade Known as Siruthanam. The Tiruvaikelvis – attending secretaries who listened to oral orders of the Emperor – conveyed royal orders to the secretaries for implementation.

To support the royal household, official set up and armed establishment, the king raised revenue from a variety of sources. Land tax formed the principal source of income. Lands were surveyed and assessed, land registers were kept and usually one third of the income was collected as share of the state either in cash or in kind. Apart from this, the state collected taxes on professional such of oil mongers, weavers, gold smiths and pottery makers, tolls from carts and levies on salt, forests and mines. It is clear that these ran to a large variety and some of them had crippling effect on the toiling people. Kulothunga Chola abolished some of these oppressive taxes and gave relief to the people. Nevertheless the peasants had to give bribes and serve food to the tax collections in their bid to escape harassment. They appeared to have suffered under an oppressive system without resisting it.

The money that was so collected was spent on the royal court, construction of palaces, temples and forts, management of the administration and maintenance of armed forces and support to agraharas. The officers of state were given their salary in the form of yield from lands allotted to them and the irrigation works were maintained through forced labour. Because of this unprincipled approach in these issues, the state had not much of financial commitment. Yet, security and defence demanded large expenditure. Money was spent on army, navy, forts and military out-posts. Also religion being part of the state, the rulers gave away large amounts to temples and Brahmin establishments. The welfare of the common people did not engage much of royal attention, for even irrigation projects were executed, keeping the welfare of ruling and priestly classes in view.

To protect a farflung Empire the Cholas maintained a big army outposts, navy and military colonies. As in the case of the Pallavas the Chola system consisted of infantry, cavalry, elephantry and the navy that were stationed at strategic places. Chariots too formed part of the army. In times of war the sub-ordinate powers joined the imperial army with their



own contingents. A band of warriors who formed a body guard took care of the king and crown prince. The king was the commander of the forces, and he or his nominee led the army to the field of battle. The generals were in control of the regiments. The navy went on expeditions and controlled the seas. Horses were imported from Arabia, while chariots were manufactured for the army. In spite of these, warfare was primitive by nature, for swords and shields had their primary role in killing.

VILLAGE SELF GOVERNMENT

A noteworthy feature of the Chola administration was the autonomy that was given to the villages in local self government. The Cholas divided their Empire into six provinces or mandalams, each mandalam into kottams and each kottam into nadus. Each nadu was a group of self governing villages. Popular assemblies constituted under a system of election and lot were entrusted with the responsibility of local administration. This was not only scientifically organised but also was provided with safeguards against the possibility of abuses. The inscriptions that are recorded at Uttaramerur and Ukkal give much information on the composition and functioning of the local bodies.

There were local head men and local councils for nadus, urs and gramas. The head of the nadu was the Nattar and the council of the nadu was known as the Nattavai, which consisted of the influential people nominated by the government. Ur or the village of the non Brahmin peasants had its own assembly known as Ooravai. The grama or a Brahmin village had its Sabha, while village of the merchant community had its own Nagara. Yet these village institutions were not uniform either in composition or in nature of working. This was because they formulated their own rules of procedure and derived their authority from mamool or custom. In addition to these institutions there existed in each place communal, religious and occupational groups.

These village institutions functioned not only in the Chola country but also in the rest of South India, yet their early history is lost in obscurity. Venkayya, while editing the Uttaramerur Inscription has suggested a North Indian origin. In his view they were the adoption from the government by committees as obtained in Pataliputra. The use of Sanskrit words in the functioning of the sabha is cited as an argument in support. But this view is not accepted. Even in Sangam classics we come across references to such institutions like manram and podiyil. Therefore it is clear that the ancient Tamils had their own primitive assemblies and they assumed prominence because of the policy of the Cholas to promote local institutions.

Different procedures were followed for the constitution of a village assembly. In a Mahasabha only Brahmin members were admitted and all Brahmins with a permanent interest in the village were given seats. In other villages representation was by kottams or wards, into which they were divided. Each family in the kottam was to send names of suitable persons to be chosen by Kudavolai system. The palm leaf chits in which individual names were recorded were shuffled in a pot from which one was drawn and the candidate mentioned in that chit was declared as elected. The thirty members who were thus elected for one year



by lot to represent the thirty wards formed the village assembly. To seek election the candidate should be of age above thirty five and below seventy, possess a house and one veli of tax paying land and ability to teach Mantara Brahmna and should be of good character and moral integrity. Women were as eligible as men were, for seeking election to the assembly. Members were to change every year and no one was to hold office for more than three years continuously. Those who were guilty of misappropriation, dishonesty and theft were disqualified. The committee members were not paid any allowances, yet they were expected to maintain a high standard of business morality. Being held in esteem, they were referred to as perumakkal.

As village parliament, the Sabha usually met in temple premises and conducted the administration of the village. The powers were vast and varied. The village assembly assisted the ruler in the assesment of lands, collected the taxes and remitted them to the government – in the case of temple lands to the temples –, received charitable endowments, purchased and sold lands, executed public works and kept records. Committees or variyams were put in charge of particular functions. Thus the thottavariyam of the assembly was given the charge of streets, while the erivariyam in charge of irrigation works. Forced labour, usually by the people of low castes, was employed for public works. In the inscriptions a judicial committee is also mentioned. In the opinion of S.K. Ayyangar jury system was prevalent and the cases were settled with the help of popular assesses. Punishments were awarded for theft, misappropriation and failure to submit accounts. Settlements were provided for land dispute, water dispute and group conflicts. As an agency of the government it transmitted royal orders to the local population and ensured the loyalty of the people to the king.

In fact the village self government contributed to order and stability in the working of village communities. In times of political disorders and dynastic changes it safeguarded the villages against tumult and turmoil. However, it is not possible to ascertain how far it was equitable in the context of caste differences and divisions and to what extent it displayed a sense of justice to the population. High morality was difficult to be obtained when some were treated as privileged while others as low. Yet it is to be noted that these local institutions provided for a decentralised system in administration. There was a division of powers between the central government and local authorities. While the central authority was concerned with such functions as internal security, external defence and cultural advancement of the Empire, the village assemblies took care of such functions like internal order, maintenance of roads and canals and supervision of religious endowments.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE UNDER THE CHOLAS

The inscriptions and literature of the Chola period give a fairly good account of the social life of the Tamils and the contributions that they made to architecture and arts. The state records are not available, for it is feared that they were not preserved or were destroyed by the invading powers. However, the great monuments, particularly the temples have survived to this day, giving testimony to the cultural grandeur of the Cholas.



ECONOMIC LIFE

In theory king was the owner of all land but in reality it was considered as the property of the community. In each village some land was held in common for purpose of residence, while the rest of the land was periodically re-distributed for cultivation. The Cholas took considerable interest in the survey and assessment of lands; cultivable lands were classified into three categories-peasant proprietorship, service land and gift land. Peasant proprietorship was the land held by vellan or peasant. The produce of this land belonged to the peasant, but he had to pay tax to the ruler. The service tenure was held by village servants and state servants in return for service or for maintenance of a fixed numbers of armed men for service to the state. The gift lands were given as charities, free of taxation, as endowments to temples and agraharas.

The Cholas took considerable interest in promoting cultivation, They constructed dams, tanks and canals. Among them were Cholagangam, Viranarayanan Eri, Madurantakam and Cholavaridi. The local bodies too formed village tanks and provided for proper maintenance. However, these projects were primarily intended for the benefit of temples, forts and agraharas. Forced labour and captive labour were commonly employed. If the villages were given the benefit of irrigation, they were required to pay **access**. Even when there was no adequate supply of water, they were required to pay it. Frequently fertile fields were taken away from the peasants and given away to the Brahmins. As a result the peasants were not protected against state repression. More over, as vast areas were given away as service lands and gift lands, taxation worked heavily on peasant lands.

While agriculture gave work to the largest section of the inhabitants, industries gave employment to a limited number. Silk, cotton and animal hair were used for the manufacture of dress material. While smiths made jewels and implements, carpenters built boats and ships. Salt pans were under the control of state and they produced salt for internal consumption and export. Sea ports were connected by trunk roads through which bullock carts moved in convoys. Nagapatnam, Poomputhar, Mamallapuram and Virampattinam were the important sea ports. Among the roads the Thanjavur Peruvazhi and Kongunattu Peruvazhi were trunk routes, connection the farm belt with the port towns.

Internal and external trade contributed to the economy of the Cholas. Cotton and silk garments, pearls, jewels, ivory, nuts and pepper were the principal items of export. Horses were imported from Arabia. Coins of gold, silver and copper were the media of exchange. Pon and Kasu, the two well known coins, had the figures that were taken from the overseas possessions. As the Kalabras did, the Cholas maintained their own mints.

A number of weights and measures were in use, but they were not uniform for the entire Empire. When loans were raised promissory notes were given, but interest on loan ranged even upto fifty per cent. The trade guilds controlled the markets, yet prices of articles were under state regulation. Though the high ways were there, they were in no proper condition. The merchant guilds mover the goods in caravans of bullock carts, being guarded by their owns swords men. This was because of the insecurity of the times. Though no



protection against high was robbery and murder was provided, the merchants were required to pay custom duties for cart and boat loads to the government.

Inscriptions suggest that the Chola Empire had commercial relations with Arabia, Persia, Burma, Java, Sumatra and China. The local merchants and Arabs usually through guilds controlled trade. The Chola and Arab merchants visited Sri Vijaya in South East Asia and from there reached China. An Emperor of China entertained a group of Chola business men at his birth day feast. This appeared in recognition of the importance of commercial relations between the two great empires of the times.

SOCIAL LIFE

The Chola Kings presided over a social system, that was marked by social iniquity and economic inequality. The Brahminical influence, that made a beginning in the Sangam age but suffered a set back under the Kalabras, gained ascendancy under the Pallavas and entrenched itself in the social life of the Tamils under the Cholas. Social distinctions assumed so rigid a proportion that privileges came to be associated with the high born. Each caste came to be sub-divided into numerous groups and the low castes were driven to neglected corners of towns and villages, to be subjected to oppression and exaction.

There emerged a three fold division of society, based on varnashrama, sub-divisional grouping and right hand-left hand distinction. Varnashrama divided the population into Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishas and Sudras as in Pallava period. In addition there developed numerous sub castes in each of the major castes. Also there were two religious divisions-saivites and Vaishnavites on the one hand and two social groups-Valankai and Idankai on the other. In each of these was a mixture of different castes. It is not certain how this kind of social division had originated. According to tradition a dispute arose between two merchant communities, Baliya and Nagaratha, about their precedence at public ceremonies. Before long the Komati, Valluvar, Nadar and Parayar joined the Baliyas, while the Chetties, Pallies, Kaikolar and Panchalas supported the Nagarathas. Thereupon Karikala Chola summoned the two groups to the Kamakshi Temple at Kanchi, listened to their view points and declared them as of equal status. Those who stood on the right hand side of the goddess were called Right Hand Castes (Baliya group) and others who stood on left hand side were Left Hand Castes (Nagarathagroup) The Vellalas, Nayakkar, Reddis and Brahmins formed the neutral group. The attempt at settlement did not end the disputes. On the other hand it gave convenient labels for more of disputes. The Right Hand groups looked at the Left Hand groups as low. The warring factions made Kanchi the centre of their controversy, marked by clashes plunder and destruction.

Though the Cholas were rulers, the Brahmins as priests, ministers and officials wielded real power. They lived in their own villages called agraharas or Chaturvedimangalams and received food and education free of cost. The kings made rich endowments to the temples for the benefit of these Brahmins. Young and attractive girls, who were induced into the temples as devadasis or maids of gods entertained the Brahmins with music, dance and body. On the other hand those who did productive labour were condemned



as untouchables. Inscriptions indicate that the working classes were required to do forced labour for the state and to pay most of the taxes. These iniquities created social unrest, leading to setting fire to houses and pulling down the temples. In an attempt to restore social harmony King Kulothunga III made a review of the privileges and liabilities of different groups and made concessions to the low. Yet order could not be restored. The Parayas formed the agrarian proletariat. They did most of the agricultural operations and contributed to the welfare of the population. Yet the reward given to them was that they were condemned to live in poverty and starvation in filthy corners called cheris. There are referenes to slaves (adimai) and it is clear that many of the farm workers lived as slaves or in bonded labour, treated with cruelty and sold and re-sold. Many of these slaves were held by the temples.

There is no evidence to suggest that men and women were equal in status. Chastity was insisted upon for women but not for men. Plurality of wives was very common, as kings and nobles did not restrict themselves. Queens made gifts but they were usually for the Brahmins and out of the property of subject population. Sreedhana or dowry was given to enable the young woman to start life and it was given to her as her property. The temples employed dancing girls to celebrate religious functions. Parents were persuaded to dedicate their girls if they were sufficiently attractive as god's maids, and these devadasis livid a life of austerity and made their attractive appearances at public functions. But the system degenerated as princes, nobles and priests sought their company.

While Saivism and Vaishnavism gained ascendancy, Jainism and Buddhism went down. This was inevitable because of Brahminical control over the Cholas, persecution of rival religions and diversion of state finances for the construction of temples, mutts and agraharas. As the Cholas were Saivites, their religion came in for fovoured treatment. When the ruler takes a particular line whether it is right or wrong it is the usual tendency of scholars, saints and philosophers to exhibit their talents in competition to support. Accordingly there came to emerge compilations and philosophical systems. In the tenth century A.D. Nambi Andar Nambi collected religious texts and compiled them into eleven Thirumurais. The Saiva Sidhantha philosophy was a contribution of the age. After Saivism, Vaishnavism was the popular sect of Hinduism. Nathamuni, who lived at Srirangam, compiled the works of the Alvars and contributed to the development of the philosophical system of the Vaishnavites. Yamunacharya propounded the Visista Aovaita philosophy, while one of his followers, Ramanuja wrote several works on theology the Vedantasara, Vedantasangraha, Vedantadwipa and commentaries on the Upanishads and Bhagavat Gita. He laid stress on bhakti, yoga and virtue for attaining salvation. While Sankara believed in one universal spirit, Ramanuja in Iswara and his two manifestations-soul and matter. The Sri Vaishnavites came to be divided into Vada Kalai (Northern School) and Then Kalai (Southern School) – the first giving importance to Sanskrit Vedas and the Second to the Tamil Prabandhams. The hostility between the religious sects led to frequent feuds and conflicts. In fact the Brahmin elite enjoying the comforts provided by the state and temple and isolating themselves from the common people dealt at length into the mysteries of theology and philosophy and waster their energy in conflicts instead of promoting scientific thought for material welfare.



The Hindu mutts, the Jain pallis and the Buddhist viharas provided for educational establishments. They imparted to the students knowledge in religion and taught writing, reading arithmetic, grammar and philosophy. The teachers were assigned pieces of village lands and given donations by the scholars. Institutions of higher learning existed at Ennayiram, Tribhuvani and Tiruvaduthurai. They received endowments, admitted Brahmin scholars, provided for free boarding and lodging and taught such subjects like the Ved as, Vedanta, Mimamsa and the Sastras. Here too racial discrimination was practised against the Dravidians and teaching was restricted to traditional subjects. In this respect the Brahmin Pallava and the Dravidian Chola made no difference to the Tamils. Nevertheless, the age was significant for numerous literary productions. The Prasastis of the Chola kings, Kalingathupparani of Jayankondar and the Paranis and Ulas of Ottakkuttar are noted for their historical information. Ramayana of Kamban, the most important epic in Tamil, was an outstanding work of the age. It contributed to the denigration of Dravidian heroes and Generation of Aryan chiefs in the land of the Tamils. The works of Sekkilar was intended to invoke spiritualism among the people. Nambiahaporul, Nemintham, Veerasoliam, Dandialankaram and Nannool were the works on grammar. These works together with lexicans did much for the development of Tamil language as well as enslavement of the Tamil spirit.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The Cholas were great builders; they built temples, palaces and forts in different centres of their extensive empire. The monuments of the age were found in the territories that they held in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Desa, Kerala and Sri Lanka, From the Pallavas the architectural heritage passed into the hands of the Cholas the reached wider proportions not only in dimension but also in grandeur. Though granite was used as the building material, artistic elegance was aimed at in the execution of structural works. It could not be denied that they employed slave labour for the construction of architectural works. Also it could not be ignored that they indulged in these works at the expense of material welfare and under Brahminical influences. Yet the many sided contributions to architecture and arts have rendered the Chola rule a glorious epoch in the cultural and artistic history of south India.

In the history of Chola temples there were three stages of change as in the case of rise, growth and decline of an empire. The early temples were constructed during the period of Vijayalaya and Parantaka and some of them are found at Tiruchirapalli, Pudukkottai and Narathamalai. They were not only small but were simple in style. Subsequently great temples were built the Big Temple by Raja Raja and the Choleswaram Temple by Rajendra. It took seven years for Raja Raja to build the Big Temple (The Brihadeswara Temple) at Tanjore and he completed it by 1006 A.D. It measured 500 feet by 800feet and enclosed as many as thirty five subsidiary shrines. The vimana with thirteen diminishing tires from bottom to top is 160 feet in height and is roofed by a single block of granite, weighing eighty tons. It is believed that a road was formed to take it to the top of the temple. Among the other attractions of the age are the mandapas, pavilions and a giant size monolithic bull. Rajendra I built the Rajarajewaram Temple at Gangaikondacholapuram after his expedition to NorthIndia. Its



major characteristic is the pyramidal vimana rising in eight tiers to a height of 160 feet. In the opinion of Percy Brown the Big Temple represents the finest single creation of the Dravidian craftsman while the Rajeswaran Temple at Gangaikondacholapuram the female counterpart of Tanjore architecture. In the third stage architecture experienced a decline both in size and style. Among these monuments were the temples at Tribuvanam and Darasuram. In addition to temples the Cholas built palaces at the capital and regional centres. Literary traditions indicate that they were massive and were provided with all paraphernalia for royal comfort, but they perished due to vandalism of invaders.

Sculpture and painting found their centres of expression in the temples. Manufacture of idols developed into a big industry for which gold, bronze, silver, copper and stone were used. Gods and goddesses in different manifestations and forms of action were carved out with remarkable realism. The yogic postures and dancing Siva were among these masterpieces. The murals and frescoes that are found in different temples indicate the progress that was achieved in painting. Different scenes like dancing and marriage ceremony taken from tradition, religious texts and life of people served as themes for painting.

Drama, music and dance too received patronage from princes and priests. There were natakasalas, imparting training in dramas for performance on the stage. The dancing girls made performances in the mantapas of temples. Raja Raja I employed musicians and made endowments for their support. Veena, conch shells and flutes were the popular instruments. The devotional literature and the puranas gave material for these performances.

In fact the Cholas made significant contribution to the enrichment of cultural heritage of the Tamils. Yet it cannot be denied that there was not much of innovation or change, for they were in the traditional way. On account of the firm grip of Brahminical tradition neither the rulers nor the artisans made any significant departure from traditional themes. Further the cultural output was not of that magnitude as the extent, resources and duration of the Empire could suggest. This was because the rulers diverted most of the resources of the state to royal pleasures, agraharas and devadasis.

SECOND PANDYAS EMPIRE

Jatavarman Sundara Pandya (1251 – 1268 A.D.)

The collapse of the Chola Empire presented opportunities as well as problems to the Pandyas. It removed the obstacle to their northward expansion. At the same time the aggressive powers of the north-the Hoysalas, the Kadavas and the Kakatiyas – moved to the south, either as allies of the Cholas or as conquerors. These rendered the task of Jatavarman formidable, yet he defeated the hostile powers and extended his empire. As a first step he turned against the Cheras. He killed Vira Ravi Udayamarthanda Varma in battle and made the southern frontier secure. Inscriptions indicate that he led two expeditions against the Cholas – the first to subdue Rajendra Chola III and this second to collect tribute. The Cholas were defeated and reduced to the status of subordinate power. The Hoysalas had established themselves at Kannanur Kuppam, but were dislodged with heavy loss of men. Advancing to



Sendamangalam, the Pandyan army attacked the Kadavas and forced them to pay tribute. After these victories Jatavarman defeated the Telugu Chodas and Kakathiyas and occupied territories extending upto Nellore. Across the seas an expedition was sent to Lanka and its ruler was forced to accept a subordinate status. As a result of these brilliant exploits Jatavarman emerged as the master of southern India. He celebrated his victories by assuming imperial titles and making rich endowments to Brahmins and temples as he believed that it was because of them he succeeded in his ventures. Among the beneficiaries were the Saiva Temple at Chidambaram and the Vaishnava Temple at Srirangam. At Chidambaram a temple tower and gold tiled roof to the Nataraja shrine were among the presentations made by the Pandyas. At Srirangam a garland of emerald was presented to Lord Ranganatha. These are mentioned in **Koil Olugu**.

Maravarman Kulasekhara (1268 – 1310 A.D.)

Crown prince Maravarman succeeded his father Jatavarman as the ruler of the Pandyas. The inscriptions of the period suggest that he shared power with other princes – four brothers – of the Pandya dynasty. They also refer to the wars and victories, but it is not certain that they were fought and won, when he was a crown prince or ruler. The Cheranmahadevi Inscription of his twentieth regnal year tells of his victories over Malainadu, Cholamandalam, Kongudesam, Thondainadu and Lanka.

In Malainadu he defeated the Cheras and occupied Kollam, a sea port. This won for him the title Kollamkondan. In fact if the Cheras declined in consequence of Kalabra conquest, their attempts to revive their glory were thwarted by the Cholas. Now the Pandya invasion gave a further blow to their hopes. To the Chola and Pallava territories, expeditions were sent because of local disturbances, that were directed against the Pandyas. The forces of Maravarman crushed a revolt that was organised by Rajendra III with the support of the Hoysalas. An expedition that was sent to Lanka destroyed several towns returned with a rich booty including the relics of the Buddha. Thereupon Parakrama Bahu III, the ruler of Lanka, reached Madurai and implored for the restoration of the sacred relics. The Pandyan king complied with the request in return for his continued allegiance.

The foreign travelers who visited the Pandya Empire during their reign of Naravarman have given an account of the country. Marco polo, the Italian traveler, has stated: “The king possesses vast treasures and wears upon his person great store of rich jewels. He maintains a great state and administers his kingdom with great equity and extends great favour to merchants and foreigners so that they are very glad to visit his city”. He has observed that there were five Pandyas, ruling over the country. Maravarman the eldest, had three hundred wives. The people used to keep certain leaf called tambul in the mouth and to continuously chew and spit. For the king and nobles it was prepared with camphor and aromatic spices. The yogis went about naked and lived long due to their abstinence. In the temples there lived numerous girls who were devoted to the idols. The people believed in omens and cremated the dead. About the port of Kayal, the Italian traveler has said: it was a great and noble city, ships from Hormos, Kis, Aden and all Arab countries visited it. Horses and other objects were brought for sale. It was a meeting place for merchants. An Arab traveler by name



Wassaf too visited the country. According to him the king was healthy and wealthy. His treasury was filled with gold and pearls. Also he has stated that huge ships with wide sails frequented to the coast. Laden with costly goods, they came from Sind, Hind and China, Costly goods that were found in Iraq, Khurasan, Turkey and Europe reached the Pandya country.

These accounts reflect upon the luxury and splendor of the royal court, hospitality that was extended to foreigners and the importance that was attached to trade. However, the splendor in the palace could be expected in an age, that was marked by plunder and loot. It does not appear that the travelers visited the country side. Therefore the contrast between the capital and village was not portrayed in these accounts.

The glory of the Second Empire reached its zenith under Maravarman but the fall came in a rapid succession of events. The death of the ruler was followed by a civil war between his sons, Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya. Maravarman made his younger son Vira Pandya the crown prince, but Sundara Pandya captured the throne in 1310. Thereupon Vira Pandya won the alliance of the ruler of Venad and recaptured the throne. Disappointed at the turn of events, Sundara Pandya sought the aid of the Afghans, who were engaged in a war against the HOysalas. In 1313, Ravi Varma Kulasekhara of Venad occupied Madurai and subsequently Malik Kafur led his Afghan army to the Pandyan Country. Thereafter Madurai was reduced to a province of the Afghan Sultanate.

Yet the Pandyas did not altogether vanish from the scene of history. They held possession of remote areas and the inscriptions that are found in the districts of Madurai, Ramnad and Pudukkottai indicate the survival of their influence in these areas till the end of the fourteenth century. The later rulers rebuilt the temples at Tirupathur near Madurai and founded villages for the Brahmins. The Pandyas of Thirunelveli had their existence upto the seventeenth century. Though they made repeated attempts to revive their glory, they had to content with a vassal status under Vijayanagar. Among the later Pandyas Arikesari Parakrama is credited to have ruled over Madurai for a short period and built part of the Visvanatha Temple at Tenkasi, which was completed by his successors.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

The Madurai Country, extending from Kanyakumari to Kaveri, formed the home of the Pandya Empire. At the zenith of its power it embraced the southern part of India upto to Nellore. The social and economic life of the Tamils under the Pandyas was influenced by geography and religion. Tradition and developments in neighbouring areas too had their impact.

The king was an autocrat and all powers were centred on him. While the body guard protected his person, the nobles waited on him. Wassaf has stated that a thousand courtiers were in attendance on the king. It was a normal practice for the king to possess numerous wives and concubines. According to Marco Polo, Maravarman Kulasekhara had three hundred wives. In the opinion of Abdur Razak beautiful maids in the kingdom were brought to the palace and the king had the choicest girl for his bed. Apart from romances the ruler



took interest in hunting, wrestling, dueling, chaturanga, music and dance. Also he took a kind of strange pleasure in adorning himself with pearls and rubies. Marco Polo has recorded that Maravarman wore a necklace entirely of precious stones, rubies and the like. What the king wears is worth than a city's ransom. These indicate that despite the poverty in the country the king wasted enormous resources on his palace, women and court and spared not much of his time for administration. As a result his advisors, usually Brahmins exercised the real power and enjoyed its benefits.

The king was guided by his Ekamantri, Mantris and Senapati. There was a secretariat where the officials like collector of taxes, surveyor of lands, commander of forces and recorder of royal orders functioned. An advisor on dharma guided the king in the enforcement of caste system. As in Chola country, Pandya mandalam was divided into mandalams and subdivided into nadu. A number of villages were formed into kurram, which was a sub-division of nadu. The governor was the counterpart of the king in the province. The Manur Inscription suggests that the mahasabha, elected through kudavolai system as in Cholamandalam, was in control of a Brahmin village. The urar was in charge of administration of a Dravidian village.

To support his royal establishments, the harems, the army, temples and agraharas the king required considerable amounts. Therefore he collected a large variety of taxes from the miserable inhabitants. These included revenue from land, taxes from all forms of professions, royalty from the pearl fishery and dues from ports. The village officials collected the taxes from the peasants and remitted them to the treasury. These sources of income gave scope for the improvement of material resources of the state. Yet this was not done, for the income was wasted on royal establishments, Brahmins and devadasis. The war machine too accounted for part of state expenditure. Elephants were to be caught from forests, chariots were to be manufactured and horses were to be purchased from the Arabs. Because of frequent wars a large army was to be kept and supplies were to be provided. Hero stones were erected in memory of the warriors who died in battles.

There are references to disputes on irrigation water, fishing rights and temple ceremonies. Yet no organised judiciary was provided for the settlement of disputes. In fact the ancient Tamils had no sense of equitable justice and to them dharma meant preservation of caste based iniquity. Local disputes were settled by local headmen. Appeals could be made to the royal court, but seldom did the aggrieved parties receive redressal of their grievances.

Society and Culture: The social life of the Tamils across the centuries of Pandyan administration experienced a steady transformation. It was the transformation from the primitive way of early centuries to a caste oriented system of the fourteenth century. Brahminism began to assert its influence on the class structure of the society during the Sangam age. But under the Second Empire of the Pandyas it entrenched itself in temples, agraharas and administration and moulded the society into a caste based structure of mutual exclusion and hatred. As the rulers extended their support to the ascendancy of caste distinctions, the society came to be divided into caste Hindus and the untouchables. As the caste themselves came to be divided into sub-castes, the evils of castes system assumed rigid



dimensions. Added to this, there came a division of the Hindus into Right Hand and Left Hand Castes. Taking of an image or a procession through a street of the other group of the use of a chariot or horse or the raising of a flag were the occasions for altercations on status and clashes, leading to blood shed. Worse still the communities the Pallis, the Parayer, the Chakkiliyar, the Shanar and the Maraver who supported the society through their labour, were condemned as untouchables and unapproachable. The irony was that while they were a detested lot, the food and services that they generated through their manual labour were not considered as polluted.

There is a view that women occupied a respectable and equal status with men in the society under the Pandyas. This theory is not acceptable when a king had as many as 300 queens whereas no queen was allowed to have so many men. Sati was imposed on women and not on men. An erring woman was looked down as prostitute and this was not so in case of an erring man. Chastity of a woman was insisted upon, but not that of a man. Property was inherited by a son but not the daughter on equal terms. Therefore it is to be concluded that the status of women in Pandyan society was unequivocally unequal. Young and beautiful women were pressed into service in temples for the pleasure of nobles and priests. As their number increased and their income fell, they turned to men of other sections of the society. As a result devadasis were dubbed as prostitutes. Despite these, sex as a major theme in the poems composed by the writers of the age – Ilangoadigal, Tiruttakkatevar, Pattinattar and Arunagirinathar. This reflected upon sex starvation of the times, that came in the wake of social rigidity.

Nevertheless due to Pandya patronage Hinduism with its two sects, Saivism and Vaishnavism, flourished. They had their own mutts and schools at different places. The people of the communities that were treated as low were not permitted to worship in temples or to send their children to mutts for learning. While they built their own peicoils or devil temples for worship, they were forced to neglect education. The resentment of the common people led to conversion to Islam and Christianity in later times. Jainism and Buddhism declined because of severe persecution under Kun Pandyan and his successors.

The garments of the inhabitants were not only simple but also scanty. This could be expected in a hot country as Pandyamandalam was. In the opinion of Marco Polo there were no tailor too. He described the people, whether they were princes or soldiers as going about naked. Obviously this was because they went about half naked, without knowing how to make a shirt or blouse. The people worshipped the cow, and believed in astrology, magic and sorcery.

The travelers of the period have given an account about trade too, Kayal was noted for overseas trade and Tutukudi for pearl fishing. The Pandyas had commercial relations with countries of the east and the west. In the opinion of Wassaf large ships with broad sails, laden with costly goods, reached the Pandya coast from China, Sind and the west. While horses were imported from Arabia, goods were exported to Europe. Turkey, Khurasan and Persia. Across the Pandyan Country the Arabs carried on trade with Malay peninsula and other far eastern lands. Therefore the Arabs called the southern most region as Ma'bar or passage – to



the east-a name that was later on applied to the Malabar coast of the Chera Country. The trade guilds, that are referred to in the inscriptions, flourished through high profits. Gold coins were the usual medium of exchange. A large variety of coins with an inscription on one side and figure of the carp fish on the other side were in circulation.

The architecture and arts of the Pandyas exhibit a high degree of excellence. To satisfy the Brahmins the kings under took construction of temples on a large scale. They built structural temples and cave temples at different places. The later Pandyas, despite their continued decline, devoted themselves to religion, erected temples, built villages for the Brahmins and patronised Sanskrit. Though the Afghan conquered Madurai, they continued to hold possession of parts of Ramanathapuram, Thanjavur and Tirunelveli. After the Rayas of Vijayanagar extended their authority southward, they exercised a limited influence in certain areas of Tirunelveli till they disappeared from political scene by end of the sixteenth century. They are credited to have rebuilt the Siva Temple at Tirupatore near Madurai. Parakrama Pandya, a contemporary of Kampana, carried out renovation of the temple at Kuttalam and built mantapas. Arikesari Parakrama constructed the Viswanatha Temple at Tenkasi. Another ruler by name Jatavarman Kulasekhara erected a temple at Ilangi. These rulers, inspite of their continued and steady decline, composed verses, promoted the growth of religious literature, built mantapas and sought to render temple arts popular. In fact their outlook was such that they had no higher vision.

MUSLIM INVASION

Malik Kafur's Expedition: The afhan army, sent by Sultan Ala-ud-din Khilji of Delhi under the command of Malik Kafur, appeared in the Tamil country in 1311. Kafur subdued the Hindu powers of the South-the Yadavas of Devagiri, the Kakathiyas of Warrangal and the Hoysalas of Dwarasamudra in quick succession. The Pandyas who were already distracted by a civil war between the rival brothers Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya, was the next target of his invasion. Certain factors prevailed on the Afghans for undertaking this expedition. These included the invitation that was extended by Sundara Pandya, The assistance that Vira Pandya gave to the Hoysalas against the Afghans, the temptation that was offered by the treasures in temples and palaces the desire for extension of authority and the distracted conditions in the Tamil Country.

After defeating the Hoysalas, Malik Kafur led his army through the Toppur Pass to the Tamil County. Neither did the Sambuvarayas nor did the Pandyas attempt any resistance to the invading army. The Afghans advanced through a carefully chosen route so as to cover the great temples – Chidambaram, Srirangam, Madurai and Rameswarm While Vira Pandya fled to the woods, Sundara Pandya collected his treasures and escaped to some unknown place. There is a tradition that Ravi Varma Kulasekhara, the ruler of Venad, fought against the Afghans and forced them to retreat. But this is not corroborated either by Wassaf or Amir Khusrau. Besides, a tiny principality as Venad was, had no military potential to fight unaided against the Afghan army. Nevertheless Malik Kafur systematically looted the temples, desecrated the agraharas and returned with the accumulated wealth.



The expedition revealed the weakness of the Hindu powers of the south. While their forces were of no use, the oppressed population refused to rise in rebellion to their support. There followed more of expeditions. In 1318 Khusru Khan at the orders of Sultan Mubarak Shah marched to the far South. But because of heavy rains and difference between the Sultan and the General, it was recalled. Thereupon the Sambuvarayas reasserted their independence while the Kahathiyas re-occupied Kanchi. These developments forced Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlug, the Sultan of Delhi, to send an expedition. Uluq Khan, son of the Sultan, commanded the army. He defeated the Kakathiyas of Warrangal and forced them to withdraw from Kanchi. The Sambuvarayas offered no resistance while Parakrama Pandya, who held possession of Madurai, escaped. The victorious army occupied the capital of the Pandyas and set up military posts to keep them under control. Ma'bar as the region was called, became the twenty third province of the Delhi Sultanate of the Tughlugs. On his return to Delhi Uluq Khan ascended the throne as Sultan Mohammed bin Tughluq.

MADURAI SULTANATE

Madurai formed the southern most province of Delhi Sultanate. It was situated so remote from Delhi that the Afghan sultans found it impossible to exercise their authority from their capital. Added to this, the Delhi Sultanate was in a state of disorder. The Mongal invasions, transfer of capital from Delhi to Devagiri and the disturbances in the Ganga-Yamuna Doab kept the forces of Delhi so preoccupied that it was not possible for them to keep control over far off provinces. These factors contributed to the ascertain of independence and rise of Madurai Sultanate. Ganga Devi's Madurai Vijayam in Sanskrit, accounts of foreign travelers, the coins of Madurai Sultans and the monuments of the period, yield limited information about the history of Delhi Sultanate.

In 1335 Sayyid Ahsan Shah, the Kotwal of Ma'bar, declared his independence. On hearing this development Sultan Mohammed-bin Tughluq sent an army from Delhi, but according to Barani it did not move out. It is believed that it was won over by the agents of Ahsan shah. Thereupon Mohammed bin Tughluq took the direct command of the army and began his march to Madurai through Devagiri and Warrangal. While the forces reached Warrangal a cholera epidemic broke out and the Sultan fell ill. By this time information came that the Punjab was in a state of rebellion. Considering the situation un-favourable, Mohammed bin Tughluq abandoned his project and returned to Delhi. This development left Madurai Sultanate free of any threat from Delhi.

However, the Hindu powers of the far south led by the Hoysalas decided to seek the liberation of Madurai from Afghan rule. In early times the Hoysales of Dwarasamudra were feudatories to the Cholas and the Chalukyas but asserted their independence in the twelfth century. A.D. They extended their authority to the Tamil country, occupied Tiruvannamalai and established their local capital at Kannanur Kuppam. Led by their ruler Vira Ballalla, the Hoysalas made a determined effort to dislodge the Muslims from Madurai. As a result there followed frequent conflicts between the rival powers. Yet the Madurai Sultanate successfully resisted the Hoysala inroads.



In 1340 Ahsanshah fell a victim to a conspiracy against him and died. Udaiyi, the next Sultan, carried on the war against the Hoysalas, but in one of the battles an arrow hit him to death. Ghuyasud-din Dhamaghani (1341-42), son-in-law of Ahsan Shah, was the most powerful of the Madurai sultans. During his reign the Hoysalas captured more territories and advanced against Madurai. In a fierce battle near Kannanur Kuppam it appeared that the Muslims would be defeated. However, through a clever stratagem the forces of Dhamaghani under pretention of retreat, launched a counter attack and scattered the Hindu army. Vira Ballala III fell a prisoner. The eighty year old king was impaled alive and his body was hung on the Fort of Madurai. Following this victory the Sultan made a terrible reprisal on the Hindus. According to Ganga Devi's Madurai Vijayam, the inhabitants were massacred irrespective of age or sex. Ibn Batuta, the Moroccan traveler, saw impaled bodies on stakes and road sides. These included severed bodies of women and children. The flood waters of the Vaigai carried these bodies to the sea; some of which reached the shores of Lanka. The Muslims also destroyed coconut plantations and raided the agraharas and spread panic among the people.

Greatly moved by the plight of the local people and in response to appeals from the Hindu powers, Bukka, the Emperor of Vijayanagar, sent a powerful army under the command of his son Kumara Kampana to suppress the Sultanate. The Vijayanagar army defeated the forces of Madurai at Srirangam and Madurai. As a result a considerable part of Madurai Sultanate passed under the control of Vijayanagar. Yet the Afghans continued to rule over a part of the Madurai country and continued to issue their coins upto 1378 A.D. Bukka II, the Emperor of Vijayanagar, defeated Ala-ud-din Sikkandar, the last of the Sultans, and annexed Madurai. This marked the end of the Sultanate.

Certain historians like S.K. Ayyangar have dismissed the Muslim invasion as nothing more than a raid. But this is an under estimate of otherwise a significant development. In fact the Afghans gave a final blow to the political authority of the Pandiyas and their Second Empire. Also it exposed the weakness of the Hindu powers. At Kannanur Kuppam a Muslim force of 6000 men vanquished the Hoysala army of 100,000. Such a brilliant victory of the sultans administered a severe blow to the morale of local powers. Further, the Muslim conquest created a situation of havoc and destruction. They massacred the helpless victims of their reprisal, looted towns, agraharas and temples and carried away treasures and works of art. Finally, the Muslim conquest contributed to the spread of Islam in the Tamil country. Taking advantage of their political authority, the Muslims won over people to their religion, established mosques and even converted Hindu temples into their places of worship. The coins that they issued and the monuments like mosques and tombs that they erected have survived as the relics of their rule.



UNIT IV : THE NAYAKS OF MADURAI

Nayaks of Madurai and Tanjore – Nature of rule – Society – contribution to art and administration – Art and Architecture – society, Marathas and Nawabs – Marathas Society – religion – literary growth – Arcot Nawabs – administration – society, Sethupatahis of Ramanathapuram – society – religion – Christianity.

THE NAYAKS OF MADURAI

It is believed that Emperor Krishna Deva Rava in the last year of his reign (1529-1530) organised the Nayakship of Madurai. Beginning with Viswanatha Nayaka (1529-1564), Madurai experienced the rule of numerous nayaks. The pattern that is perceptible in their administration, as in case of other nayaks, was that they squandered away the resources that they mobilized through oppression and exaction on concubines, priests and troops. They maintained large harems, fed Brahmins, kept inefficient armies but neglected the interests of the people.

Viswanatha Nayaka fought a series of wars against the Tamil powers. Ariyanatha Mudali, who betrayed the cause of the Tamils, ably assisted his Telugu master in this wars against the Pancha Pandyas of Tirunelveli and in the suppression of the local powers. Krishnappa Nayaka I (1564-1572) succeeded his father Visvanatha to power. He sent an army under Ariyanatha Mudali to the aid of the Empire against the Muslim powers of the Deccan, but it fled during the Battle of Talikota. There followed other nayaks in the line. They were Virappa Nayaka (1572-1595), Krishnappa Nayaka II (1595-1601), Muthu Krishna Nayaka (1601-1609) and Muthu Virappa Nayaka I (1609-1623). As usual their administration was marked by wars and conflicts as well as donations and gifts. Muthu Krishnappa in view of his failure to establish order in the Marava Country reorganised the administration of Ramanathapuram with Sadaika Tevar as the Setupati. The next ruler Muthu Virappa shifted his capital from Madurai to Tiruchirapalli as he felt it essential to carry on war against Thanjavur. But the Rajah of Mysore took advantage of this conflict for advancing the frontiers of his territory to the Tamil Country.

Tirumala Nayaka (1625-1659) succeeded his younger brother, Muthu Virappa Nayaka as the ruler of Madurai. Bertrand, who edited the Jesuit letters, considers him as the most prominent of the Nayak kings of Madurai. Thirumala Nayaka succeeded to the throne at a critical time in the history of Madurai. The Vijayanagar Empire was fast declining and the forces of Bijapur and Golkonda were becoming increasingly aggressive. The Nayak of Thanjavur adopted a hostile policy, while the Wodayaras of Mysore threatened the northern provinces. In the east the Setupati of Ramanathapuram and in the west the rulers of Kerala had become restive. Under these circumstance, Tirumala Nayaka found it no more necessary to drain the resources of his country for paying one third to one half of his revenue as tribute to the Emperor. Therefore, he withheld payment of tribute to the Emperor and gained for Madurai and independent status. As Tiruchirapalli appeared much exposed to the invaders from the north, he shifted his capital to Madurai, constructed forts on the northern frontier and raised an army of 30,000 men. In fact the assertion of independence represented the logical culmination of the trends at work.



During the early years of his reign he fought a series of wars against the local powers. Chamaraja Wodayar, the ambitious ruler of Mysore, coveted the possession of Salem and other territories in the north-west. His army led by Harasura Nandi Raja advanced as far as Dindigul. But the Nayak forces, assisted by the Poligar of Kannivadi, defeated and drove back the invaders. By 1635 the Madurai army fought against the forces of Travancore, as Unni Kerala Varma, the ruler of this state, refused payment of tribute. Tirumala Nayaka invaded Nanchil Nadu and raided the villages, but it is not certain whether the tribute was collected. In Ramanathapuram there broke out a civil war. On the death of Kuttan Setupati (1623-1635), his son Sadaika Tevar II became the ruler. As he withheld payment of tribute, Tirumala supported the Setupati's brother Thambi, who contested the throne. The Nayak army led by Ramappaiyan marched to Ramanathapuram. The invading forces constructed a causeway, moved to the island and took Sadaika Tevar a prisoner. In this war the Portuguese supported the Nayaks, while the Dutch the Maravas. In return for their assistance Tirumala Nayaka permitted the Portuguese to propagate Christianity, to build churches and to occupy a fort. The balled Ramappayyan Ammanai portrays the story of the expedition and the heroic exploits of the Maravas led by Vanni. When the Setupati was imprisoned, the people rose in rebellion. Unable to control the situation, Tirumala sent back Sakaika Tevar to his country, but he was killed by his rebel brother. Thereupon the Nayak divided the Marava Country among Thambi and his brothers, Raghunatha Tevar and Tanaka Tevar. On the death of his two brothers, Raghunatha Tevar became the Setupati of entire Ramanathapuram.

Tirumala Nayaks supported Vijayanagar against the Muslim powers. However as Emperor Sriranga III decided to suppress Madurai because of the refusal of tribute, Tirumala won the support of Golkonda and saved his kingdom. Now, Bijapur made a settlement with Golkonda, conquered Senji, subdued Thanjavur and threatened Madurai. Confronted with this unexpected situation. Tirumala won the support of the Kallar tribes and routed the invading forces of Bajapur. When this difficulty was overcome, he found a hostile combination of Vijayanagar and Mysore against Madurai. Thereupon he won the alliance of Bijapur against Sriranga III. In retaliation Kanthirava Narasa Rajah of Mysore, who was allied to the Emperor, invaded Satyamangalam and advanced to Madurai. The Mysore army massacred the people and cut off the noses of the captives. At this critical movement Tirumala Nayaka appealed to Setupati Raghunatha Tevar for help. The combined forces of Madurai and Ramanathapuram fought a fierce battle near Dindigul against the Mysore army and won a great victory. Each side lost about 12,000 men. The victorious army pursued the retreating forces and ravaged Mysore. This decisive victory saved Madurai from the threat of total extinction. Historians have passed contradictory verdicts on the foreign policy of Tirumala Nayaka. Rangachari has condemned him as a traitor of blackest dye on ground that by his alliances with the Muslim powers the Nayak betrayed his religion and his country. He proceeds to remark that in the end not only he became a slave but made the other Hindu rulers also slaves of the despised Mlechcha. On the other hand Sathyanatha Iyer has adored the policy of this Nayak ruler. He tells that Madurai gained no benefit in remaining loyal to an Empire, which had become powerless to defend Madurai against foreign aggression. In fact because of his intrigues the Emperor had become so much a suspect as the Deccani powers were, that Tirumala Nayaka found no alternative but to act in accordance with what



the situation warranted. True that opportunism rather than principle had its way, yet it cannot be denied that through his alliance systems. Tirumala contributed to the fall of Vijayanagar and invited the hostility of other Hindu powers.

Despite his frequent wars, Tirumala Nayaka maintained order in the Madurai Country and kept his kingdom in fact against formidable odds. Art, architecture and religion received encouragement. He built pagodas, choultries, gopuras and palaces. The Mahal, that he erected, remains as a monument of the Telugu rule. Though much importance was given for the erection of palaces and forts, no attempt was made to improve the lot of the common people. True that he dug a canal from Vaigai to Koonthiyarkundu, but it was intended for the benefit of a large establishment of concubines that he had. He extended his patronage to Hinduism but it does not appear that he gave equal protection to other religions. The Jesuit letters tell of the hardships experienced by de Nobili, the Catholic missionary, in preaching Christianity because of the hostile attitude of the officials and chieftains. In consequence he was compelled to leave Madurai for Sendamangalam. Foreign trade passed under the control of the European powers. Tirumala Nayaka supported the Portuguese against the Dutch in their mutual rivalry. In retaliation the Dutch captured the Temple of Tiruchendur and occupied from the Portuguese the port of Tutukudi in 1658. This gave a blow to the prestige of the Nayaks.

The successors of Tirumala Nayaka were Muthu Virappa Nayaka II, Chokkanatha Nayaka and Muthu Virappa Nayaka III. Their rule was a period of wars and disorders. Chokkanatha occupied Thanjavur but in his wars against Mysore and the Maravas, he suffered reverses. The period that followed was marked by a steady decline of the Nayaks. Chanda Sahib deposed the last ruler, queen Minakshi and occupied the kingdom. The Nayaks escaped to Sivaganga, where they languished and vanished.

NAYAKS OF THANJAVUR

The Nayakship of Thanjavur came into existence by the year 1532 A.D. The Telugu works, Thanjavuri Andhra Rajalu Charitra and the Thanjavuri Vari Charitra make it clear that Sevappa Nayaka obtained possession of the Chola country by 1502 as his dowry, for he married the sister of one of the queens of Emperor Achyuta Raya of Vijayanagar. Sevappa Nayaka thus became the founder of the Nayak line at Thanjavur. His territory included Thanjavur and part of the present day district of South Arcot. Tiruchirapalli formed part of his province but he exchanged it with Madurai for gaining possession of Vallam. He assisted the Emperor in the wars against the portuguese and Travancore and subsequently against the Bahmini powers in the Battle at Talikota. As the other Hindu rulers of the times did, Sevappa Nayaka too made gifts to temples, built agraharas and provided for the free feeding of Brahmins.

In 1580 Achutappa Nayaka (1580-1614) succeeded his father, Sevappa Nayaka, to the throne. Despite the defeat that Vijayanagar suffered in the Battle of Talikota in 1565, Thanjavur continued to remain loyal to the Empire. The Pudukkottai Plate dated Saka 1505 indicated that Achyutappa supported Vijayanagar in defeating the forces of Madurai in the



Battle of Vallamprakara (Vallam). This led to bitter rivalry between two nayak powers, Thanjavur and Madurai. In a war against the Portuguese he supported the Nayak of Jaffna, but the latter suffered reverses and took refuge in Thanjavur. After this humiliation he devoted himself to religious pursuits. At the expense of the Tamil peasants Achutapa too founded agraharas and made gifts to the Brahmins. It is pointed out that he instituted free feeding to a thousand Brahmins every day. In spite of his attempt to win the favour of gods through the Brahmins, his reign was marked by repeated wars and disorders. He died in 1614, being succeeded by his son, Raghunatha Nayaka.

Raghunatha Nayaka (1600-1634), a contemporary of Krishnappa II of Senji, was the most powerful among the Nayaks of Thanjavur. As Yuvaraja during the reign of his father Achutapa Nayaka, he gained experience both as a soldier and as a soldier and as an administrator. Directed by his father, he led the forces for the defence of Penukonda, which was besieged by the Deccani forces and saved the city for Vijayanagar. In return for this signal service, Emperor Venkata I complied with his request for the release of Krishnappa Nayaka II of Senji from prison. In 1600 he ascended the throne. The Portuguese letters refer to the story that he murdered his brother and obtained possession of the country, but there is no reference to it in any other source.

Raghunatha Nayaka distinguished himself as an able general and sagacious ruler. Because of his loyalty to Venkata I, he fought against the force of Golkonda, which committed aggression upon Vijayanagar and against the forces of Madurai in the battle of Topur. The victories that he gained in these battles made him the most powerful of the Nayaks. He also led an expedition against Solaga. It is believed that Solaga was the ruler of a territory, situated north of the river, Kollidam. Supported by the Nayak of Senji, he created disturbances in Thanjavur. In consequence the forces of Raghunatha Nayaka equipped with bows, arrows and swords and carrying with them medicinal herbs, attacked the rebel stronghold. Solaga surrendered and Krishnappa Nayak of Senji who came to his support, retreated in humiliation.

The forces of Thanjavur fought against the Portuguese in Lanka. The ruler of Jaffna, being defeated and expelled from his kingdom by the Portuguese, sought the support of the Nayak of Thanjavur. Accordingly, from Devakottai Raghunatha Nayaka advanced with his army along the sea coast, crossed the Gulf of Mannar by a chain of boats, defeated the Portuguese and reinstated the king of Jaffna. However, this victory proved momentary, for the Portuguese returned in strength and re-occupied Jaffna. The forces of Thanjavur again moved in support of Jaffna, but suffered a defeat and retreated.

The reign of Raghunatha Nayaka witnessed a keen competition among European merchants for ascendancy in the eastern market. Because of intrigues and repression the local powers sought to expel the Portuguese and often sided with the Dutch. From Raghunatha Nayaka the Dutch acquired Tegnapatam by 1610 A.D. They sought to erect a fort at Trimilipatam, situated between Tarangambadi and Nagapatam but the Nayak refused permission for fear of inviting complications in his relations with the foreign powers. The conflict between the two European powers badly affected the growth of their trade. The



English wrote: “the Dutch worked havoc to the Portuguese ships in the sea but on land the latter endeavoured by clandestine efforts to prevent the Dutch from getting a foot hold”. Raghunatha Nayaka permitted the Danes too to establish a settlement in his country. In 1620 they founded Danesborg at Tarangambadi. By 1622 they built a fort at this place and captured a large volume of trade. The success gained by the Danes prompted the English to seek a foot hold in the kingdom. Attracted by the good and cheap cloth, painted in different colours and believing that this coast produced plenty of pepper, they wanted to open a factory at Karaikal. But by experience they found the Nayak: “very covetous expecting very great presents yearly”. Also pepper was not available in large quantity. Because of these considerations and Portuguese intrigues, they abandoned their attempt. Nevertheless, it appears that Raghunatha Nayaks encouraged the different European powers to have a share of the country’s trade with a view to keeping them in mutual competition and safeguarding his interests thereby.

Men of letters lived in his court and sought royal favours, Yagnanarayana Dikshita singing in praise of his reign wrote: ‘poverty left the country and Thanjavur became the abode of Lakshmi’. However, with an oppressive taxation prevailing in the kingdom, it is difficult to give credence to this statement. Yet it cannot be denied that the weakness of the rulers for flattery and the unscrupulousness of the poets to excel in this art have always contributed to the growth of literature and the suppression of reason. No wonder, the court of Raghunatha Nayaka was not an exception. The ruler convened pandita parishads or assemblies of scholars in which learned men and women competed against each other not only to exhibit their intellectual attainments but also in showering encomium upon the king. Incidentally this helped Thanjavur to become a seat of learning. The southern school of Telugu literature, which was noted for its contribution to the yakshagana type of drama, emerged during this period. Sanskrit too received encouragement but Tamil was neglected. As the other Nayaks did, Raghunatha Nayaka too made large gifts to the Brahmins at the expense of the Tamils. Govinda Dikshita, as priest and minister wielded vast influence. Both the king and his minister diverted the resources of the state for the promotion of their religion rather than of the welfare of their subjects.

On the death of Raghunatha Nayaka, his son Vijayaraghava, succeeded to the throne. Despite the preoccupation of Vijayanagar with the wars against the Deccani powers, he remained loyal to the Emperors, Venkatapati II and Sriranga III. He neglected the welfare of his people and spent his time in constant worship. Greatly encouraged, the forces of Bijapur and Madurai ravaged the country, as the result of which the inhabitants suffered terribly. Ultimately the Nayak himself died in a battle, fought against the Madurai army. The last ruler of the dynasty was Chengamaladas, from whom the Marathas usurped the throne.

(1) Administration:

(i) Central Government:

The Nayak as provincial viceroy had the assistance of a host of officials and ministers. The Nayaks were administered their provinces under the control of the Emperor. But the Emperor did not interfere in the internal affairs of the Nayakdom, The top officials of the kingdom were:-



- (1) The Delvay (Chief Minister)
- (2) Pradhani (Revenue Minister)
- (3) Rayasam (Chief Secretary)

The Other members were:-

- (1) The Kanakkan (Accountant)
- (2) Sthanapati (Foreign Secretary)
- (3) Adappam (Beatel bearer)

According to prof. R. Sathianatha Iyer, “These three officials (the Delvay, Pradhani and Rayasam) formed the trio of the king’s council.

As Provincial governors they respected the traditions conventions and public consensus among the ruled. As a vassa to the Emparor, they paid an annual tribute of 40 to 45 lakhs. In their province the Nayaks were the ultimate authority. The Nayaks of Madurai considered themselves as imperial successors of the Pandyas. The Double carp of the Pandyas was the royal emblem of Nayaks of Madurai.

(ii) Local Administration:

The Nayak rulers greatly reorganised the local administration. The Nayakdom was divided into “mandalam” or “rashtra” or ‘desam’ or rajya or nadu. They were sub-divided into makana or simai and thence into villages. The estates or fiefs so divided were left under the control of polygars. The fiefs were called palayams where the power to collect taxes, administration of internal peace and maintenance of an armed division were entrusted to the fief holder. The system was devised by Ariyanatha during the regime Visvanatha. Some 77 palayams appear to have existed. In the Dindigul region alone there were 18 palayams under the leadership of the Polygar of Kanivadi.

The villages were changed radically along with their names during this period. They had for their suffix mangalam (e.g. Uppidamangalam), Palayam (Perianaickenpalayam), Samudram (Ambasamudram), Kudi (Peramakudi), Ur (Tiruppur) Puram (Tirumalaisampuram), Kulam (Periakulam), Patti (Badinaichenpatti) etc.

(iii) Revenue:

The polygar system in its fundamentals was a revenue-cum-military-cum-police organisation. The officials in charge of revenue collection in the villages were known as maniyakkaran or ambalakkaran. They collected the dues from ryots and sent them to Mekanam and thence to the Pradhani. They collected one-third of the produce from their tenants and paid one-third of the collected amount to the higher authority.

Apart from land revenue taxes on imports, exports and various professions were levied. Royalty from pearl fisheries was yet another source of royal income which were passing into the control of the European trading companies.



The principal items of expenditure were the king, his court, household, public works, benefactions of temples and institutions of charity.

The Nayak regime in general was benevolent. Some are inclined to characterise this rule as an oppressive one. According to Nelson this rule was a blessing in disguise for Madurai. Rev. Caldwell thought that the dazzling pomp and luxury of the court deliberately concealed internal decay and degradation.

(2) Social Conditions:

The establishment of Vijayanagar rule in Tamilaham added a new element to the populations. Most of them seem to have migrated along with the Vijayanagar Viceroys and their train of servants of officials. Chief among the Telugu speaking communities in Tamilaham are the following:-

- (i) Kammavar
- (ii) Kavarai or Balijas (Bangle merchants)
- (iii) Uppuliya (Salt merchants)
- (iv) Seniya (Textile Workers)
- (v) Tottiar or Kambalattar (those with a Kambalam or blanket).
- (vi) Oddar
- (vii) Sakkiliar
- (viii) Dombas (Acrobats)

The Kavarai and Kammavar topped the list as merchants and agriculturists par excellence. Now they are called as Naidu or Naicker.

The Chettis and Komatie among the Telugu speaking were noted for their subtle and ingenious practices in trade. They were very interested in doing business.

Most of them form small groups who adore a particular god or goddess. In most cases household deities are worshipped. Women adore secret deities called Kanniyar (Virgin Goddess) unmarried girls of marriage age, who died concealed in bamboo boxes or underground vaults in an attempt to save their chastity during the invasions of the fanatic Muhammadans. They died due to suffocation and became deities of the house. The Kanniyar were (and are) worshipped with flowers, turmeric and other holy oblations.

THE MARATHAS

The Nayak power in Tanjore began to fall in 1676 i.e. during the time of Sangamaladas. This marks the beginning of the Maratha rule in Tanjore. It was inaugurated by Venkoji the Maratha General of Bijapur.

(i) Venkoji (1676-84):

Venkoji began his reign cautiously to win over the people of the newly get kingdom. He was the first Bhonsle (Maratha) ruler of Tanjore. He was the son of Shaji Bhonsle and



Tuka Bai. Shivaji was his half-brother. He inherited his father's Jagir in the Carnatic; but Shivaji got Poona as his jagir, Venkoji was employed under Adil Shah as war general. In 1674 Alagiri Nayak invaded tanjore, killed Vijayaraghava and asurped the throne. Vijayaraghava's son Chengamaladas was brought up in Nagapatnam by a faithful servant. When Alagiri's reign turne oppressive, the adherents of the Tanjore royal family appealed to the Adil Shah to put an end to the misrule and resotre Chengamaladas. Immediately Adil Shah set Venkoji to settle the Tanjore question. Alagiri was defeated by Venkoji in the battle of Ayyampet and Chengamaladas restored. In 1676 Venkoji ousted the Nayak and usurped the throne. Thus he inaugarated a century of Maratha rule at Tanjore.

Venkoji was an able administrator and efficient soldier, He was a subtle diplomat. J.N. Sarkar considers him as "no unworthy brother of Shivaji". Venkoji died in 1680.

(ii) Shivaji:

Raising his arms against Islamic persecutions, " the fiery genius" Shivaji set in nation the concept of Pan-Hindu empire. For 50 years he worked for the cause of Hindu revival. Many reasons have been attributed for the invasion of Tanjore by Shivaji. Among them the foremost was his acute need of gold and silver. His temptations were motivated by Raghunatha Narayan Hanumante. Accordingly he marched towards Carnatic with a huge army. The army marched by way of Sri Sailam, Tirupati and Kanchi and fell upon Senji "Like a thunderbolt". All the territory upto Chidambaram was annexed and entrusted to Santaji, Shivaji's son. Encamping on the Northern Coleroon, Shivaji had an interview with Venkoji, and demanded half-of the Carnatic that which the latter inherited from his father. Venkoji demanded the same in Maharashtra. The brothers were vascillating in arriving at a final settlement. In the meanwhile Venkoji escaped. Under these circumstances he was unwilling to cross the Coleroon. So he retreated back. Scholars are of opinion that the Carnatic was "peeled to the hones" by organised "plunder and execution". According to Grand Duff, the Carnatic venture was "the most important expedition in his life.

(iii) Shahji II (1685-1712)

Venkoji had three sons. Shahji, serfoji and Tukkoji. These three sons succeeded to the throne one after another in the order of seniority. Shahji II was a liberal ruler and patron of the arts. He helped his cousin Rajaram, the Chatrapati in his crusade against the Mughal emperor. But he was not able to check the rising tide of Mughal imperialism in the far south. He was forced into submission by Aurangzeb in 1684.

Shahji was a man of letters. He was the author of Adhinava Bhoja. Under his patronage Ramabhadr Dikshita wrote Panakiparinayam and Patanjalicarita. Appakavi was a dramatist, author of Srigaramanjarisahajiyam.

(iv) Serfoji I (1712-28):

Shahji died without any issue and issue and was succeeded by his brother Serfoji I. His reign was noted for literary progress. Taking part in the Marava Civil War between



Tanda Tevar and Bharani Sankara, Serfoji reaped a rich harvest of territorial acquisition, all the lands north of pambar. After his death a civil war broke out in Tanjore. Serfoji's illegitimate son Kattu Raja rebelled and seized the throne. Soon his government was toppled by Serfoji's brother Tukoji who ascended the throne in 1728.

(v) Tukoji (1728-36)

Tukoji was a belligerent sovereign and inaugurated a vigorous forward policy. He aspired to conquer the whole of Ramnad. On behalf of Bhavani Sankara he invaded Ramnad. Kattaya Tevar of Ramnad rose equal to the occasion, defeated the invader and took all the territories north of Pambar in 1732.

Tukoji was a man of letters and was the author of a musical treatise entitled sangidasara.

Tukoji had five sons named Bava Saheb, Shahji, Aruna Saheb, Nana Saheb, and Pratap Singh.

(vi) Tukoji II (1736):

After Tukoji's demise Bava Saheb was crowned as Tukoji II in 1736. Soon he died and was followed by his queen Sujana Bai.

(vii) Pratap Singh (1739-63)

Pratap Singh's quarter of a century of reign is a land mark in the chequered history of Tanjore. He descended upon the Carnatic plains in 1740. Dost Ali met the invader at the Damalcheruvu pass. In a terrible battle that followed the Nawab was defeated and killed. He followed an aggressive policy towards neighbouring states. Neither the Nawab nor the English Presidency was in a position to control him. His aggressions against his southern neighbours came to an end in 1763 when he died.

Pratap Singh was succeeded by his son Tuljaji.

(viii) Tuljaji (1763-87)

Tuljaji's reign was a period of storm and stress in the history of Tanjore. In 1767, Haider Ali swept across the Carnatic like a hurricane and exacted a ransom of Rs. 4 lacs from Tuljaji. In 1769 Mohammad Ali accused Tuljaji of treasonable alliance with Haider Ali and the rebellious polygars. He sent an expedition to Tanjore under zulficar khan. Tuljaji agreed to pay the annual tribute of 4 lacs. In 1771 Tuljaji led an expedition to Ramnad, defeated the Maravas and annexed Hanumantagudi. The Nawab bribed the company and led a punitive expedition to Tanjore. The "war ended mysteriously" abruptly Tuljaji agreed to pay 8 lacs as indemnity.

In 1773 Mohammed Ali planned to plunder Tanjore once again. Tanjore was looted. Tuljaji was deposed and imprisoned. Alexander Wynch the Governor of Madras was a silent spectator to these happenings. He was bribed to remain silent. The British Government at



London ordered to restore Tuljaji. After three years Tuljaji was given lease of life in 1776. The company concluded a subsidiary alliance with him. He died in 1787.

Tuljaji was succeeded by his adopted son Serfoji II.

(ix) Serfoji II (1798-1833)

Serfoji II was a minor. So Tuljaji's half-brother Amar Singh acted as Regent. Then Amar Singh ruled the land from 1787 to 1798. He was an inefficient administrator.

In 1790 the company took away the right to collect revenue from Tanjore. Later Serfoji was restored to the throne on the basis of the recommendation of the Committee appointed by the Governor of Madras.

Lord Wellesley ordered the annexation of Tanjore in 1798. By a treaty signed with Serfoji, the latter surrendered all civil and military powers to the company. He was to receive one lakh of star pagodas (one star pagoda =Rs. 3½) per year. He was permitted retain the title of Raja. Thus the drama of annexation was enacted in a stupendous manner by the British.

Serfoji died in 1833 and was succeeded by his rather sickly son Shivaji II.

(x) Shivaji II (1833-1855)

Shivaji had never been conspicuous for intelligence, dash or initiative. The harem was normal residence where a multitude of wives shared his dyspeptic attentions. Shivaji II died on 17th October 1855 leaving no sons behind. Dalhousie utilised this opportunity to abolish the title of 'raja' by the 'Doctrine of Lapse'. It seems that even the private property of the Serfoji family was confiscated. The royal family continued to reside in its ancestral palace and enjoy and exercise permitted rights and draw nominal pension.

ARCOT NAWABS

In 1693 the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb created the Nawabi of Arcot. Till 1801, the Carnatic with its headquarters at Arcot was ruled by the two lines of rulers known as the Narayets and Wallajahs.

Navayets:

Towards the end of the 17th Century the Nayak power in the far south began to decline as a result of perpetual conflicts. In 1693 Aurangzeb sent Zulficar Khan to collect tribute from Tanjore and Tiruchy. Mangammal and Shivaji of Tanjore knew their own capacity and acknowledged Mughal overlordship by paying tribute. Zulficar Khan was the first appointed Nawab of Arcot. He was succeeded by Dand Khan and Sadatullah Khan (1710-32). The latter established the independent Nawabi of Arcot and threw off the Mughal yoke. He was the founder of the Navayeb family. The Navayets overcame all the Hindu powers upon Travancore and established their sway over Tamilaham.

After Sadatullah Khan, Dost Ali became the Nawab of Arcot in 1732. He continued as the Nawab of Arcot till 1740. He was the nephew of Sadatullah Khan. He was the chief architect of the collapse of the Nayakdom of Madurai. In the civil war between queen



Munakshi and Bangaru Tirumala, the latter sought the aid of Dost Ali who sent his son-in-law Chanda Saheb to settle the problem of Tiruchi. Queen Minakshi entered into a secret alliance with chanda sahib who agreed to pay him Rs. one Crore to counter-act the machinations of Bangaru and his son Vijayakumara. Chanda Saheb defeated Bangaru and Vijayakumara near Dindigul and drove the latter into exile. The he turned against her and plaed her under arrest. In the meantime she committed suicide. He styled himself as the Nawab of Tiruchy.

In 1739 Dost Ali sent his son safdar Ali to Tanjore to laid the accession of Pratap Singh. In 1740 Raghuji Bhousesle invaded the Carnatic in that year with a huge army. Dost Ali, Safdar Ali and Chanda Saheb met the Maratha invader in the Damalcheruvu pass. In the terrible battle that followed Dost Ali lost his life. Safdar Ali concluded peace with Raghuji by agreeing to pay Rs. on ecrore as indemnity. Chanda Saheb and his son Abid Ali were taken prisoners to Satara whom to keep in confinement. Safdar Ali agreed to pay an annual subsidy.

Safdar Ali (1740-42) was murdered by one Murtaza Ali who asurped the throne. He himself was overthrown in a military coup. Sadatullah Khan II, an infant son of Safdar Ali was placed on the throne. It was then in 1743 that Nizam Asaf Jah descended upon Carnatic to reasser Mughal paramountcy. After the death of Sadatullah Khan II, Anwar-ud-din was appointed as the Nawab of Arcot. He killed the adjure Nawab and ascended the throne. Thus the Navayet regime in Arcot came to an end.

The Wallajahs:

Anwar-ud-din was the founder of the Wallajah dynasty. The Nizam recognized him as the Nawab of Arcot. Anwar-ud-din appointed his son Mohammad Ali as Subedar of Trichy. In 1744 Chanda Saheb secured his release from Satara by paying 7½ lakhs of Irupees land rushed to the Carnatic to assert his claims to the Nawabi of Arcot. A civil war between the Navayets and the Wallajahs broke out in 1744 which lasted till 1754.

Carnatic Wars:

The Wallajah-Navayet Civil war is known familiarly in South Indian History as the Carnatic Wars. The conflict among the rival claimants to the Nawabi of Arcot and the Nizami of Hyderabed coincided with the Anglo-French contest for supremacy in the Carnatick.

(i) The First Carnatic War (1744-48):

The First Carnatic War was coincided with the Austrian Succession War (1740-48). The war broke out in the continent and soon spread to various parts of the world.

They were commercial rivalry between the English and the French. It paved the way for the war.

In addition to this in 1746, the English navy under Barnett captured few French Ships which served as a cause for a major confrontation between the rival powers. La Bourdonnais came from Mauritius for French help. The French squadron stormed the fort of Madras and captured it. At this juncture the Nawab as overlod of the Carnatic ordered the French to relinquish their conquest of Madras which the former declined. The infuriated Nawab sent an army under Maphuz Khan to rescue the English. It was defeated by the French at Adyar. Malleison says "To Europeans and Natives alike it was as the storming of the Bastile".



After the rendition of Madras, Dupleix and La Bourdonnais quarreled over the possession of the city. The former wanted to ransom it while the latter opposed it. Before anything could be done La Bourdonnais was forced to return to Manritius as his fleet was destroyed in a tempest. Now Dupleix was free to settle the destiny of the city which he plundered from 'top to bottom'.

In the meantime reinforcements came from England. Under Admiral Bascawn an English fleet besieged Pondicherry. At the same time a peace treaty was signed in Europe and the Austrian Succession War came to an end. It was called the Treaty of Aix-la-Chappel. By this the French agreed to give Madras to the English. The war thus vindicated the weakness of the Nawab in the Carnatic.

The Second Carnatic War (1749-54):

The war coincided with the succession disputes at Arcot and Hyderabad.

In 1744, the Nizam appointed Anwar-up-din as Nawab of Arcot. It was challenged by Chanda Saheb who was the son-in-law of Dost Ali.

At Hyderabad Nasir Jung and Muzzafar Jung contested for the Nizami. Nasir Jung was the second son of Nizam-ul-Mulk. Asaf Jah who had six sons called Ghazi-up-din, Nasir Jung, Salabat Jung, Nizam ali, Baslet Ali and Mughul Ali Khan.

Prior to the war Chanda Saheb, Muzzafar Jung and the French formed an alliance. Anwar-up-di, Nasir Jung and the English formed another alliance.

War broke out in 1749. Chanda Saheb and his allies met Anwar-ud-din in a decisive encounter at Ambur and killed him. Anwar-ud-din's son Mohammad Ali fled to Trichy and shut himself in the fort. Nasir Jung descended upon the Carnatic and won some victories but was murdered in 1750. In the presence of Dupleix Chanda Saheo and Muzzafur Jung were proclaimed the Nawab and Nizam respectively.

In 1751 Muzzafar Jung set out for Hyderabad accompanied by the French Admiral Bussy. He was killed on the way. Hence Bussy nominated Nasir Jung's brother Salabat Jung as Nizam setting aside the claims of Muzzafar's minor sons.

In the meantime Mohammed Ali from the Trichy fort contacted the English. It was then that Robert Clive suggested an attack on Arcot. The Governor of Madras Saunders dispatched a regiment under Robert Clive to Arcot. The capital of the Nawab was captured. The loss of Arcot was really a serious blow to Chanda Saheb. He sent an army to relieve Arcot but was repulsed by Godeheu. Chanda himself was killed after his defeat at Trichy. Mohammad Ali became Nawab. By this war the English got the Northern Circars as their prize.

The Third Carnatic War (1756-63):

The war coincided with the Seven years' war (1756-63). The renewal of hostilities in 1756 paved the way for the destruction of the French.

The French General Thomas Arthur Court de Lally besieged Fort St. David and captured it in 1758. Then he marched towards Tanjore. It ended in waste of time and resources. In 1759 Lally's attempt to capture Madras was thwarted. So he summoned Bussy from Hyderabad for his support. Sir Eyre Coote rushed to the British aid and in a memorable



battle at Wandiwash in 1760, the French forces were crushed and Lally himself imprisoned. In May 1760 Pondicherry was besieged and captured. The French attempt to contact Hyder Ali for help did not materialize. According to Robert Orme “Pondicherry was looted and in a few months more than a roof was left standing in this once fair and flourishing city”. Finally the war came to an end by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. According to the Treaty Pondicherry was restored to the French. thus the English got glorious victory over their rivals in the Carnatic. It was due to their strong navy and financial background. Moreover able and efficient generals like Clive, Lawrence, Saunders and Sir Eyre Coote paved the way for the success of the English and failure of the French. Besides their strategic bases at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta assured their victory.

SETUPATHIS OF RAMANATHAPURAM

The Setupatis emerge into history during the reign of Muthu Krishnappa Nayaka.

(i) (1601-1609) He appointed Sadaikka Tevar as Udayan Setupati of Ramnad. Setupati means guarding of the Causeway to Rameswaram. The maravas considered it their privilege to protect the pilgrims going to Rameswaram. He humbled the Vanniyar and Pacified the Paliyagars whose chief he became. Thus he became the first Setupati of Ramnad.

(ii) Kuttan Setupati:

His reign period lasted from 1622 to 1636. He continued the tradition established by his father. He was a true subordinate of the Nayak of Madurai.

(iii) Sadaikka II:

He was the adopted son of Kuttan Setupati. He succeeded Kuttan Setupati after his death in 1636. For about three years, Sadaikka II ruled peacefully.

Sadaikka II was also known as Dalavay Setupati. His position was challenged by Tambi, an illegitimate son of Kuttan. He was supported by the Nayak of Madurai as the setupati was withholding tribute

Tambi invaded Ramnad. We get a clear picture about the Marava Civil War from the Ramappaiyan Ammanai. It was a terrible war. The Setupati was defeated and taken prisoner. Tambi was crowned but the popular sentiment was against his regime.

Once again Raghunatha Tevar and Narayana Tevar, nephews of Sadaikka were also opposed to Tambi. So Tirumalai Nayak ousted Tambi and restored Sadaikka. Tambi hatched a plot against the Setupati and killed him. The assassin himself died soon. Now Raghunatha Tevar was appointed as Setupati. He was a loyal servant of the Nayak. He ably assisted Tirumalai Nayak and Muthu Veerappa II in their wars against Mysore.

(iv) Raghunatha Setupati (alias) Tirumalai Setupati:

Raghunatha Setupati ruled one-third of the Setupati domination from 1645 and the whole of the kingdom from 1655 to 1670. He may be considered to be the greatest among the Setupatis. During his period the relationship between the Setupatis and Nayaks of Madurai



became of strained. Chokkanatha Nayak invaded Ramnad for the former had refused to cooperate during the Muhammadan invasion of Trichy. An army led by him easily overran Tirupattur, Pudukottai, Manamadurai and Kalayarkoil. The Maravas withdrew to the jungles and resorted to guerilla warfare. Chokkanatha returned ordering the army to render their submission. But they were a hard nut to crack. This army returned crest-fallen. In 1674 he was succeeded by his nephew Surya Thevar.

Raghunatha Setupati was a great patron of literary men. He was a great builder of temples. Moreover he renovated many temples. In spite of the many wars he waged, he found the resources and the time needed to promote the peaceful arts. The Telugu language in addition to native Tamil was used in court records and official correspondence. Alagiya Chitrumbala Kavirayar and Amirtha Kavirayar were among the Tamil poets patronised by him. Perhaps he is to be credited with the construction of the Second 'Prakara' of the Ramanathaswamy Temple in Ramesvaram, Thayumanavar, the famous mystic poet spent his last days in Ramnad during the reign period of this prince.

(v) &(vi) Surya Tevar and Athana Tevar:

Tirumalai Setupati was succeeded by the elder of his two sons Surya Tevar and Athana Tevar. They reigned in succession but the reign periods of both of them together did not exceed one year. Both of them died one after another within a short period. After a few years of personal rule the Nayak appointed Raghunatha Tevar alias Kilavan Setupati son of Surya Tevar through his fifth wife.

(vii) Raghunatha Setupati:

He ruled from 1671 to 1710 A.D. His nickname was Kilavan Setupati. He was a ruthless and cruel man; warlike and tolerant but in his own way competent. He stood with Chokkanatha Nayak in the days of difficulty and got the title 'Para Raja Kesari' (Lion to alien kings). He increased the defences of the Marava Kingdom and took stern measures against rebels.

Kilavan Setupati founded the Tondaiman dynasty of Pudukkottai in 1711.

Kilavan picked up a quarrel with Muthu Veerappa Nayak III and turned rebellions, so the Nayak sent an army against Ramnad which was defeated by the Setupati in league with Tanjore.

In 1700 he receded the Marava country practically from subjection to Madurai. His anti-Madurai policy forced Mangammal to dispatch an army against Ramnad in 1702. It was routed by the Maravas and forced to return ignominiously. Mangammal's difficulty with Aurangzeb gave Kilavan the opportunity to liberate Ramnad from the Nayak yoke. By 1706 Kilavan Setupati established the independent kingdom of the Maravas.

According to Prof. R. Sathianatha Iyer, "he was a man of remarkable ability who conducted the administration of the country with vigour and wisdom." He shifted the capital of the kingdom from Pugalur to Ramnad. He also created the Sivaganga Palayamand



appointed Peria Wodaya Tevar as its governor. He was a bigot Hindu ruler. He was responsible for the execution of the Christian missionary worker John de Britto. It was due to the large scale conversion of Marvars to Christianity by John de Britto. It is stated that at one time he converted nearly 8000 Maravars to Christianity.

Kilavan Setupati's services to the cause of Hinduism were many. He endowed a temple in Tiruvadananar with lands; he provided for the comfortable functioning of many mathas. He gave three villages to a temple near Kalaiyarkoil. He ordered the excavation of a large reservoir called the 'Mugavai Urani' and the construction of a dam across the Vaigai. He permitted the Dutch who had settled themselves on the eastern coast, to fish freely in the waters nearby for but a nominal fee. The Setupati at the age of 80 and after a reign of 40 years, passed away in 1710 A.D. His 47 wives committed self-immolation on his funeral pyre. He left no heir to succeed him.

(viii) Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati:

He was in power from 1710 to 1720 A.D. He inherited very bad economic condition of the country and had to face famine on one hand and floods on the other and the consequent hardships. He caused a lake called 'Raghunatha Samudram' to be excavated near Tanjore. He divided the country into a number of defence zones and improved also the civil administration. The Palaiyagars were disciplined and the Palayam system was reorganised. He built many forts. The important one was built at Kamudi. He ruled a vast territory between Tiruvarur in the north and Tirunelveli in the south. He was a devout Saivite who made many additions to the Ramanathasamy Temple at Ramesvaram.

(ix) Others:

After the death of Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati, Sundaresvara Tevar alias Tenda Tevar became the ruler of Ramnad. He was defeated by Anand Rao, General of the Tanjore armies and finally he was beheaded. Then Bhavani Sankara came to the throne in 1720 and ruled till 1729. During the time of Kattaya Tevar (1729-1735) the Marava country witnessed two invasions – i.e. one from Tanjore under Tukkoji the successor of Serfoji I and the other from the General Anand Rao. He was succeeded by his son Sivakumara Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati (1735-1746). His reign was peaceful and undisturbed by wars. He was succeeded by Rakka Tevar a cousin of Kattaya Tevar in 1747. After him, Sella Tevar (Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati) became the ruler in 1748. His reign lasted upto 1761. In course of time the Marvas slowly drifted towards the Nawab. In 1761 Sella Teva died and left no son behind. His sister's son Muthuramalinga Setupati became the ruler in 1761. During his time things threatened to go from bad to worse in Ramnad. In 1772 that Ramnad came under the direct management of the Nawab of Arcot. In 1792 the Ramnad territories were ceded to the British by a treaty col. Martinz occupied the Maravar country. The company took its administration. In 1803 the Zamindari of Ramnad was transferred to Mangalesvari Nachchiyar. Thus the Ramnad kingdom reduced to the status of a Zamindari.

Mangaleswari Nachchiyar became Zamindarini in 1803 and was in power till 1812. Her son Annasamy Tevar succeeded her in 1812. He assumed the title Muthu Vijaya



Raghunatha setupati. After his death in 1820, Ramasamy Tevar claimed the Zamin during 1820 to 1830. From 1830 to 1847 it was put under the control of his widow Parvadhavardhani Nachchiyar. Later it was brought under the crown in 1858. The manager Ponnusamy Tevar looked after its administration. He died in 1869. His son Pandithurai Tevar became the reputed founder of the Madurai Tamil Sangam. Muthuramalinga Setupati, Baskara Setupati, Rajarajeswara Muthuramalinga Setupati and Shanmuga Rajeswara Naganatha Setupati took over the administration of Ramnad Zamin respectively. The last Setupati joined the congress party in 1949 and in that year the Zamindar's right of Ramnad was abolished. He was minister for Public Works from 1952 to 1957.



UNIT V : POLYGARI SYSTEM

Polygari system – Kaval system – Palayakkarars – Kattabomman- Arrival of the Europeans – Portuguese, Dutch – French – English – Revenue system- South Indian Revolt – abolishing poligari system – Vellore revolt, Tamil Nadu and freedom struggle – civil disobedient movement – Quit India Movement – Salt sathyagraha V.O.C., Subramania Siva, Bharathi, Justice Party- E.V.R. – Rajaji – Sathyamoorthy – Kamaraj – Role of the Congress Party.

POLYGARI SYSTEM

The Nayak period witnessed the rise of a political order, called the pligari system. Similar in character to the nayankara system but of subordinate status, it was destined to have a chequered existence in the history of the Tamil Country. Palayam in Tamil and Palmu in Telugu literally meant an armed camp. The holder of palayam was the Palayakkarar or the poligar. The duties of the poligars in regard to the payment of tribute to the sovereign, administration of justice in their districts and maintenance of troops for the service of the king correspond with those of the feudal barons of medieval Europe, but differed considerably from those of the jagirdars and the zamindars of Moghul India. The possession of estates was indeed the basis of authority of all these chieftains. But while the primary duty of the jagirdar was to render military service to the sovereign, and that of a zamindar to payrent, the poligar combined in himself both these functions. The combination of these branches of duties together with the rights arising there from accounted for the vast influence of the poligars. In the Vijayanagara system what the nayaks of Madurai, Thanjavur and Senji were to the Emperor, the pligars were to the nayaks.

The rise of the poligari system is attributed to several sources. When the nayaks occupied the country, the ruling houses were deprived of their status. Those who surrendered and accepted their authority were accommodated into the poligari system. Expediency too had its role. Also the nayaks wanted to settle the influential Chieftains who migrated with them from the Telugu Country and reward the servants who distinguished themselves in their devoted service. Therefore they formed estates and assigned to them under the poligari tenure. As a result there came into existence several poligars. Among the important palayams were Ramanathapuram, Sivagangai, Wodayarpalayam, Ariyalur and Panjalankurichi.

ADMINISTRATION OF PALAYAM

The poligar, irrespective of the extent and resources of his palayam, maintained a government of his own. He kept up the nominal officers of state. The principal of whom was called the pradhan or dalaway. On every important occasion he held a durbar. He conducted official communications with his sovereign and other rulers through accredited ministers, called stanapatis. The poligar functioned like a virtual king, for he collected taxes, presided over the distribution of justice, maintained order and kept his own troops. He did certain economic functions too for he undertook charitable activities, cleared forests, executed irrigation works and built villages. In short the poligar was the administrator of his Palayam, commander of his forces, the renter to the ruler and a ryot among his people.

Like a feudal baron, the pligar preserved a part of his district usually the best land, for his own cultivation and distributed the rest among the chief inhabitants, commonly called the sherogars, on condition of military service. The followers of a sherogar cultivated the lands in times of peace and took to arms in times of conflict. This arrangement enabled the pligar to assemble a considerable number of troops at a short notice. Forinstance the Setupati of



Ramanathapuram found it no difficult a task to collect 30,000 to 40,000 armed men in less than eight days.

As a usual practice, the actual cultivation of land was entrusted with a caste of workers, the Pullers, the counter-parts of serfs in a baronial estate. The Pullers who tilled the fields of the poligar received a little dry grain for their subsistence, but no fixed share of the crops. On the other hand, those who worked in the fields of the sheroyars received a fixed share of the harvest. The field workers were not tied to the estate, but their poverty forced them to sell their services for long periods. In that case the custom of the land gave their master the right to extract every kind of service from them, to mortgage them to another master for the money borrowed, to hire them out to others for daily labour and even to sell the servants to another person by whom they were held in the same bondage. Still, the status of the Pullers who sold their services, appeared better than that of slaves: for they were not subjected to it forcibly and were permitted to purchase their freedom. Despite their scanty means of subsistence, the Pullers, prompted by an ambition to obtain relief from affliction, contracted their wants to the mere preservation of their lives so that their savings might at some distant period enable them to purchase their freedom. This would usually happen when their master consented to release them no receipt of an amount or when he was involved in some distress. After obtaining freedom from bondage these workers cultivated the fields with animation which could be expected from their altered status.

The cultivated lands in the poligar country were usually calssified into four categories based upon productivity. They were karisel or blank cotton ground, free from stones and sand; the shevul or land with mixture of red soil, stones and sand; pottul or ground with a mixture of black and white earth, with stones and veppul or land with a mixture of brown earth, clay and sand Productivity was decided on the basis of soil conditions, but this was applied only to the wet lands.

The poligar's share of the produce was known as potuchilavu which literally meant public expense. It was estimated at 50% of the yield; the assessment being made on the basis of soil conditions. The share of the poligar was regulated by mamool or custom, but it being an undefined term was used in reality as a pea for committing every kind of abuse. The fluctuation of taxes, the want of an established standard in the assessment of dry grain fields and the intricate details of collections were real evils in the revenue administration of poligar territories. The peasants on their part relied upon evasive tactics against the encroaching evils. It was a common practice that a ryot managed to possess greater extent of land than what was found on the records wither by keeping the actual extent unnoticed by the officials or by bribing the surveyors. The additional area for which the peasant paid no tax varied from 50 to 100 per cent of the extent of the land for which he actually paid. In fact there followed a struggle between oppressive exactions and fraudulent evasions.

THE KAVAL SYSTEM

In addition to the military establishment of the poligars, there existed a police set up called the kaval. The word kaval means 'watch' and a person who performed the duty was called kavalkara or talayari. The kaval system was essentially the Sourth India counterpart of 'hue and cry' in Anglo-Saxon England. Until the Moghul invasions, the poligar and the kaval systems existed as two parallel organisations The poligars of the Vijayanagar period had nothing to do with the kavalkars of the traditional Tamil Nadu. From times immemorial every village had its kavalkars, who were posted either by village communities or by rulers for guarding the villages. The services of the kavalkars were rewarded by a fee called stalam



kaval, which consisted of a portion of the crop which they protected or a monetary payment in lieu thereof. The kaval system was in substance based upon the principle, 'set a thief to catch a thief'. Accordingly, the responsibility of apprehending a thief was entrusted with groups of inhabitants like the Kallans and the Maravas, who during this period considered robbery as their profession. This conferred upon a habitual thief a sense of responsibility. Thus it sought to rectify a social evil by the application of a self corrective remedy.

The two systems, poligar and kaval, complemented each other. The poligars rendered military service to the king and gave security to the country against external invasions. The kavalkars on the other hand discharged police duties and preserved internal order. The poligars were for the poligar territories, while the kavalkars were for the circar lands doing complementary duties. Both the establishments were solely supported by the inhabitants. It was the duty of the sovereign to see them functioning efficiently and separately of each other. The distinct existence of the two establishments appeared essential not only for preventing the overgrowth of their influence but for safeguarding the interests of the sovereign as well as of the subjects.

However, the turmoil which attended the Moghul invasions and the subsequent rebellions created circumstances favourable for the integration of the two systems. The collapse of the established order exposed the inhabitants to the evil of universal conflagration. The Central Government distracted by its own problems found it impossible to give protection to the kavalkars so as to enable them to execute their duties. The inhabitants of several villages in consequence appealed to the powerful poligars for protection. The chiefs on their part readily undertook the new responsibility. They re appointed the former kavalkars or superseded them by their own servants. In return for their service, they received from the inhabitants a voluntary contribution called the deshakaval. The assumption of a new responsibility greatly contributed to the grow of their influence, for they obtained more rights and a new source of revenue.

VIRA PANDYA KATTABOMMAN

Vira Pandya Kattabomman (1793-99):

Vira Pandya Kattabomman was the son of Jagavira Pandya Kattabomman. He was born in 1760. His ancestors seem to have migrated to Salikulam from the Bellary area in the 11th century. His predecessors are said to have reigned forty-six generations before him.

Jagavira Pandya was a Pendyan feudatory who ruled from Virapandiapuram. Kattabomman was the hereditary title of the rulers of Panchalamkurichi, it comes after Gatti Bommu, a forerunner of the family.

The palaiyagars as auxiliary powers came directly under the control of the Nawab of Arcot. When the latter assigned the Nawabi to the British in 1790 they claimed tribute from all the local powers. The company appointed collectors to collect taxes. They adopted oppressive and suppressive methods to collect the taxes. So there was an inevitable conflict between the palayagars and the company.

The first confrontation and conflict took place in 1798. In that year Kattabomman was summoned to meet the Collector of Ramnad Colin Jackson in connection with the arrears of tribute that he owed to the company. Without prior intimation, he **began his**, intimidation in the area to collect the tribute from the local powers. Kattabomman followed him for 23 days with tribute in hand. His attempt to meet the Collector and Courtallam did not materialise. He



was forced to follow the Collector through Chokkampatti, Sivagiri, Sattur and Srivilliputtur. The purposely delayed interview finally took place at Ramnad. The records were examined and Kattabomman was required to pay 1080 pagodas. The interview lasted for more than three hours. But he was insulted during the interview. He along with his minister was not permitted even to sit. At the end of deliberations the collector attempted to imprison Kattabomman. But the latter forced his way out of the fort. In the skirmish that followed the security guard Lieutenant Clark was killed. The raja escaped; but his minister fell into the British hands.

In the meantime the company keenly observed the Ramnad incident. So it appointed a committee to study the case. But it acquitted Kattabomman and dismissed Jackson from service.

After analysing the situation, Kattabomman formed a coalition to resist the British expansion. There was a general discontent and dissatisfaction in Tirunelveli, Ramnad and Madurai areas. The company took a note of these developments and reduced those irregular chieftains to the authority of the civil government.

At this juncture Jackson was followed by Washington as the Collector of Ramnad. He decided to bring the rebellious chiefs of Panchalamkurichi under control.

Under the leadership of Major Bannerman the British forces marched towards Panchalamkurichi. Kattabomman had remarkable generals like Sivattaiya Nayak, Virabhadra Pillai, Samprati Ponnappa Pillai, Vellaiya Tevan etc.

In the war with the British Vellaiya Tevan is said to have defeated and killed General Collins. Therefore Panchalamkurichi fell to the British cannons. It was a great shock to Kattabomman. His attempt to unite Nagalapuram Sivagiri and Ramnad did not serve any purpose. Soon Nagalapuram itself fell. Ettayapuram allied with the British. Within a short period the Palaiyagar resistance crumbled before the British arms. As observed by Bannerman, ".....never was European energy more gallantly displayed by the officers than on this unfortunate occasion." Kattabomman escaped and sought refuge at Pudukottai. Vijaya Raghunatha Tondaiman got an opportunity to display his loyalty to the 'low wretches' by handing over the 'rebel'.

After the fall of Panchalamkurichi, the 'rebels' were tried and punished. Soundara Pandya of Nagalapuram and the commanders of Kattabomman's army were executed. Umaidurai was put in prison at Palayamkottai. Kattabomman was taken to Kayattar and hanged on 16th October 1799. He was hanged due to the following allegations:-

- (i) Kattabomman accumulated arrears of tribute;
- (ii) He refused to meet the Collector without an armed band;
- (iii) He disregarded the summon of the Collector of Tirunelveli
- (iv) He induced the other Palaiyagars to rise in revolt.
- (v) He refused to meet the Collector on the day of the declaration of war.

The allies of the company like the rulers of Ettayapuram, Pudukottai, Maniachi, etc. were amply rewarded for their services. But they were deprived of their right to possess arms and required to pay more tribute.



ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEANS

The Europeans made their appearance on the Coast of Tamil Nadu during the Vijayanagar period. The first to reach were the Portuguese and they were followed by the Dutch, the Danes, the English and the French. This was not an isolated phenomenon in the history of South India, but a feature that was common with the Indies. Disintegration of the Vijayanagar Empire and the internal conflicts among the local powers presented problems as well as opportunities for the European merchants.

THE PORTUGUESE ON THE COAST

In 1498 the Portuguese vessels reached Kozhikode on the Malabar Coast. They acquired Goa in 1510 and made it their headquarters in India. This was followed by the establishment of settlements along the East Coast. What the Portuguese aimed at was no large territorial possession, for their resources did not permit it, but the control of the eastern market through alliances with the princes and establishment of isolated posts. They gave equal importance to religious enterprise too; for they extended their support to the Jesuits for the conversion of the people to Catholicism.

The Portuguese formed a settlement at San Thome in 1522. To begin with their interest was religious, for they wanted to build a church at the place, where St. Thomas was believed to have been killed. Gaspar Correa recorded that in 1507 Francisco de Almeida, the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa, having heard from local Christians that there existed a chapel of ST. Thomas on the East Coast, sent his men to trace it out. On the basis of their report, two Portuguese visited a church that was believed to be the sepulchre of ST. Thomas. At the orders of the king of Portugal, the church was rebuilt and walls were erected. However, in later years the walls were washed away by the waves. Before long, they made it a trading settlement too. In Senji they established a settlement at Porto Novo and developed it into a sea port. During the administration of Sevappa Nayaka of Thanjavur, they settled at Nagapatnam, which grew into a large town. Father Pimenta who visited the place in 1597 recorded: "many Portugals dwell there and many winter there, which came from the coast of China, Bengla, Pegu and Malacca". However, it was in the southern coast that the Portuguese made considerable gains. The Paravas, an industrious people, greatly contributed to the resources of the Vijayanagar Empire. Yet they were oppressed by the Telugu rulers and were left at the mercy of the other communities. Frequently there were clashes between the Paravas and the Muslims, and in one of them about 7000 people died. As the Emperors of Vijayanagar refused protection, they appealed to the Portuguese at Cochin for help. In response the Portuguese reached the fishery coast in 1583 and after having made themselves masters of the port towns, won over the allegiance of the Paravas. All in one day the Paravas received baptism, accepted Christianity and recognized Portuguese jurisdiction. This made Tutukudi, a port town with some 50,000 people in 1700, a strong hold of their influence.

However, what altered their situation were their conflicts with the Nayaks and the Dutch. The forces of Vijayanagar raided their settlement in the fishery coast. Reghunatha Nayaka of Thanjavur undertook an expedition in support of his ally, the ruler of Jaffna, against the Portuguese. Though it ended in failure, the Portuguese lost their influence in Thanjavur. The Dutch occupied Nagapatnam and other settlements by 1658 and gained control of the market on the East Coast. As a result of these developments the Portuguese influence declined in Tamil Nadu.



THE DUTCH AND THE DANES

The Dutch and the Danes appeared on the Coast as the bitter rivals to the Portugueses. Enterprising and cosmopolitan in their outlook and directed by their nation to build forts and make alliances with the Asiatic powers, the Dutch challenged Portuguese supremacy from a position of strength. Their early experiences in the Tamil country were disappointing but as the result of determined endeavour they asserted their influence in several areas.

In 1595 they set out with a fleet of four vessels, reached the Malabar coast and from there sent their ships to the East Coast. With the permission of Krishnappa Nayaka of Senji, they in 1608 built a factory at Devanampatnam, which later on became an English settlement as Fort St. David. In 1610 they acquired possession of Pulicat from the local nayak and made it their stronghold. However, because of Portuguese intrigues against them, Emperor Venkata I directed the Nayak of Senji to destroy their fort at Devanampatnam. The English records refer to the raid by the nayak troops and demolition of this settlement. Subsequently they again approached Krishnappa Nayaka for permission to settle at Devanampatnam and Porto Novo but it was refused. Disappointed at this, the Dutch decided to retaliate in strength. They defeated the Portuguese fleet in the Battle of Malacca in 1606 and subdued the rival settlements, including Nagapatnam and Tutukudi. In 1689 they made Nagapatnam the capital of their possessions in India. They fortified their settlements, maintained their finances efficiently and gained large profits. However, in later years they indulged in slave trade and entered into intrigues in the courts. These made them unpopular. Due to British opposition in India and scope for lucrative trade in the East Indies, they gradually withdrew from the Tamil coast and moved to the East Indies.

King Christian IV of Denmark sent his Danes to Thanjavur in 1620. Ove Geede founded a settlement at Tarangambadi, which they called as Danesborg. Motivated by commercial as well as religious considerations, they entered into trade and founded the Danish Lutheran Mission. The Lutherans erected churches and presented a powerful challenge to the missionary activity of the Jesuits. However, as the supply of money and arrival of ships from their home country became irregular, they lost their influence as well as interest.

ADVENT OF THE ENGLISH

In 1600 the English East India Company obtained a royal charter for trade with the Indies. It made a vigorous attempt to seize trade but encountered difficulties because of internal rivalry and European machinations. Thwarted in their endeavour to establish a profitable trade with the Konkan, the Malabar and the East Indies, they turned to coastal Tamil Nadu and coastal Andhra, a region which lay remote from the spheres of rival influence. This manifested into a land of promise, for it unfolded vast opportunities, both commercial and political. The country produced what they needed and lacked the unity that would have rendered their efforts difficult. In consequence the English established numerous settlements all along the Coast. Because of the opposition of Golkonda and the Dutch at Masulipatam, Francis Day sailed to the south and obtained a grant in 1639 from Damerla Venkatappa, the Nayak of Poonamalle under Emperor Venkata III, for the construction of a settlement and a fort in or around Madraspatnam. He found the place full of sand and mud with no scenic beauty, yet it had good anchorage of ships. A small fort erected in 1640 was enlarged subsequently and was called Fort St. George. The English obtained confirmation of their right to possess Madras from the Rajah of Chandragiri, the Emperor of Vijayanagar and the Sultan of Golkonda in return for the payment of annual rent. Through its rapid growth



from a settlement of traders and sea men to a city of Tamils and Telugus, Madras overshadowed the cities of Kanchi, Vellore and Arcot. In 1653 Fort St. George was made a separate presidency, independent of Bentam in the Indies. Aaron Baker was appointed the first Governor. In 1654 it was made the headquarters of the English on the Coromandel Coast.

Thomas Yale, Governor of Fort St. George, negotiated with Raja Ram, the Maratha ruler of Senji, for the acquisition of Fort St. David. He gave a liberal bribe to the Brahmin minister and obtained a grant for Fort St. David and Cuddalore. Situated near Pondicherry, Fort St. David developed into a promising settlement. The English evinced an interest to build factories in Tahnjavur but abandoned the idea as the local rulers appeared very greedy and European rivalry seemed formidable. It was only in 1749 that they acquired Devokottai. They defeated the Portuguese and the Dutch and established their ascendancy over rival European powers. Queen Mangammal of Madurai invited the English to establish their settlements at Kayal, the sea port near Tutukudi and at Attingal on the west Coast. The queen of Attingal sent tribute to Madurai but she defaulted because of Dutch support to her. Mangammal wanted to play the English against the Dutch. Due to the prospect of trade in pepper the English took some interest in Attingal but for fear of Dutch rivalry declined the offer.

As trade increased in volume and profits exceeded the limits of expectations, the British grew confident in their strength and developed political ambitions. As early as in 1687 the Company announced its resolve to “Establish such a polity of civil and military power and create and secure such a large revenue..as may be the foundation of a large, well grounded sure English dominion in India for all time to come”. NO wonder this major shift in policy from commercial to political had its impact upon the Tamil Country.

ARRIVAL OF THE FRENCH

In 1664 largely because of the initiative taken by Colbert, the Minister of King Louis XIV of France, the French East India Company for Trade with the East came into existence. Granted power to conquer and occupy territories, the Company made a determined bid to emerge into a political power. In 1674 they acquired possession of Pondicherry from the Sultan of Bijapur and made it their capital in India. At a later period in 1739 the French Governor, Dumas in alliance with Chanda Sahib, forced kind Sahuji of Thanjavur to cede Karaikal to the Company. Obsessed with political ambitions, the French neglected trade and entangled themselves into wars with Indian and other European power. As the political fortune failed, commercial decay followed.

In fact all the major European powers had their commercial and political interest in Tamil Nadu. As merchants they engaged themselves in export trade as well as inland trade. They exported cotton products, slaves, pepper and salt petre. At the same time they sold wollen products, tents, bricks and grain, mostly obtained from different parts of India. Their strongholds-San Thome, Nagapatnam, Tarangambadi, Madras and Pondicherry were located in the Tamil country. Surrounded by the major Indian powers of the times, Mysore the Marathas and the Nizam, the Tamil Country acquired a strategic importance of great magnitude. Control of this territory appeared essential not only to deal with the rival European powers but also with the Indian powers from a position of strength. No wonder in the subsequent period it was transformed into a cockpit of intrigue and conflict.



REVENUE SYSTEM

The governorship of Thomas Munroe was extremely significant as marking a great changeover from the Pre existing revenue regulations of new arrangements which led profound impact on the economy of the land.

Munroe was an extraordinary man who served England and Indian equally well and understood India better than many others who come out to this country. They people of Madras loved him more than perhaps they could have loved the best among their own rulers. They endearingly called him the 'Father of the people.'

For purposes of revenue administration the company created a Board of Revenue as early as 1786. District Collectors were appointed in 1794 who replaced the corrupt and inefficient avildars of the previous regime. The mode of revenue collection was known as the 'ryotwari' system which was an innovation of Sir Thomas Munroe. By this system the ryot was enabled to pay the land revenue direct to the Government. This again transferred the judicial and police duties to the district collector.

By the ryotwari system the ryot was entitled to pay a fixed sum to the Government. Usually the amount so collected was 50% of the gross produce. The government appointed officials for collection of revenue. Owing to the dishonesty of those officials all collected as tax did not reach the company's coffers. Many of the officials were rash towards the native powers and precipitated the palayagars crisis. In fact all were not a replica of Munroe, father of the ryotwari system.

After quelling the palayagar resistance to British expansion, Wellesley in 1801 ordered the introduction of Permanent Settlement. (The Permanent Settlement was first introduced in Bengal by Lord Cornwallis in 1792) But it did not function well. So in 1814 the ryotwari system was reintroduced. By 1818 peace and order were restored in the Madras presidency. The modern system of district administration with the revenue and magisterial functions invested with the district collector was well established by 1818. The Board of Revenue guaranteed a uniform system of revenue collection. Appeal can be made to the Board and the Government in cases of oppression. Since 1857 deputy collectors were appointed to aid the district collectors. By the Local Board Act of 1884 member of the district and taluk boards were to be elected.

Sir Thomas Munroe was the Governor of Madras from 1820 to 1827. He was honoured with a Knighthood. From Madras he greatly helped the Governor-general (Lord Amherst) to prosecute the first Burmese war. He died of Cholera at Pattikonda in the Kurnool District. He was very considerate and sympathetic towards Indians. The equestrian statue of Sir Thomas Munroe which adorns the Island Ground in Madras was put up in 1839 by public subscription.

SOUTH INDIAN REVOLT

The South Indian Rebellion of 1800-1801 represented a violent reaction against the surrender of the rulers to the British and loss of freedom. As a result of diplomacy and wars, the aliens established their sway over the land. The horrors that attended the growth of imperialism spread a wave of revulsion and led the inhabitants to united action. The outbreak of the Rebellion marked the climax of a determined endeavour, made by the common people of South India to liberate the 'Peninsula of Jambu Dwipa' from British yoke and to forestall the fall of rest of India under European authority, so that all the inhabitants of the land, as the



rebels declared, could live “in constant happiness without tears”. Marudu Pandyan of Sivaganga, Gopala Nayak of Dindigul, Khan –i-Jah Khan of Coimbatore, Kerala varma of Malabar, Krishnappa Nayak of Mysore and Dhondaji waug of Maharashtra, who organised a formidable confederacy for the overthrow of the British rule, spearheaded the movement. They held a conspiracy at Virupakshi in Dindigul and rose in arms with an attack on Coimbatore on the 3rd of June, 1800. The insurrection spread over an extensive region from Sholapur in the north and to Nanguneri in the far south. In this great struggle the Tamils played the most remarkable role.

CAUSES OF THE REBELLION

The proclamations and letters of the rebels furnish clues to the causes of the movement. Their grievances were that the English reduced the hereditary rulers to the humiliating status of “widow”, treated the sons of the soil like ‘dogs’, showed no consideration for the customs of the land, denied the peasants due share of the crops, and made the rice vellum or water. Thus the causes of the rebellion were political, social and economic. These assertions are substantially corroborated by the official correspondence entered in the records of Fort ST. George.

The obliteration of the royal institutions represented the logical outcome of the steady ascendancy of the English in South India. The Company deprived the rulers of the Carnatic and Thanjavur of their political rights. In 1795 they deposed the Setupati of Ramanathapuram, but failed to win the allegiance of the inhabitants. They made deep inroads into the liberties of the poligars too. The Company not only waged a series of wars against these traditional chieftains for default of payments or defiance to its authority, but overthrew them from power and at times executed them. Thus the Madras Council deposed Cobia Nayak of Sapatore, for this failure to pay tribute. The chief turned a rebel, was caught and executed. Poojari Nayak of Deodanappatty met with the same fate. In 1799 Kattabomman and other poligars were suppressed. This was followed by the abolition of the poligari system.

The people had a grievance that they were ill treated. In fact the chieftains were required to supply provisions to the forces, give presents to the officials and to attend on the revenue servants. Among the common people, it was a pestilential traffic called country business that held the English in ridicule. The European adventures who obtained assignments on revenue, employed bands of peons as the feudal barons did, under the pretext of protecting the money chest. When the season of collection arrived, these peons sallied forth to levy to scourge and to oppress the unfortunate peasants. Thus, they tyrannized the inhabitants and flourished on the exorted wealth. Therefore as the American colonists raised the slogan “no taxation without representation”, the Tamil declared: the cloud rains, the land yields, why should we pay tax to the aliens?

Oppressive administration and natural calamities intensified the economic suffering of the inhabitants. After the assumption of power the English greatly increased the rates of assessment. Bribery and corruption crept into every department of revenue administration. The Company’s renters observed no maxim in the exaction of money and grain. They took away the entire grain on which the ryots had to subsist for the whole year and stripped them of all their property, plough and even utensils. Not unfrequently, extortion and violence forced the inhabitants to desert their homes. These oppressive practices had obliterated the expectations of the inhabitants to seek justice from the English. In 1798-99 monsoon failed. The southern provinces put on the dreary appearance of an excessive drought and the



desolation was “too melancholy to the eye, not to convince the mind”. Despite the starvation and mass exodus, the renters and the assignees increased the prices by common agreement. Extortion and plunder made the adventure of merchants unenterprising. The Stagnation of commercial traffic due to the withdrawal of carriage bullocks, to be employed with the forces set against Mysore, prevented the importation of grain from other territories by land. The English at Ramanathapuram on the other hand, imposed an arbitrary embargo on the importation of grain through the sea in their attempt to provide every artificial attraction to the grain, kept in their store houses. In consequence the price of grain shot high and the famine stricken inhabitants found it impossible to obtain any relief.

The French made their own contribution to the outbreak. The French Directory sent its emissaries to the southern provinces for disseminating revolutionary principles and kindling nationalist risings as part of its global struggle against the English. Tipu Sultan who became a convert to the ideal of the French Revolution promised assistance to the rebels. The French endeavours had their impact upon the discontented inhabitants and contributed to the co-ordination of rebel strategy.

The long chain of political evils and the accumulated horrors of a dilapidated economy together with the spirit of independence fostered unrest in volume and intensity. The insurgents decided to liberate the land from the British domination and to restore the old royal institutions to their former glory. By achieving this noble task, they expected to find the means to live in “constant happiness without tears”. They declared that “if now the people in the different countries would rise up and resist they (the Europeans) will sink and perish. As the people of the different countries are submissive, they desire them to do whatever they like”. The leaders of the rebellion placed their reliance upon force and united action for the attainment of their objective. Accordingly, they sent three missions to the Marathas and won the support of Dhoondaji Waug of Shimoga. The emissaries visited the other rebels too, particularly in Canara, Arisikarai and Malabar. As a result of wide spread activity, the deputies of the rebel chiefs held a conspiracy at Virupakshi near Palni under the leadership of Gopala Nayak on 29 April, 1800. It was decided to begin the war with the capture of Coimbatore. The confederates in the far south were to rise in arms with the appearance of the ‘horse’, which meant the cavalry of Dhoondaji Waug. Marudu Pandyan in the mean time issued two proclamations, one at Tiruchirapalli and another at Srirangam, Summoning all the inhabitants, irrespective of any communal or religious consideration, to rally to the standard of rebellion.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

As decided at the conspiracy at Virupakshi, the rebels assembled in strength on the Satyamangalam Ranges and Palni Hills in preparation for the capture of Coimbatore. On 31 April 1800 five columns of rebels moved on Coimbatore, but the enemy received secret information and thwarted the realization of the rebel move. The forces, that were sent in search, apprehended several of the rebel parties and seized much of the rebel correspondence. This led to the trial and execution of Appaji Gour, who led the Tamil missions to the Marathas and forty one other conspirators. The parties that escaped apprehension, thereupon, retreated to the hills, waiting for further opportunity. In the mean time the British forces took effective measures to suppress the rebels of Kannada and Maratha territories. Colonel Arthur Wellesley in command of the forces led a series of expeditions against Dhoondaji Waug. As the result of extensive operations, the forces occupied the territories from the rebels. Yet the rebel cavalry moved in strength to Savanore in the south for an expedition through Mysore in support of the patriots of Coimbatore, but it was checked. Sustaining a series of reverses,



Dondaji Waug retreated to Konagal in September, 1800 but was defeated and killed,. The rebels of Canara, Arisikarai and Malabar too were driven to the defensive.

As the expected 'horse did not appear at Coimbatore, the disappointed rebels of Tamil Nadu turned their attention to the far south. Early in February, 1801 the patriots disguised as pilgrims going to Tiruchendur, secured the release of the rebel leaders, imprisoned in the Fort of Palayamkottai. Immediately, 30,000 insurgents of Madurai and Ramanathapuram sent by Marudu Pandyan, joined their comrades in Tirunelveli. Large groups of Maravas, Nadars, Paravas and Totiens voluntarily joined the insurrection. The Paravas of the coast supplied wall pieces, powder and guns to the fighting men. Pillaging parties led by Oomathurai, the deaf and dumb leader, surprised and subdued British military posts and by the end of February occupied all the territories extending from Panjalamkurichi to Srivaikuntam and Alwar Tirunagari. In March they advanced to Tutukudi, upon which the garrison consisting of the local sepoys surrendered the fort. After this victory, the rebels embarked upon an offensive to Ramanathapuram.

While the rebels were gaining victories in various quarters, fresh troops of the Company poured in to the far South. A formidable phalanx attacked the British camp at Pasuvantanai, but after losing ninety-six armed men, made its retreat. On the 31st of March the British forces, led by Macaulay, launched an attack on Panjalamkurichi. With intrepid firmness the insurgents engaged the assailants in a fierce encounter. All the British troops who pressed their way to the walls were piked or shot dead. Successive attempts made to surmount the resistance, ended in failure. Greatly concerned at this humiliation, the enemy assembled a grand army at Koilpatti and directed Adjutant General Agnew to take the command of the operations. On the 24th a practicable breach on the walls of Panjalamkurichi having been effected, hostile columns supported by field pieces, advanced in strength. In the arduous contest that ensued, both parties suffered equally heavy losses. The insurgents continued their heroic resistance until all, who gathered in the breach, were shot dead by the enemy. The British troops emerged triumphant. Shortly after this decisive hour, the rebels numbering about 3,000 assembled on the eastern face of the fort, rushed rapidly in eastern and northern direction, formed into two columns and retreated. They left 1050 of their compatriots dead. Agnew executed the imprisoned rebels near the fallen citadel. After this discomfiture, the insurgents evacuated their strongholds in Tirunelveli; most of them fled to the north, while the rest escaped to the hills of the West.

In May 1801 the Rebellion spread to the northern provinces. Uniting themselves with every disaffected chief and drawing together all the inhabitants of their districts. Marudu Pandyan and his allies assembled a powerful force. They proclaimed Muthu Karuppa Tevar as the rebel ruler of Ramanathapuram and reduced the forts of Tirupatore, Natham, Melur and Tirumelur to submission. Led by the chiefs, Melappan and Puttur, the insurgents established their sway over the Marava territory. In control of a long coast-line they employed large boats to bring supplies of grain, arms and ammunition from Lanka and other territories through the port of Tondi. In July Oomathurai commanded his followers to Palayanad near Madurai and captured it. The Kallar tribes occupied the western part of Madurai district. In June 1801 the insurrection spread to the Kavari basin. The armed columns of Sivaganga and Ramanathapuram under the command of Shevatta Tambi, son of Marudu Pandyan, marched to Thanjavur. With the peasants voluntarily rallying to rebel ranks, they occupied Pattukkottai and established their posts at Arnadangy and Adiarkudi. All the rebels made a common cause against the English. Their unity of purpose rendered their resistance determined. Aimed at the harassment of the enemy, the insurgents cut off communications, destroyed forts, took shelter in thick jungles and depended on guerilla tactics. By their rapid and irregular movements they



laid waste the entire country, but eluded the pursuit of regular troops with ease. The British forces could neither obtain provisions nor establish their posts in security. In consequence they found themselves constantly exposed to the assault by the rebels.

In a bid to overcome these odds the English gained the support of the princes, particularly the Tondaiman of Pudukkottai and the Rajah of Thanjavur and brought reinforcements from Bengal and Malaya. They resumed operations on a large scale in May, 1801. Agnew checked the rising tempo of rebellion in Ramanathapuram. Leaving Ramanathapuram, Agnew reached Madurai on the 9th of July. He stormed the rebel stronghold at Tirupatore and waited for the arrival of a detachment, led by Colonel Innes from Malabar. After suppressing the rebels of Dindigul, Innes advanced towards Madurai. But the columns led by the Marudu Brothers pressed vigorously on his lines, forcing his retreat to Natham. Subsequently taking the route through Piranmalai, Innes arrived at Satturusamharakkottai. The next day while he was marching to Tirupatore through a thick wood, the rebels again attacked him using rockets, but was rescued by Agnew. The combined forces of Agnew and Innes now reduced Okkur and attacked Siruvayal, the headquarters of the rebels of Sivaganga. After a futile resistance the insurgents retired to the jungles. Marching from Siruvayal, the British forces began operations against the rebel strongholds in the forests of Kalayarkoil.

In the mean time the British forces with the aid of the Rajah of Thanjavur, reoccupied the southern bank of the Kaveri, expelled the insurgents from Arandangy and desolated the villages of Terboinadu. After establishing a post near Karaikudi they drove the rebels from the jungles of Singampunari and cut off their communications with the coast. An armed vessel, sent to the Bay of Tondi, destroyed the boats employed by the patriots for the importation of grain and war materials. Mean while Martin won a signal victory over the rebels near the fort of Ramanathapuram and Macaulay routed another body led by Melappan at Abiramum. Lieutenant Miller won a victory near Kamudi. These gains, significant as they were, not only reestablished Company's authority over Ramanathapuram but bottled up the rebels in the forests of Kalayarkoil.

In September Agnew launched an offensive towards Kalayarkoil. On the 18th he reduced Piranmalai and taking his route through Melur, Singampunari and Nandikottai, arrived at Okkur. He captured the rebel posts at Vaniamkudi, Collumbum and Muthur in Sivaganga. On the 30th of September three detachments led by Innes, Blackburne and Macaulay made simultaneous thrusts on Kalayarkoil. After a siege and fire on the 1st of October the defiant citadel fell to the enemy. The vanquished, led by Oomathurai and Sevatiah, fled to Dindigul while the rest followed Marudu Pandyan to the jungles of Singampunari.

On the appearance of the patriots the inhabitants of Dindigul again rallied in strength. Within three days more than 4000 armed men joined Oomathurai and Sevatiah. They reoccupied the hills of Virupakshi, descended upon the valley of Dindigul and repulsed an attack by a detachment, commanded by Jones. As dispatch seemed essential for curbing the growing influence of the patriots, Innes at the command of a well equipped detachment, rushed to Dindigul, fighting was resumed on the 12th of October. The rebels headed by Oomathurai sought to intercept the progress of British forces at Virupakshi and subsequently at Chetrampatti, but suffered reverses. Advancing through a thick wood, the English captured Cowdelli and the Corman Delli Barriers. Hard pressed, Oomathurai led his armed group to the valley of Dindigul. In a running battle, which kept the patriots constantly on foot without



food, water and rest across a distance of fifty one miles from Dindigul to Vettilagundu for three days together, the exhausted insurgents were finally overwhelmed.

The principal rebels faced execution. Marudu Pandyan, the popular leader of the rebels, together with his gallant brother Vellamarudu, was executed on the ruins of the fort of Tirupatore on the 24th of October 1801. Among the multitude who faced their fate at the same spot were Sevata Tambi and Sivagnanam, the sons of Marudu Pandyan, Karutha Tambi and Molly Kutty Tambi, the sons of Vella Marudu, Muthuswamy, the young son of Sevata Tambi, Muthukaruppa Tevar, styled the rajah of Ramanathapuram and the Poligar of Kadalkudi.

In fact the vindictive Englishman hanged grandfathers, sons and grand sons together in common gibbet. The head of Marudu Pandyan was severed and taken to Kalayarkoil, while the body was buried at Tirupatore-now in Scottish Mission compound. Oomathurai and Sevathiah were taken to Panjalamkurichi and beheaded on 16th November. Seventy three of the Principal rebels were condemned to perpetual banishment. Among them were Vengum Peria Wodaya Tevar of Sivaganga, Booma Nayak of Verappur, Dalaway Kumaraswamy Nayak of Panjalamkurichi and Doraiswamy, the son of Marudu Pandyan. On the 11th February 1802 the prisoners on board Admiral Nelson sailed from Tutukudi. The voyage, long and tedious, lasted for seventy six days. Kept under strict restraint and handcuffed with iron in pairs, the prisoners suffered miserably. In the course of the voyage two died of sickness and one was drowned. The rest of the prisoners, seventy in number, reached Penang on the 26th of April 1802. Soon after their arrival at the destination, one third of them fled in different directions. But their agony preyed upon them that twenty one of them died within five months of banishment.

VELLORE MUTINY

The patriots involved in the south Indian Rebellion made another endeavour against the English, when they organized a struggle in 1806. After the suppression of the widespread Rebellion of 1800-1801, the rebels made vellore the centre of their activity. This place became, as S.S.Furnell has asserted, the seat of “deep and dark intrigues.” Futtess Haidar, who was associated with the organization of the Anti-British confederacy of 1800 continued his work in secret, as the result of which not fewer than 3000 rebels of Karnataka settled either in the town of vellore or its vicinity. During the British military operations in the west many more of the vanquished rallied to the cause, upheld by the prince. The English contributed to the collusion of the rebel elements against their authority, when they unwittingly inducted into vellore the remnants of the broken ranks of the insurgents of tamilnadu. Besides the European troops, the garrison of vellore in 1806 consisted of six companies of the first battalion and all the companies of the second battalion of the Twenty third regiment, which was raised in Tirunelveli soon after the suppression of the Rebellion in 1801. Many rebels, who had been reduced to dire straits in consequence of their discomfiture in their struggle and the confiscation of their properties, as well as the inhabitants whose relatives were slain by the English allowed themselves to be recruited in to the service of the aliens. With the admission of these sepoys into the fort of Vellore, it became the meeting ground of the rebel forces of tamil and kannada regions, as Coimbatore had been in 1800. Thus the English by sheer ignorance introduced a Trojan horse into the citadel. It is evident that the peninsular confederacy furnished in Futtess haider a leader for a fresh venture, while



the rebellion of 1800-1801 supplied in the rebel elements an instrument at vellore for the execution of the long cherished dream. Now the chier tains too drew closer to the scent, as they found it possible to exploit the favourable circumstances that a combination of factors offered. As the English themselves had admitted, these enterprising chiefs began to take an interest in the developments, for they wished for a revolution and to destroy the British authority. The sepoys and the migrants to vellore entered into a conspiracy and held frequent deliberations, attended by the sons of Tipu. This patriotic movement progressed to such an extent that as in the organsation of the Rebellion of 1800-1802 the rebels exchanged better so as to bind themselves together for the attainment of common goal.

The English in the mean time enforced certain innovations in the administration of the sepoy establishments. They prohibited all marking on the forehead which were intended to denote caste of sect and the use of ornaments and directed the sepoys to cut their moustaches to a set pattern. Added to these Adjudant General Agnew, the assassin of the patriots, designed and introduced under his direct supervision a new model turban for the sepoys. On the 9th of June 1806 upwards forty if therse Agnew's turbans had beeb put on with out objection by the fourteenth Native Regiment. Soon a concourse if several hundred men, who had already assemble at a distance not far off, uttered a current of the vilest abuse at them for having consented to wear them. The mob dispersed yet this was followed by several sepoys throwing off the turbans in a turbulent manner. However all were reduced to subordination and force to wear the turbans.

The rebels of Vellore as in the rebellion of 1800-1801 endeavoured to bring the insurgent forces of the peninsula under a common banner and to restore the monarchs to their former status of dignity. Collaboration had been so widely concerted as to gain support from different quarters. The inhabitants of Pallikonda and the sepoy detachment that was stationed at Wallajabad, taking part in the conspiracy, offered their co-operation. Another detachment that was cantoned at chittoor was implicated in the intrigious. The rebels of vellore had entered into an understanding with the inhabitants of arcot for fighting the common enemy. It is not certain whether the disaffected inhabitants of the west agreed top rise in a simultaneous rebellion but they promised their support and co-operation. Disaffected that had been manifest at chicacole and Hydrabad in Andhredesa, synchronized with the defiant moves in several places in kannada nadu and Tamilnadu. It was possible that the sepoys from the far south communicated their sentiments to their relatives and friends in the subsidiary force stationed at Hydrabed and in turn the latter to chicacole. The sepoys held sectet meetings with the inhabitants of Hydrabed and the intelligence gathered by the company, indicated that they had taken a solemn oath of secrecy and mutual support. The Nizam had complete knowledge of the plot, yet transmitted no information to the company.

The patriots decided to rise in rebellion in the early morning of the 13th of July, 1806. The same date eas spoken of at Hyderabad as the appointed time for mutiny by the Subsidiary Force, that was stationed there. The people friendly to the Company, warned the English officers of the native corps to be upon their guard. TO herald this movement the rebels decided to occupy Vellore, as the confederates sought to occupy Coimbatore in 1800, so that they could have a strong hold in which they could secure themselves until the planned



insurrections in other regions drove the English out. As part of their design they decided to seize a treasure of three lakhs of **pagodas**, deposited at Chittoor. In the mean time the insurgent forces in different regions waited to know what success attended the daring venture at Vellore and other barracks before they themselves plunged into the fray. Upon the overthrow of the British sway, the patriots decided to elevate a son of tipu as the ruler of Mysore and to re-establish the Independence of the Nizam.

On the 9th July 1806 a number of horsemen with a large train of attendants appeared in Vellore, behaving in a very disorderly and riotous manner and engaging in sham fighting with each other. A general rising was determined on the night of 12th July, but due to the intemperance of a zamindar it was precipitated before the appointed day. At 3 O' clock in the morning of the 10th the sepoys at Vellore rose and commenced heavy firing upon the quarters of the English officers and the barracks of the Sixty-ninth Regiment. They annihilated the body of Europeans at the main gate, destroyed the guard of the magazine and gained possession of the Fort. Moving to the building that housed the captive princes, the sepoys raised the cry: "Come out, Nawab, Come out, Nawab, there is no fear". This was supposed to have been addressed to Futeh Haidar. Now a flag – an old one of Tipu – green stripes on a red field with a sun in the centre was hoisted on the flag – staff while all raised 'ding' ding'

The occupation of the Fort at Vellore represented a master stroke of a co-ordinated stratagem, but the success did not last long. As the mutiny came as a premature outbreak, it did not act as the signal to similar risings in different quarters. Dissatisfaction was manifest on the 13th of July at Wallagabad and a defection was detected in Subsidiary Force at Hyderabad, but they came late and developed into no rebellion as to be of any assistance to the sepoys of Vellore. A relief expedition, commanded by Colonel Gillespie, reached the rebel stronghold, bombarded the gate and forced its entry into the ramparts. In a sharp engagement the sepoys had killed 113 Europeans but they lost 350 themselves. Five hundred of the mutineers fell as prisoners to the enemy. This marked the failure of the last bid made by the insurgents under the inspiration of the South Indian Rebellion. The Company now proceeded to strengthen the European element in the military establishments and reorganize the administration of the forts. These reforms contributed to the consolidation of its sway.

TAMILNADU AND FREEDOM STRUGGLE

Introduction

The British people came to India as traders and then they turned as rulers. The very existence of a foreign rule helped the growth of a national sentiment among the people. There was also a clash between the British interests in India and those people. The British had conquered India to promote their own interests and they ruled over her primarily with that object in view with the passage of time. There was a realisation in India and that realization brought differences against foreign rule and that was responsible for the growth of the Nationalist movement to drive out the foreigners from the country. All classes of people in India joined at one stage or the other Nationalist movement. The intelligentsia in India, the



peasants, the artisans and the workers all played their part in the freexom struggle Tamilnadu Played a significant role in the freedom struggle.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

Through Civil Disobedience the congress aimed at the destruction of diarchy by means of power, generated through political agitation and constructive work. In response to the decision of the party in 1930 the Tamilnad Congress Committee constituted a council of action with S.Satyamurti as president for staging the civil disobedience. In madras the city boycott committee directed the picketing of hsops and boycott of foreign goods. The movement began on 11 March 1930 with saltsatyagraha but it had a conquered history. Since then the British Government published the Simon commission Report, Which favoured grater participation of the people in government and replacement of diarchy by autonomy in the provinces. The british Government rejected the demand for complete independence.Lord willington, who succeeded Lord Irwin as Viceroy, executed Bhagat singh, Rajaguru and Sukhadev, who were convicted in the Lahore conspiracy case, jailed M.K Gandhi and S.C. Bose and launched repression. Provoked by these atrocities, the nationalists in January 1932 resumed the movement with vigour.

In March 1930 C. Rajagopalachari, President of the Tamilnad Congress committee, moved his headquarters from Madras and made Tiruchirapalli the centre of civil disobedience operations. The Congress Committee dicideto defy the salt laws at Vedaranyam, situated in the sandy region of point Calimare but favourably situated near a salt factory. As it was also a place of pilgrimage, the movement assumed a religious colour too. C.Rajagopalachari was made the dictator of the movement. T.S.S. Rajan was placed in charge of the organization work. The idea was to degy law and discredit the British authority, marking the beginning of civil disobedience in Tamilnadu.

The organization held a large public meeting at Tiruchirapalli on the 13th of March 1930. It was addressed by Rajagopalachari and T.S.S.Rajan. About a thousand volunteers came forward but the organizers selected only one hundred to be sent in batchers. An advance batch singing patriotic songs went round and collected donations. C. Rajagopalachari, led the first batch. He decided to begin the march on 13th April-an auspicious day, being the Tamil New year day and Jallinwalabagh day, for the commencement of the march. Joined volunteers from Elam, Burma, Madras and Bombay, the satyagrahis marched from Tiruchirapalli on the appointed day to coincide with Gandhi's march to Dandi.

The british administration warned the inhabitants against providing hospitality to the Satyagrahis, yet did not seek to arrest the leaders before the actual breach of salt laws. The first batch consisting of ninety volunteers reached Kovilodi on the 14th evening. As the great chatram was found bolted, all rested on a river bed, while Rajaji in the house of an ayyangar. The march continued through Thiruvadi, Thanjavur and Kumbakonam. Those who extended hospitality were arrested. On the 30th the volunteers went through the process of collection salt. Thereupon Rajaji was arrestedabd sentenced for six months in jail at Tiruchirapalli. Now S.Satyamurthi became the next dictator, while K.Santanam took up the leadership at Vedaranyam. Parties of volunteers went to the swamp and collected salt. On the



3rd of May all were permitted to collect as much salt as possible; but a surprise raid was made and leaders were arrested. A big storm on the 5th prevented further saline operations. Volunteers organized meetings but crowds were dispersed through lathi charges. On the 29th police raided the central camp at Tiruchirapalli, arrested 135 congress men and dismantled the camp. T.S.S. Rajan too was arrested and sent to prison for one year.

The satyagrahis violated the salt laws at other centres too. At Udayavanam, Madras, T.Prakasam and K.Nageswara Rao set up a camp but the police arrested the leaders, raided the camp and broke it up. This was followed by hartal in city. On the 27th April 1930 the police came into clash with a large crowd at Tiruvallikkeni; the fighting lasted for these hours. Culminating in firing. According to administrator's report, which is usually nor near to truth, it caused seven casualties, three of them fatal. Volunteers manufactured salt at Rameshwaram but were arrested. Attempt was made from April to June to make salt on the coastal areas of ovary, anjengo, Veppalodai Tutukudi and Tharuvaikulam but were frustrated. At these centres the patriots chanted:

“Let us march-

March to the sea shore to make salt”.

Determined to carry the struggle to success, the patriotsemployed different methods. They sought the support of all sections of the population, particularly the public servants, workers, presents and students. Their attempt to draw the police to the movement failed but the satyagraha, hartal, picketing, staging of dramas and singing of patriotic songs formed the different manifestations of popular resentment. There emerged several orators through street corner meetings. Esakkia pillai was a well known singer of patriots. When the volunteers sang patriotic songs, they span with the thaklis. Swadeshi dramas and flag salutations too were popular.

When nationalism assumed vigour, the British administration reacted with increased rigour. The police forces lathi charged the volunteers, broke the meetings and resorted to firing. On 11 March 1930 the workers organised a meeting at Choolai, Madras, in protest against the torturing of satyagrahis. Police opened fire and left at least three dead and many injured. 17 July 1930 the volunteers picketed the toddy shops at Madurai. As the mob attempted to set fire to shops, police resorted to shooting, as the result of which many died. On 6 August 1930 more people were killed at Madurai. At Tirupur on 11 Januar 1932 the police attacked a procession, carryomg matopma; f;ags and singing national songs. As a result of the lathi charge, tirupur kumaran died. In the meantime the British sought to create dissensions among the people. As part of their programme, they encouraged loyalist gatherings, employed hooligans to disturb nationalist news papers. Several anti-nationalists took service with them for praising the virtues of British rule, the most prominent of these paid-agents was Kasinatha Pillai. The nationalists press was black listed and denied of advertisements. The Dravidan, the Navasakthi, the Ooliyan the Swadesamitran, the Swatandira Sangu and Sukhodayam- all Tamil news papers-were placed on the black list.

However, at the psychological movement the congress failed the nation again. In May 1934 by an understanding with the congress, the British Government agreed to withdraw



repression. Accordingly, Gandhi called off the agitation. As a result, the struggle was not carried to its logical end.

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

In 1940 the House of commons, London, held a three day debate on the war situation. The nationalists very much expected a word of hope but prime minister Winston Churchill maintained absolute silence on India. While the dominions like Canada and Australia were given representation on the war cabinet at London and Pacific Board at Washington, the populous country of India was totally neglected. However, the rapid advance made by Japanese forces to the frontiers of India and the collapse of the expediency of taking India into confidence. The Roosevelt administration in USA too persuaded Britain to adopt such a line of action. Accordingly Churchill announced the Cripps Mission to India. On the 23rd March Stafford Cripps arrived at Delhi. His proposals centered on an offer of setting up an elected body, charged with the task of framing a new constitution for India. As this proposal appeared as a simple promise with no date fixed for implementation, the congress party as well as the Muslim League rejected it.

The country now witnessed spread of unrest in an unprecedented Magnitude. The sympathy that the congress party extended to the British, the support that the country gave to war effort and the sacrifices that the people made because of the dislocations caused by war appeared to go unrewarded. Finding it impossible to postpone the agitation any longer, the Congress working Committee met at Allahabad in May 1942 and passed what was called Quit India Resolution. It suggested: “ British rule in India must end immediately” and the establishment of a provisional government for convening a constituent assembly. But the British refused to be perturbed, for the war situation greatly improved. The navy of the allied powers defeated the Japanese fleet in the Battle of Coral Sea. British forces landed in Madagascar. The Russian army marched rapidly towards Germany. Japan got entangled in an intensified offensive against China. As a result the Japanese threat to India receded. In fact the congress leadership missed the opportunities presented by war and allowed the enemy to become formidable. No wonder Great Britain rejected the demand. As soon as the All India congress Committee passed the Quit India Resolution, it proceeded with the arrest of Gandhi and all prominent leaders of the party, banned the congress, confiscated the party funds and seized the party offices. This gave the signal to the outbreak of disturbances on a large scale in the different provinces.

In the Tamil districts the agitation was not only intense but widespread. The common people, the workers and students plunged into the movement. In Madras they led processions, raised Quit India slogans, observed hartals, picketed toddy shops and burnt public offices. The workers of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, the Madras port Trust, the Madras corporation and the electric tramway struck work. The toddy shops in Choolai were set on fire. The public offices were attacked. In North Arcot the demonstrations and disturbances were extensive. The agitators cut off the telegraph and telephone lines, burnt the public buildings at Vellore and Panapakkam and derailed a goods train near Adichanur. In Chengalpatu and South Arcot there were similar outbreaks in which the students of Christian



college, Loyala college and annamalai university took a leading part. In Coimbatore there were hartals, picketing and strikes. The sheds in the aerodrome at Sullur were destroyed and trains were derailed. The village offices and toddy shops were set of fire. However, it was in the southern districts that the disturbances were the most serious. Besides the disruption of communication, the agitators raised barricades and attacked public offices as well as government servants. In the course of the outbreaks municipal offices school buildings, railway stations and forest offices were set on fire. At Madurai the congress volunteers clashed with the military and in a firing P.M, Doraisamy Nadar was killed. Many nationalists were killed in police firings at Rajapalayam, Karaikudi, Devakottai, Tiruvandanai and poolankurichi. In a bid to suppress the movement the administration lauched the worst form or repression.

The attitude of certain political organizations presented serious impediments to the movement. The Muslim League demand the creation of Pakistan. Taking advantage of the situation created there by, the British adminastrators insisted upon the solution of the communal and minority problems as a preminary to the consideration of the demands, made by the congress party. In 1942 Rajagopalachari advocated the acceptance of Pakistan in principle as a basis of settlement between the congress and the league. The all india congress committee rejected his resolution, yet Rajaji's gesture had a demoralizing effect upon the nationalist movement. This led to his resignation from the party. The justice party extended to the British "Unconditional support to Tamilians in the prosecution of the war as a counterblast of the congress attitude:. E.V.Raaswami Naickar advocated the creation of a separate DravidaNadu and threatened to launch an agitation for the eradication of social discriminations and communal disabilities. The commuist party, led by Mohan Kumaramangalam, "Ramamurthi and Anandan Nambiar, extended their support to the British, as Communist Russia joined the side of Great Britain. Determental to the nationalist cause, they cause, they organized the workers and peasants in support of the English and attacked land holders and factory owners.

Because of these overwhelming odds and for want of co-ordination, the Quit India Movement fell through. Subhas Chandra Bose, who organized the Indian National army, fought against the British in assam but wasdefeated. In consequence the nationalists circles put on the appearance of gloom. However, the success of the labour party which was pledged to India's independence in the election of 1945 in great Britain led to a welcome change in British attitude to India. At the instance of Prime minister Attlee, Viceroy Wavell released political prisoners and ordered general elections in the provinces in 1945. The tamilnad congress committee under the leadership of K.Kamaraj by this time had emerged as a powerful organizations. It created the National Youth Federation and gained the support of the peasants and workers. The workers and the peasants too resorted to agitations. Added to these the prakasam ministry faced the opposition from inside the party. In consequence the ministry collapsed and O.P.Ramaswami reddyiar formed his government in 1947.

SALT SATHYAGRAHA

From 1928 to 1931 when gandhiji started his salt satyagraha and renewed civil disobedience movement. It had its impact all over India. C. Rajagopalachari was in charge



of defying the British laws in Madras. He started the salt satyagraha campaign at Vedaranyam in Thanjavur district. Thousands of gress volunteers came to Vedaranyam to defy the laws. The British government arrested C. Rajagopalachari and many volunteers and imprisoned them. Mr.K.Kamaraj also suffered a lot during the freedom struggle. In the meantime B, Munisamy Naidu and P. Subbrayan were willing to run government in Madras.

V.O.CHIDAMBARAM

Under Tilak a many sided struggle was going on against the British government. It spread the fire of Patriotism in every nook and corner of Bombay presidency. He made whirl-wind tours and collected a lot of money for the various national caused. He asked his audiences to work for Swaraj and get ready for suffereing which alone could bring Swaraj. At the same time the extremists under the leadership of V.O.Chidambaram pillai took the lead in Madras presidency.

V.O.Chidambaram, a great leader from Tamil Nadu the disciple of Tilak boycotted not only foreign goods but also foreign merchant ships. He was born at ottapidaram in Tirunelveli district on 5th September,1872. He studied law and practiced in his home-town. He was honest and he never appeared in the court for false cases. The people respected him and fondly called him “V.O.C”

V.O.Chidambaram was not interested in his profession. Soon he joined in the freedom movement. All his thought, plans and actions now centred round India’s freedom. To cripple the shipping business of the British. V.O.Chidambaram planned with his friends to buy a ship and develop our trade. The shipping company started by him 1906 was called the “Swadeshi steam Navigation Company”. Since he was not able to pay the money for ship, he went to Bombay with his friends to get ship on lease. He met Bala gandadhar Tilak and got his help to buy a ship. Finally he bought a ship from France and another from Bombay. They were “S.S.Lave and SS Galleo”. Trade went on successfully between Tuticorin and srilanka.

At this juncture Nipin Chandra Pal, a great patriot was released from prison. V.O.C and his friend subramania siva led a huge procession to celebrate this release. The collector of Tirunelveli prevented them from doing so. But they refused to obey the order. The British arrested both the leaders and put them in prison for life. Later the period was reduced to seven years by an appeal. They were treated cruelly in prison. They had to break rocks into bits. Above all V.O.C had to work in the oil press like a bullock. He bore all this cruelty for our nations sake. He had great courage.

After his release from jail, he settled down in Madras with his family. He was eagerly looking forward to our country’s freedom. The Tamil people adore him as “Kappalotiya Tamizhan”. He died on 18th November 1936. The nation will remember his great sacrifice for ever.

BHARATHI

The original Name of Bharathi was subramaniyan. He was a great poet, a master of beautiful language and a creator of fair and gracious dream figures in the world of imagination. He was a nationa poet. He was born on 11th December 1882 in Ettayapuram



village in Tirunelveli district of Tamilnadu. His parents were chinnasamy Iyer and Lakshmi ammal.

Subramanian used to compose poems even at the age of seven. After the death of his father, he went to Varanasi and lived with his aunt. He studied Hindi and Sanskrit there. He was given the title of Bharathi because of his talent in composing poems at the very young age.

Bharathi came back to his native place and served in the court. Then he worked in Sethupathi High school for some time. Afterwards he went to Madras and joined the 'Swadesamitran' a leading newspaper in Madras.

Bharathi was a great patriot. He wrote many poems and essays. They were very powerful enough to kindle the spirit of freedom in the people. The British were angry with him for his writings. They wanted to arrest him. So he escaped to Pondichery which was then under French rule.

Bharathi loved the nature, the motherland and children very much. He believed in a United India. He disliked caste and regional quarrels. He fought for women's rights.

Bharathi continued to serve the cause of freedom from Pondichery. He sought the help of Aurobindo Ghosh and V.V.S. Iyer for the freedom struggle. They gave their wholehearted cooperation to Bharathi. In 1918 he returned to Tamilnadu and wrote many poems with revolutionary and reformatory ideas. He died on 11th September 1921. Thus the immortal poet Bharathi sacrificed his life for the sake of India's freedom.

E.V.RAMASAMY

E.V. Ramasamy (1879-1973) was a great social reformer. He was an embodiment of courage, intelligence and leadership qualities. His pragmatic approach to political and social problems enabled him to become the greatest revolutionary of this century. He wanted violent and radical changes in all walks of life of the people.

E.V. Ramasamy got married at the age of 13. He toured the country and understood the evils of Hinduism, exploitation of the priests, politicians and upper class people on the poor downtrodden masses. He criticized strongly against the casteism which made him to fight against this social malady. As he was fighting for them, he was socially boycotted by his own caste people.

As a politician,

E.V. Ramasamy Naicker was a congressman in the beginning. He served as the chairman of the Erode Municipality and earned a very good name and fame. He faithfully supported the Gandhian policies and took active role in the non-co-operation movement. He was a strong believer in prohibition movement in Tamilnadu. He cut off all the palmyrah trees in his garden and proved that he was a pioneer in exposing the evils of drinking.

He was the secretary of Tamilnadu Congress in 1921 and later he became the president of it. During his tenure in the office, he extended his office to the downtrodden people. He strongly argued that employment opportunities should be on the basis of proportional representation of the communities.



He started 'self respect movement' in 1925 because he wanted to eradicate the distinction between "haves" and the "have-nots"

As there was difference of opinion with regard to his self-respect movement, he joined the Justice Party in 1934.

In the year of 1935, he fought for the abolition of Hindi as second language. He started Dravida Kazhagam in 1944 and requested his followers to wear black shirts to indicate that the Indian society is the bundle of superstitions and ignorance and it is to be enlightened and modernized through rationalism.

As a social reformer:

E.V.R was a champion of the socially backward classes. He was against all castes and religion and he wanted to introduce a sort of society bereft of distinctions on any basis which will be the only remedy for social evils.

He had taught the people to develop self-thinking and find out the rational ideologies which is absolutely necessary to liberate the old conservative orders of the society.

He wanted a radical political and economic reforms in the country. According to him the election system is a mere gambling. Its object is not to serve the people but to fulfill the personal ends and to share the political power.

He stood for equality for women also in all walks of life. He wanted to remove the imbalances between villages and towns. The people living in the cities are enjoying all the convenience of life whereas village people are suffering hence villages should be modernized like towns.

He attacked the existing democracy in which the masses are slaves to the political leaders. Hence he never allowed his organization to contest the election.

The caste divisions are unnatural. Such unnatural divisions are being maintained only by the brutal violence of state and by the force for their protection. Thus he attacked the political system and economic order of the country.

He was the champion of liberty for the scheduled caste people and led the temple entry movement in Tamilnadu.

He was the hero of the Vaikam movement, fought on behalf of the untouchables and succeeded in acquiring permission to get into temples.

Temple is a place where high class people are exploiting the weaker sections of the people. So he destroyed the idols in the temples and advised his followers to break the idols kept in the street-temples. The effigies of the characters of Ramayan and Mahabharata were fired by his followers.

He introduced reform in Tamil alphabet in his books and newspapers.

He introduced a new system of marriages called 'Suyamariyathai' marriage. Thereby he wanted to eliminate the involvement of Brahmin priests and rituals. When K.Kamaraj formed the state ministry in 1954, the D.K leader suspended all agitations directed the government. He celebrated the accession of Kamaraj as the end of the Brahmin domination in politics. It was also hailed as the commencement of the Tamilian government, 'paccatamilian atchi'. But his attack against religion and caste system continued. He continued his activities right upto the age of 96.



No doubt he was a social reformer in Tamilnadu and due to his services and teachings, the socially backward people acquired equal status on par with upper caste people. Such a great leader passed away in 1973. After his demise in 1973, his better half maniammai became president of the party.

RAJAJI

C.Rajagopalachari was popularly known as Rajaji in India. He was born on 9th December 1878 in Thorapalli village in Salem district. After finishing law, he became a prominent lawyer in Salem town.

In this early days, he was attracted by the ideas of Tilak. So he became the follower of Tilak, When the freedom struggle was in full swing under the leadership of Gandhiji. Rajaji was a prominent congress leader in Tamilnadu. He served as chairman of Salem municipality for some years. During the non-cooperation movement he was arrested and was imprisoned in Vellore jail.

Besides, rajaji started a weekly called 'Swarajya' during the freedom movement to intensify the same. He headed the salt satyagraha at Vedaranyam in april 1930, when the movement was gaining momentum throughout India. He was arrested and imprisoned for six months. In 1937 he became the chief minister of Madras presidency. Later on, he was once again arrested for the participation of individual satyagraha. He was given two years imprisonment.

Rajaji gave his formula in 1942 to solve the congress league tangle in connection with Pakistan. The congress refused to accept the same and hence he resigned from the party. However after independence, he became the central minister. Then he was appointed as the governor of Bengal and the first Indian Governor-General of India. After the 1952 general elections he became the chief minister of Madras presidency. He did selfless service throughout his life for the sake of the country. He was a great statesman. He was an efficient administrator and a prominent writer. He scrapped prohibition and stood for eradication of Untouchability. He died on 25th December 1974.

SATHYAMOORTHY

Sathyamoorthi played a significant role during the freedom struggle. He was born in the year 1901 in Tirumiyam in Pudukkottai district. His father was sundara sastri. After finishing his education he became a tutor in Christian college, Madras. Then he practiced as a lawyer for some time.

Satyamoorthi was a great orator. He was a great parliamentarian. Gandhiji himself realized his council entry. Satyamurthi participated in all the movements organized by Gandhiji during the freedom struggle. He boycotted council entry, foreign goods and their activities. He was imprisoned in 1932 in Vellore jail. He was praised by Sir C.P.Ramasamy for his political campaign among the masses. In 1939 he became the Mayor of Madras. In 1942 'Quit India movement' he was once again arrested and imprisoned in vellore jail. But he died on 28th March 1943 due to ill-health without enjoying the fruits of freedom. Thus the political Guru of K.Kamaraj sacrificed his life for the sake of our motherland.



K.KAMARAJ

K.Kamaraj was born on 15th July 1903 at Virudhunagar in Tamilnadu in a poor family. His parents were Kumarasamy nadar and sivagami ammai. After finishing his elementary education he actively took part in politics. He was attracted by the speeches of Mr.Satyamurthi in those days. So he considered him as his political guru.

K.Kamaraj took active part in all the movements of freedom struggle. He was imprisoned several times. He spent eleven years in jail. He was elected the secretary of the Tamilnadu congress party and then the president of the party in 1939. He was highly responsible for the information of ministries in 1946 and 1947. Hence he was called as the King maker of India. After independence, he become the chief Minister of Tamilnadu. Thus he dedicated his whole life for the cause of country and its people. He died on 2 October 1975.

JUSTICE PARTY:

The Justice party played an important role in the history of Tamilaham from 1920 to 1935. It was at first a non Brahmin movement. Dr. T.M. Nair, Physician and P. Thyagaraya Chettiar long Councillor and Chairman of the Madras Corporation met at the Victoria Public Hall, Madras on 20th November 1916 and started the South Indian People's Association Limited which was later to mature into the Justice Party. The other founder member were Justice C. Singara Nayar and Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar. Moreover the party attracted talented men like K.V. Reddy the rajas of Panagal and Bobbili, A. Ramasamy Mudaliar and a host of others.

Aims:

The aims of this party were:

- (1) Upliftment of the education of the non-Brahmins.
- (2) Development of the social status of the non-Brahmins.
- (3) Improvement of the economic condition of the non-Brahmins.
- (4) To represent the grievances of the non-Brahmins to the Government.
- (5) To rejuvenate the spirits of the down-trodden communities in the society

Journals:

The news organs of the party were:

- (1) The Justice – English journal.
- (2) Dravidan – Tamil journal.
- (3) Andhra Prakasika – Telugu journal.

Of all, the 'Dravidan' was their leading journal, through its columns they expressed their views. They held their conference, issued pamphlets and called upon the British Government to set right the imbalance caused by Brahmin preponderance in public services.

Activities:

Though the harbinger of the non-brahmana movement, it was not "a thoroughly reactionary party".K.A.N. sastri feels that the Justice party was created to minimize the influence of the Brahmins in the society and the government.

When the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were implemented in 1919 the Justice Party demanded the reservation of 70% the constituencies for non-Brahmins. The government



agreed to reserve 50%. The Justice Party and its people criticized it violently and nick-named the Government of Madras Lord Wellington as 'Lord-Brahmana'.

In 1920 and 1923 elections the Justice Party got majority and formed the ministries. They held transferred portfolios under the diarchy.

It was almost simultaneously with the formation of the Justice Party that Mrs. Anne Besant's Home Rule League was formed. Mrs. Anne Besant asked for 'Home Rule' for India even as the Irish had been fighting for their Home-Rule.

The Justices saw in Mrs. Besant's Home Rule Movement an attempt to ignore the communal demands of the non-Brahmins and indirectly she favoured the Brahmins. Further Mrs. Besant had attracted a number of leading Brahmins like Sri. S. Subramanya Iyer and Sir C. P. Ramasamy Iyer and so on. This irritated the non-Brahmins. So they decided to fight against this Irish Lady – and the Brahmins simultaneously. This was a great advantage to the British to fight against this lady with the help of the Justice Party. Thus was Tamil Nadu presenting the picture of a house divided making it easy for the third party to exploit this difference for their own advantage.

The Justices who assumed ministerial office had to manage only the transferred subjects like education, rural development etc. and the more important portfolios like police, revenue etc. remained with the Governor and his Executive Council. The Executive Council had mostly a majority of Brahmin members till very late. Distinguished members of the Executive Council like Sir P.S. Sivasamy Iyer, Sir. C. P. Ramasamy Iyer and V. Krishnasamy Iyer were noteworthy administrators; and a majority of judges of the Madras High Court again were Brahmins.

In 1923 the Congress people entered the assembly in the garb of the Swarajya Party. They vehemently attacked the Justice Party and branded it anti-nationalist. In fact it was not so. In the third elections the Justice Party was defeated. It was at that time that E. V. Ramasamy Naicker (1877-1973) began his 'Self-respect Movement'. By 1928 the stalwarts of the Justice Party like Dr. T. M. Nair, Sir. P. Thiyagaraya Chettiyar and the Raja of Panagal died one after another. E. V. Ramasamy Naicker identified himself with the Justice Party and became its President. In 1938 when Hindu was introduced as a compulsory subject for schools, he boisterously opposed it. An agitation was conducted in which Maraimalai Adigal, Somasundara Bharathiyar K.A.P. Visvanatham and others participated.

In 1944 the Secretary of the Justice Party C.N. Annadurai brought forward a resolution in the Salem Conference to galvanise the activities of the Party. Known as the 'Annadurai Resolution' it diverted the course of the party in a new direction. The very name of the party was changed into 'Dravida Kazhagam'. A section of the Justice Party bosses like P. T. Rajan did not favour these changes. They met at Madras and elected P.T. Rajan himself as the party president. In course of time it disappeared and the 'Dravida Kazhagam' became successor of the Justice Party. The anti-Brahmin mantle of the Justices had fallen on the Dravida Kazhagam and later on the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam of C.N. Annadurai. The 1936 general election ended in a landslide defeat for stalwarts of the Justice Party and the Congress assumed office in Madras. From 1937 to 1966 it looked as if the Congress had come to Madras to stay in office.



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