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Directorate of Distance Education

M.A. [History]

I - Semester

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**TAMIL CIVILIZATION AND
CULTURE UP TO 1336 A.D.**

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INTRODUCTION

NOTES

Tamil Nadu is a southern state of India. It is extremely rich in culture and heritage. The people of Tamil Nadu belong to one of the oldest civilizations of the world, known as the Dravidian civilization. Moreover, the people of Tamil Nadu are extremely proud of their rich cultural heritage and always strive towards protecting and enriching their old history. Tamil Nadu has witnessed the reign of rulers such as the Cholas, Pandyas and the Pallavas to name a few. The art and architecture developed under the reign of various rulers has become highly significant in the cultural heritage of the state.

This book, *Tamil Civilization and Culture Upto 1336 A.D.* has been divided into fourteen units. The book has been written in keeping with the self-instructional mode or the SIM format wherein each Unit begins with an Introduction to the topic, followed by an outline of the Objectives. The detailed content is then presented in a simple and organized manner, interspersed with Check Your Progress questions to test the student's understanding of the topics covered. A Summary along with a list of Key Words, set of Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises and Further Readings is provided at the end of each Unit for effective recapitulation.

BLOCK - I
PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD

*Archaeological and
Literary Sources of
Tamil History*

**UNIT 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
LITERARY SOURCES OF
TAMIL HISTORY**

NOTES

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Geographical Features of Tamil Nadu
- 1.3 Sources of Tamil Nadu History
- 1.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 Key Words
- 1.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 1.8 Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the examination of the past, historians primarily examine two categories of historical sources. These are primary and secondary sources of history. A primary source of history is something that originates from the past. It can be a chronicle, a piece of potter or coin found in an archaeological site, and so on. On the other hand, a secondary source of history is a work that comments on the past. Typically, this is a recently written book that describes past events, often written by a historian or trained scholar familiar about the time period and civilization in question. While examining Tamil history, historians examine literary, archaeological, epigraphic and numismatic sources. The foremost source of ancient Tamil history is the Sangam literature, generally dated to the last centuries BCE to early centuries CE. The unit will examine the sources of Tamil history in detail. It will begin with a discussion on the geographical features of Tamil Nadu.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the geographical features of Tamil Nadu
- Examine the archaeological and literary sources of Tamil history

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1.2 Geographical Features of Tamil Nadu

It is not an exaggeration to say that geography and history are intertwined with each other that run parallel to the growth and development of the State/Country. It is equally essential to understand the geographical features of a State while venturing to learn the History of the State to complete the circle.

Geographical features certainly contribute to the Culture, Heritage and all round growth of the State as History and Geography are interdependent and self-contributory. The political history and cultural development of Tamil Nadu, which is a part of South India, could be better understood keeping in mind the Geographical features as well.

Geographical Features in General

The geographical features of a state determines its wealth, welfare and its bountiful treasures of nature based on the strengths and advantages of the features embedded in the land and boundaries. All boundaries discussed herein are ascribed to the Ancient Tamil Nadu that included the provinces of present Kerala state.

North and South India

Tamil Nadu geographically referred to as a part of South India falling within the province that falls South of the Vindhya and Satpura Hill Terrain. The area falling beyond Vindhya and Satpura Hill Terrain, is referred to as North India.

Geographical Features of Tamil Nadu:

Ancient Tamil Nadu is referred to as a Triangular part surrounded by three Oceans namely the Indian Ocean on the South, the Bay of Bengal on the East and the Arabian Sea on the West.

Borders of Ancient Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu has the unique geographical feature of being bordered by Vindhya and Satpura Hill Terrain on the Northern Side, just identical to India having the Strongest Himalayas on its North side as the protective bordering terrain. This protective geographical belt on Tamil Nadu's northern side dissuaded many invasions from North India to the south. This is quoted as one of the reasons for the preservation of the Tamil Culture and Tamil Heritage throughout.

Ancient South India Borders

Direction	Name of the Border
East	Bay of Bengal
West	Arabian Sea
North	Vindhya & Satpura Mountains
South	Indian Ocean

Ancient Tamil Nadu included the present Kerala State also and the bordering North Western side was the Mysore Plateau.

The Deccan Plateau: The Deccan Plateau by formation is high on the Western side and low on the Eastern side. Tamil Nadu is on the South of this Deccan Plateau. The Plateau is very strong with the formations of Rocks and boulders and is considered one of the Oldest of its kind. Behind the Deccan Plateau, on its Western Side, remain the Western Ghats.

Western Ghats: Western Ghats range from Cape of Cambay, in the North India, closing with the Aralvai Mozhi (now in Kerala), in the South. The South West Monsoon Rains are due to this Western Ghats. It is also a strange fact that the West Coast could not play an active role in the history of South India due to the presence of the Western Ghats separating the South India from the West Coast.

North and South of Tamilagam or Tamil Nadu

In Tholkappiyam, a reference is made to the North and South borders of Tamil Nadu quoted as 'Vada Venkatam' (Northern Venkata Hills) on the Northern Side and Kumari (South Kumari) on the Southern side. Still the conclusion on the mention of Then Kumari reference is not established whether it refers to Kanyakumari or a landscape (Kumari Nadu) lying beyond South of Tamilagam that went under the water in a deluge. This area was also mentioned as Lemuria. There is a mention of this deluge in the Epic- Silappathigaram.

Tamil Kingdoms and Geographical presence

The Province south of River Cauvery was known as Pandya Kingdom; Chera Kingdom consisted of the present Kerala and Coimbatore Areas; The Province across North of River Vellaru was known as Chola Kingdom; the area West of Pavala Hills and South of Venkata Hills was known as Thondai Nadu. Apart from these Kingdoms, there were several small Rulers known as Kadaiyelu Vallal in Independent small provinces of Tamil Nadu within this Geographical contour.

Tamil Nadu and its Mountains

The Hill area in Tamil Nadu could be grouped into the following:

- (A) Western Ghats- Kodagu Hills, Podigai Hills, Anamalai, Kudiraimalai, form a part of the Western Ghats. Generally, Western Ghats are seen as a chain of Hilly terrain well shaped, straight and continuously interconnected.

Cultivation: Coffee, Tea, Pepper, Cardamom are planted in these Hills. Apart from that quality Teak Wood, Sandal Wood and Special trees are grown in these forest Reserves.

Adivasi Residents: Adivasi Residents belonging to the sections such as Kadar, Irular, Pulaiyar, Muthuvar are living in these Hill Areas.

- (B) Eastern Ghats- Kalvarayan Hills, Chervarayan Hills, Javvadu Hills, Kolli Hills, Kanja Hills fall in the terrain of Eastern Ghats. Eastern Ghats, unlike

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the Western Ghats, are scattered, not interconnected continuously and lower in heights. According to the Geography Experts, Eastern Ghats are estimated to be older in age than that of Western Ghats.

- (C) Neelamalai Hill Region, known as the Kongu belt is considered the meeting point of Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats. Ootacamund, Kothagiri, Gudalur are the places situated in the Nilgiris (Neelamalai Hills). 2677 meter tall Doddabetta peak is situated in this Hill Terrain. Kodaikkanal and Yelamalai are also part of the terrain of Nilgiris.

These ghat terrains provide a natural fortress for Tamil Nadu and are also responsible for the

- (i) South West Monsoon Rainfalls
- (ii) Water Sources from the Rivers of Eastern Ghats and Western Ghats
- (iii) Plantation of Coffee, Tea, Pepper, Cardamom and
- (iv) Forest Tree plantations consisting of Teak, Sandal, and Special trees
- (v) Preservation of the Adivasi Communities including Thodas, Badagas in Nilgiris, Kadar, Irular, Pulaiyar, Muthuvar, in the areas of Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats.

Coastal Plains of East and West Coast belts

Eastern areas that fall in the Delta, with the flow of the rivers Mahanadhi, Godavari, Krishna, Cauvery, on the Eastern Coastal Plains, are considered as the most potential and fertile places for Agriculture. Cauvery Delta is completely devoted to Agriculture and allied activities as prime activity. Chola Country is always shown as an example for its Agriculture Produce and projected as the Granary of the South.

Western areas that fall under the catchment areas of South West Monsoon Rainfalls, are very fertile and rich areas for agricultural activities. The areas with a good rainfall and fertile soil for example are situated in Malabar and Konkan belts.

Rivers of Tamil Nadu

Cauvery, with its origin at Kodagu, Brahma Giri, runs south east towards Tamil Nadu through Mysore. There is a dam built across River Cauvery, called Kallanai, near Tiruchirappalli, built by Karikala Cholan.

Thamirabarani River is considered as a perennial river that prospers Tamil Nadu.

Palar River originating at NandiDurga in Karnataka runs through North Arcot District and flows into the Bay of Bengal

Apart from these major Rivers, Pennai, Vaigai, Paraliyar Rivers prosper Tamil Nadu

Climatic conditions and Rainfall in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu's prosperity much depends on the timely monsoon rainfall. The Climatic conditions are tropical as the area Tamil Nadu falls between the Equator and the Makara contours. North East Monsoon gives rain fall in the Eastern Costal Plains, during the months of October, November and December. South West Monsoon gives rain fall during the months of June, July, August in the Western Costal Plains.

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Geographical Divisions and its influence on Historical and Sociological Factors

1. It is considered a nature's gift that Vindhya and Satpura Hills separated Tamil Nadu and its History from the Influence and Invasions of the Northern Indian powers, thereby preserving the Tamil History, Culture and Heritage.
2. The Geographical divisions enabled the Society beginning with Sangam period, to adopt a life style and choose an avocation suitable to that part of the geographical belt.

Five Geographical Divisions made during the Sangam Age indicated that the people chose to adopt a life style, Culture and also an avocation according to the nature of the geographical belt they were living in.

Types	Name of the Formation	Nature of the Terrain and description
I	Kurinji	Hill and Hill based areas
II	Mullai	Grasslands and plain field areas
III	Marutham	Areas with abundant water resources/water borne
IV	Neithal	Sea and Coastal areas lying on the shores
V	Paalai	Dry desert areas where livelihood is difficult

Predominance in Agriculture: Tamil Nadu is observed to have had the Predominant Agricultural activity all through, as the other Wealth of Minerals and Metals were much lesser in this belt. Besides, the Agriculture and Agro based productions were seen as primary and oldest.

Sea Supremacy: Natural Ports in Tamil Nadu were very few. Yet, the Southern Dravidians mastered in Overseas Trading and Waterway capabilities. The Three Kingdoms of Chera, Chola and Pandyas, due to the Supremacy in the Sea Trade, could establish their colonies in the Westward countries and have Cultural Exchange programmes through the Sea Coast areas called Neithal.

Foreign Trade: Musiri, Thondi on the Western Coast side, Kaveripoompattinam, Korkai ports situated on the East Coast side, were busily engaged in the Foreign Trade. Trade and commerce flourished from these ports to Countries and Locations such as Sumathra, Java, China, Persia, Ceylon, Bablyonia, Greece and Rome

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Rice for Mesopotamia, Pearl for Rome and Coir for Europe were traded through these ports of the Tamil Nadu. Apart from these, Peacock Feathers, Sandal, Teak, Pepper, Yelachi and Elephant Ivory were traded with various other countries of the East.

The Negative Role of Rivers and Hills on Tamil Nadu History

Though insignificant, the influence of rivers, and the hills in disconnecting people with isolated thinking and lack of unity thoughts due to the geographical divides, is considered a disadvantage in Tamil Nadu geographical division. Historians attribute this as a factor that enabled the emergence of small kingdoms without political consensus. Frequent wars were also due to this factor.

Check Your Progress

1. What do the geographical features of a state determine?
2. What does Tamil Nadu's prosperity depend on?

1.3 SOURCES OF TAMIL NADU HISTORY

The sources of history are the focus of the discussion in this Unit. It relates to 'Historical Sources' that reveal and link historical facts with us for a concise comprehension of the historical happenings during any period of time. Sources are the edifices upon which theories are built up by the historians. Facts are corroborated with the proof of evidences. Literature is compared to take cognizance of the discovered tools/weapons/utility items, etc. Sources lead to the logical arranging of the events in the chronological order and line up the historical facts and flow of events in rearranging them chronologically to formulate a conclusive observation on an Era.

History gets updated and the scope of study enhances as the additional Sources are researched by the ongoing research works of the historians.

We have abundant sources that have supported the study of Tamil Nadu History, classified into different portfolios of study:

I. Archaeological Sources of Evidences

1. Excavations of buried societal evidences, buildings etc.,
2. Monumental Evidences such as Temples, Stone Inscriptions
3. Copper Plate Evidences
4. Coins in circulation

II. Literary Sources of Evidences

1. Inland Literature
2. Foreign Literature

III. Foreigner Diary Notings

1. Travellers accounts
2. Historians Visit Notings

Let us study each of these one by one.

I. Archaeological Sources

Archaeological Survey Reports are of a great source of historical importance. With these evidences and corroborations, the theories built upon the edifice of certain historic factors get further strengthened in formulating a firm authenticity on the history sheets.

Archaeological surveys most of the times result in recovery of important old monuments, lost cities buried under the soil, old coins, memorials and various tools, implements and above all weapons used for the warfare.

Buried treasures: Excavations make a history when the country's lost history is recovered due to some evidences. Excavations of buried treasures, buried cities and towns, buried tools, furniture, household utensils, workmen tools, weapons of the civil and armed life. The pioneering work in the Tamil Nadu Archaeological Survey and excavations, were implemented at the instance of Robert Bruce Foote, a British geologist and archaeologist who conducted geological surveys of prehistoric locations in India for the Geological Survey of India.

1. Excavation Locations during the Archaeological Surveys

- (i) Athirapakkam, Chingleput District: Source of Stone Age Tools and Implements belonging to Aculian Technology, which is considered 2 lakh years pre-historic. These were discovered by the Experts Bruce Foote, Patterson, and Sangalia. These excavations led to the theory that Tamil History dates back to 2 lakh years prior.
- (ii) Baiyampalli at North Arcot District: Headed by Dr.S.R.Rao took up a research work at this location. The sources such as Implements and Tools, pulses grinding stones, priceless precious stones, lamps and bangles made out of clay, led the historians to conclude that they belong to the Iron Age and Megalithic Age. These sources enable us to learn the lifestyle of the people lived in those ages.
- (iii) Adichanallur at Tirunelveli District on the banks of River Tharabharani, has provided a great push to the Research conclusions on the life and Social practices of Ancient Tamils. In this excavations, the sources recovered are Swords, Axes, Bow and arrow, Iron Weapons, Spear, and Human skeletons as additional evidences to throw more light on the ancient Tamil History. Besides, a huge pot believed to have been used to bury the dead has been excavated. This is called the "Mudumakkal Thaazi" Mudumakkal denotes elders and Thaazi denoting an earthen Pot.

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- (iv) Thiruthangal near Sivakasi in Virudunagar District: Sources such as black and red earthen pot tiles and copper pieces were recovered in this location and they are related by the historians to the Pandya King of Sangam Age. There were Micro implements and tools of the Palaeolithic age,
- (v) Kodu manal excavation and research led to the evidences on the Trade with Rome as they recovered mud pot tiles and clay dolls. This revealed the history during the Sangam Age.

2. Monuments and Memorials/Stone Inscriptions

- (i) Tamil Nadu and Andhra Monuments: Many of the Forts, Temples and Palaces situated in Tamil Nadu and Andhra, remain as the Monuments reminding of the rich architectural value and heritage of the past. Besides, these monuments are considered as the richest treasures left for the posterity. These monuments and memorials carry the evidence of the various sculptures and stone inscriptions as well as artworks displaying the scenes from the Puranas like Ramayana and Mahabaratha.

3. Stone Inscriptions

Stone inscriptions play a very prominent role in establishing the theories formulated in confirming the historic facts relating to Tamil Nadu Ancient History. These inscriptions are said to be in Tamil Nadu as well as outside Tamil Nadu. Similarly, they are inscribed in languages such as Tamil, Brahmi, Prakrit, Sanskrit and Kannada.

- (i) Locations: Stone Inscriptions were initially found at Rameswaram, Brahmagiri, and Maski. Western Deccan sports a variety of Stone inscriptions on the Temple Walls. They are located at Kanheri and Nasik. These inscriptions are in Bruhui letters of Prakrit language. Pallavas, Sungas and Kadambas have released their Stone inscriptions in Sanskrit language.
- (ii) Emperor Asoka's Rock inscriptions found in Siddapuram, Brahmagiri, and Errakudi, speak volumes about the Chera Chola and Pandya Kingdoms. These inscriptions are not in Tamil.
- (iii) Kalinga King Karavelar's Hadigumba Stone Inscriptions inform us about the syndication of the Tamil Kings highlighting the synergised approach of the Tamil Kings in those eras.
- (iv) Samudra Gupta's Inscriptions on Allahabad Pillar informs on the rule of Kanchi Vishnugopan, a Pallava King.
- (v) Aikol Inscriptions of Pulikeshin II, the most popular Chalukya King, reveal the details of the wars between the Chalukyas under Pulikeshin II and the Pallavas under Mahendra Varman.
- (vi) Chola's Stone Inscriptions are innumerable and they are special. These stone inscriptions provide the store of historical evidences on the Chola History.

- (a) Malpadi inscriptions and Raja Rajeswaran Temple inscriptions of Rajendra Chola I provide clear evidence on the Political information of the Chola period.
- (b) Tirumukkudal stone inscriptions of Veera Rajendra Cholan reveal the donations and support to the welfare activities such as Study Centres and hospitals.
- (c) Thiruvempuram stone inscriptions of Rajendra Chola III is a Masterpiece of Historic Evidence recorded in the past.
- (d) Velvikudi grant of Paranthaka Nedunchadayan, Pandya King of Sangam Period, describes the rededication and return of the village Velvikudi to the descendants of the Vedic Scholars who were donated Velvikudi by the earlier Pandya King Palyagasalai Mudukudumiyan Peruvazudhi.
- (e) Pallava King Mahendra Varman's Inscriptions at Kudumiyanmalai near Pudukottai inform on the developments in Music and Art during the Pallava Rule.

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4. Copper Plate Records

After the 7th Century AD usage of Copper plates for inscriptions is found increasing. Pandyas, Chalukyas and other Kings released Copper Plate Inscriptions. These copper plate records releases give a lot of details on the Social and Political events, Religion and Wars, and so on.

- (a) Anbil copper plate records reveal information on Chola King Chenganan.
- (b) Pallavas copper plate records were in Prakrut and Sanskrit languages. Narasimhavarman III released Pallan Kovil plate records indicates that the Jains were patronised during that era.
- (c) Cholas' copper plates were very lengthy. Rajaraja Cholan I released Laidan plates; Rajendra Cholan I released Thiruvallangadu, Karandai plates; Veera Rajendran's Sarala plates; all these reveal the Chola History with broader details.
- (d) Hariharan I of Vijayanagar Kingdom released Banganapalli copper plates; King Krishna devaraya released the Amaravathi copper plates; Devaraya II released Srirangam Copper Records; All these describe the achievements of Vijaya Nagara Kings and the various programmes of their Rule.

5. Coins of various Eras

It is noteworthy that the Coins of any age that is found by the Archaeological Surveys reveal the Era, the territories, economic status, the year of minting and also the ruler by name or by image.

- (i) Arikamedu near to Pondicherry: In this location, Martimar Wheeler undertook Archaeological survey and research. A huge quantity of gold

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coins were recovered in this site. This reveals the trade relations between Tamil Nadu and Rome. These coins belong to the Emperor Augustus Ceaser. As for the Tamil Nadu coins, they were very crude and rough and are rare to find. Other coins reveal the contemporary levels of the Kingdom, Trade relations and Economic activities including overseas trade. While initially coins were issued in copper with the insignia, later coins circulated in Third Century AD are in gold. They were named as “PANAM” or “VARAAGAN” in Tamil.

- (ii) Periya patnam excavation: This work was undertaken by the Tanjore Tamil University. In this, Chinese coins and Chinese earthen pots were recovered at Tanjore, Tirunelveli and Periyakulam. These coins carry Chinese words RIUBIN and TANGBO. This reveals the trade relations between China and Tamil Nadu. Chinese coins also indicate that the trade was spread upto South of Pandya Kingdom. Chinese coins were also found belonging to the MING dynasty of China
- (iii) Pallava coins carry bull on one side and two sail ship images. Swastika and Lion images are also found on Pallava Coins.
- (iv) Chera, Chola and Pandya age coins were looking artistic and also better shaped with inscriptions and images. Chera coins sported Bow and Arrow Chola Coins displayed Tiger and the Pandya coins carry Fish images, these coins have more or a tell-tale effect by revealing the strength of the economy, the societal development level and also the richness in their lifestyle.
- (v) Rajaraja Chola’s coins were discovered from Telleswaram on the banks of Godavari River. This indicates that the rule extended upto Godavari banks.
- (vi) Besides major Research Projects, small projects were also undertaken at Korkai, Uraiyur, Madurai and Amaravathi. These historic evidences confirmed the various theoretical stand on the historical facts as concluded by the historians. In this, excavation, the Coins issued by the Rulers were recovered.

It is concluded that the Coins that were found in excavations open up a window of information on the Social, Cultural and Economic factors of the Era and also to map the age of the Coin with the dynasty in Tamil Nadu, corroborated by the contemporary rulers elsewhere.

II. Literary Sources

Literature is the main source reflecting the societal development due to literacy supported by the other developments in culture and economic conditions provided by the political will and strength. Besides, literary sources provide a vivid description of the status of the lifestyle; the internal and external cultural norms, taboos, social divisions, casteism, economic activity, poverty, primary vocation etc.,

Literature with wider ramifications covered not only the King’s courts but also the real life structures existed outside the palaces. Learning history and its

flow of events are made easy by the Literature with its record of chronological events from various sources of literary contributions such as poems, writings, stories, drama etc.,

Literature that have been the sources of evidence for historians are divided into three major classifications:

- (1) Inland Literary Sources: Literature born from the Indian laureates.
- (2) Foreign Literary Sources: Literature born in foreign lands with a mention on the South Indian Kingdoms and the happenings
- (3) Foreigner Diary happens to be a special mention notings and travelogues of foreign Visitors, Scholars and Emissaries.

A. Inland Literary Sources:

1. Literary sources evidencing Sangam Period:
 - (a) Sangam Period considered to be the Golden Era of Tamil Nadu has a rich Literature to describe the values of Sangam Period. Though many are lined up as Sangam Period Literature, Only Two are recognized to be Sangam Period Literature: (1) Ettuthogai and (2) Pathupaattu.
 - (b) Apart from these two major Authentic Literature of sangam period, (1) agathiyam, (2) Tolkappiyam (3) Pathinenkizkanakku (4) silappadigaaram (5) Manimekalai (6) Valaiyapathi (7) Kundalakesi (8) Seevagachinthamani and (9) Thirukkural literature explain the Social, Religious Status and values and also the superior culture of the Tamils who are also called Dravidians
 - (c) Puranaanooru is a composition of poems admires and showcases the capacity of the Rulers of the small kingdoms and also the Kings ruling the Country.
 - (d) Pathithupatru portrays the Chera Kings' qualities for peace, art, and war tactics.
 - (e) All these literature speak volumes about Sanga Period Tamils' Hospitality, Love Life, Courage and benevolence
2. Kalabhras Age Literary Evidences: Though there are no noteworthy mention on any literature that brings sufficient evidence on the Rule of Kalabhras, which is considered as the Dark Age of the Tamil History for nearly three centuries, three important literary works with Religious bent, do mention on the Kalabhras Rule.
 - (a) Tamil Navalar Sarithai
 - (b) Periya Puranam
 - (c) Yaapperungalam

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3. On Pallavas: There are many references available from the Literature on the Pallavas Era.
 - (i) Thevaram written by Appar, Sundarar and Gnana Sambandar, gives a glimpse of Pallavas Social, Economic and Religious History.
 - (ii) Nalaayira Divyaprabandam narrates on the Pallava Chalukya relationship
 - (iii) Nandivarman's Nandikalambakam is a literature that gives a detailed account of the Political life and History in Pallava Kingdom.
 - (iv) Perundevanaar composed a book named Bharata Venba. This collection describes on the Political life of the Pallavas.
 - (v) Dandin's Periya Puraanam, Paandikkovai literary sources provide information on the Pallavas Rule and its achievements.
4. On the Early Pandyas: Pandikovai, Periya Puranam, Divya Sucharitha, Guru Paramparai Literature of the Era gives details on the History of Early Pandya's Rule. Besides, several Vaishnava Literature and Tiruvilayadal written by Paranjothi mirror the history of this age.
5. On Later Cholas: There are several literatures that describe the rule of Later Chola Dynasty starting with King Vijayalayan. Seevaga Chinthamani, Valayapathi, and Kundalakesi describes on the Jain and Buddha Religious Status under the Chola Rule.
 - (i) Veera Choliam written by Buddha Mithirar and Kamba Ramayanam provide the sources to understand the Chola History.
 - (ii) Kalingathu parani an epic written by Jayangondaar gives a vivid description of the Kalinga War carried out by Karunakara Thondaiman, General of Kulothunga Cholan I. This literature discusses in detail the time zone and chronological events of the Chola Rule
 - (iii) Moovarula written by Otta Koother shares the information on the Three Chola Kings viz., Vikrama Cholan, Kulothungan II, and Rajarajan II.

B. Literature from Other Languages

In addition to the numerous Literature found in Tamil Language, Tamil History has been discussed in the literature of other languages also with the same authenticity.

- (i) Arthasastra written by Kautilya, written in Sanskrit make references on Madurai City and the pearl produced in the Pandya Country.
- (ii) Dandin's Avanisundara Kathachara refers to Pallava Era History
- (iii) Mahendrarvarman's Maththa Vilasa Prakachanam enables us to understand the Pallava Era History.
- (iv) Literature such as Chola Vamsa Charithai, Kongudesa Rasaakkal Savisthaara Charithai, written in Sanskrit brings a lot of historical evidences and references of the Era.

- (v) Ganga Devi's Madura Vijayam, written in Sanskrit makes a mention about the Invasions on Madurai by Kumara Kampana of Vijayanagar. This also describes the Victory over the Madurai Sultanate by Kumara Kampana, deployed by the Delhi Sultanate of Tughlaq.
- (vi) Pamba's Pamba Bharatham and Ranna's Beema Vijayam, both written in Kannada Language, provide the traditional information of the Society, Economy and Life, also discuss on Rashtrakoota, Chalukya history in a descriptive manner.
- (vii) Another Kannada literature named as Kannada Desa Mahaana Tharangil gives a detailed description of the Vijayanagar Empire and the Social life of that era.

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C. Foreign Literary Sources

There are many literary works of foreign origin give authentic information on the History of Ancient Tamil Nadu.

- (i) Indica written by Megasthenes ranks as the top most literature giving out a number of historical evidences of the past Tamil Nadu. There are several mentions on the Pandya Kingdom. There is a mention about the Houses created for the governance of the Country. One can also get information on the Social, Political and Commerce Status of the rule.
- (ii) Persian Wars written by Heratodus give information on the Overseas Trade by Tamil Nadu and also the various Port Towns of Tamil Nadu.
- (iii) Dalami's work called Global Map also mentions on the Overseas Trade and the Port Towns of Tamil Nadu.
- (iv) Strabo's Notes reveal the Trade Relationship between the Pandya Country and the Rome. This literature also provides information on the Political Social and Economic Status of Tamil Nadu under Pandyas.
- (v) Pilius's Literary Work named as Natural History gives an account of the Western Ports of Tamil Nadu.
- (vi) Ceylon's Literature, Mahavamsam and Deepavamsam written in Pali Language provide an authentic description of King Chera Senguttuvan.

Foreign Visitors' accounts in the form of diary notings also contributes to the sources of evidence to the History of Tamil Nadu.

- (a) Chinese Traveller Pahiyan visited during the rule of Gupta King Chandragupta Maurya II has left many observations in the form of Diary.
- (b) Another Chinese Traveller Hieun Tsang has left a large number descriptive notes on the Tamil Nadu, during his visit to India in 7th Century AD.
- (c) Benjamin and Marco Polo give a detailed description of the Social Status and Social Life in Tamil Nadu. Marco Polo visited Tamil Nadu in 13th Century AD.

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- (d) Ibin Batuta a traveller from Morocco gives an account of the Muslim Invasion on South India.

Thus, the archaeological evidences and literary evidences have made a sizeable and authentic information on the Tamil Nadu culture, heritage, economy, political and social conditions.

Check Your Progress

3. What do coins of an era reveal?
4. What role do stone inscriptions play?

1.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The geographical features of a state determines its wealth, welfare and its bountiful treasures of nature based on the strengths and advantages of the features embedded in the land and boundaries.
2. Tamil Nadu's prosperity depends on the timely monsoon rainfall.
3. It is noteworthy that the coins of any age that is found by the Archaeological Surveys reveal the Era, the territories, economic status, the year of minting and also the ruler by name or by image.
4. Stone inscriptions play a very prominent role in establishing the theories formulated in confirming the historic facts relating to Tamil Nadu Ancient History.

1.5 SUMMARY

- It is not an exaggeration to say that geography and history are intertwined with each other that run parallel to the growth and development of the State/Country.
- Tamil Nadu has the unique geographical feature of being bordered by Vindhya and Satpura Hill Terrain on the Northern Side.
- Cauvery, with its origin at Kodagu, Brahma Giri, runs south east towards Tamil Nadu through Mysore.
- Sources are the edifices upon which theories are built up by the historians. Facts are corroborated with the proof of evidences.
- Literature is compared to take cognizance of the discovered tools/weapons/utility items, etc.
- Archaeological Survey Reports are of a great source of historical importance. With these evidences and corroborations, the theories built upon the edifice

of certain historic factors get further strengthened in formulating a firm authenticity on the history sheets.

- Archaeological surveys most of the times result in recovery of important old monuments, lost cities buried under the soil, old coins, memorials and various tools, implements and above all weapons used for the warfare.
- Literature is the main source reflecting the societal development due to literacy supported by the other developments in culture and economic conditions provided by the political will and strength.
- Literary sources provide a vivid description of the status of the lifestyle; the internal and external cultural norms, taboos, social divisions, casteism, economic activity, poverty, primary vocation etc.
- There are many literary works of foreign origin give authentic information on the History of Ancient Tamil Nadu.

*Archaeological and
Literary Sources of
Tamil History*

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1.6 KEY WORDS

- **Sangam Period:** It refers to the period of history of ancient Tamil Nadu and Kerala (known as Tamilakam) spanning from c. 5th century BCE to c. 3rd century CE.
- **Emissaries:** It refers to persons sent as diplomatic representatives on special missions.
- **Inscriptions:** It refers to writings carved into something made of stone or metal.

1.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the ghats in Tamil Nadu responsible for?
2. Write a short-note on climatic conditions and rainfall in Tamil Nadu.
3. How can literary sources of history be classified?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the geographical features of ancient Tamil Nadu.
2. Examine the various archaeological sources of Tamil history.
3. Discuss the different literary sources of Tamil history.

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1.8 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 2 CULTURAL TAMIL NADU

Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Paleolithic Culture (Old Stone Age)
 - 2.2.1 Mid Stone Age
- 2.3 Neolithic Culture
 - 2.3.1 Metallic
- 2.4 Megalithic Culture
- 2.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 2.6 Summary
- 2.7 Key Words
- 2.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 2.9 Further Readings

NOTES

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Many details of the Prehistoric Era remain unknown due to the fact that there are no written evidences on the Era and its historical details. History starts with Reading and Writing, which happens through the literacy. Except the evidences due to the Archaeological Surveys and Excavations, there are no authentic written evidences that bring before us the facts of that Prehistorical Era of Tamil Nadu.

Historic evidences : Due to the availability of a few evidences such as mud pots, human bones, implements and tools, out of the ongoing Research Projects, Surveys and Excavations at various levels and stages, the Historians are able to establish connections with their assumptions, theories and also their inferences. Historians and Researchers come to conclusions based on these evidences. However, some of these conclusions get modified/refined as and when fresh evidences emerge in the process of Researches.

Relevance to Prehistoric findings: It may be asked as to why one should know the pre-historic facts which are concluded as primitive, archaic and out dated. We need to establish in the present scenario, the word development, etymologically. These facts trace the origin of our development and also the depth of the growth that has been established as of now. Besides, it is interesting to note the status of the Economic, Cultural and Political Society of that age. This also enables us to establish the year of origin and also the contemporary status of the various other human habitations in India and outside.

Tamil Nadu's Pre Historical Period could be classified into following types namely:

- (a) Paleolithic indicating the ancient Prehistoric age called as the Old Stone age with the lifestyle and activities of the Society were centered around Hunting

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marked with migrations and life in the caves, open forests and hilly terrains. They moved depending upon the availability of food and nature's bounty. They used quartzite stones as their weapons.

- (b) Mid Stoneage indicates the later part of the stoneage. People used smaller and refined stones as their weapons. They had also made instruments and tools out of small stones. The livelihood expanded from hunting to other areas of vocations also. They started staying in foothills and migration from place to place was limited to climate and resources.
- (c) Neolithic age displayed more of a Cultural Development. In addition to the traditional hunting and fishing activities, they also focused on Agricultural Production. They also created their own hutments and houses.
- (d) Megalithic age indicates the large stone age. In this age, one could see a development in Cultural and living patterns; use of natural resources not only for hunting but for agriculture and other vocations. Building houses and living in villages started at this age. They started creating Round Stone Memorials for the dead.
- (e) Metallic age indicating the period wherein the use of metals in the place of stone and in addition to stone were predominant. Cultural and Social developments were faster and refined to suit the changed living styles and habits.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the background of the culture of Tamil Nadu
- Discuss the paleolithic, neolithic and megalithic culture
- Evaluate the distinct features of different ages vis-a-vis each other

2.2 PALEOLITHIC CULTURE (OLD STONE AGE)

The Old Stoneage in Tamil Nadu is estimated to be from 5 lac years to 15000 BCE. The people of the Old Stoneage were using the axes made of stones. In one of the Excavations in 1863, in Pallavaram, Researcher Robert Bruce Foote, (born 1834—died 1912), discovered a Stone Axe used in the Old Stoneage. Various other weapons made of stoneage stones were discovered at places around Chennai Metropolitan City. They include knives, handheld axe etc. This technology is also named as Chennai technology.

In locations such as Chengalpattu, Thanjavur, North Arcot, Handheld axes, cutting stone equipments, chiseled instruments, double edged sharp stone equipments were discovered by the Archaeological Survey teams. All these

instruments are made out of smooth stones. These stones were made into instruments with minimum technology and the technology is named as Achulian type of technology.

Life and Style: The people of Paleolithic age were ancient in culture; not literates; were depending upon the art of hunting; staying in the mountain caves and other open places in the hilly terrains or riverside terrains. They were unaware of the art of making mud pots and use of utensils. They were also eating Raw Meat, fruits, Yam and Vegetables.

2.2.1 Mid Stone Age

The Mid Stoneage period is estimated to be between 8000 to 2000 BCE. Tamils lived in this age were using smaller stones for making their weapons instead of the quartzite stones. They made weapons such as knife, triangular implements, hammers, spoons, swords etc.,. This is called as Levasian Technology.

In this Mid Stoneage, tamil people were found living in Tamil Nadu locations such as Dharmapuri, Gudiyamalai, Thirumangalam, Kallupatti, Thirunelveli, Yeral, and Nazareth. They were found using the weapons which were claimed to be refined over the old stoneage. They were also better in Culture and they were engaged in Fishing and Hunting as their avocation.

As there was a cultural improvement, they changed their lifestyles according to the situations locations and climatic conditions.

They were found living in the foot of the hills. They also worshipped the nature. Dead were buried. They started worshipping God and conducted Prayers. They also believed in life and Rebirth concepts.

Check Your Progress

1. Who discovered the stone axe used in Old Stone Age?
2. What is Levasian Technology?

2.3 NEOLITHIC CULTURE

The age called Neolithic is estimated between 1500 to 700 BCE. Locations of the Tamil people stayed in North Arcot, Salem, Krishnagiri, Cheroy Hills, Pudukottai, Palani, Kodaikanal, Bodinayakanur. Locations have been discovered in the Archaeological Survey projects in Tamil Nadu.

We are able to infer that they belonged to a better Society with improved culture by studying the Instruments and weapons in their usage. They made their weapons with Diorite, Draptine and Basalt. These instruments were stronger and also shining and smoother.

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They used the following instruments:

- (1) Drilling equipments
- (2) Handheld Axe
- (3) Hammer
- (4) Handles
- (5) Cutting Instruments
- (6) Harness instrument &
- (7) Mega Hammer

It is learnt that they also made instruments out of the bones.

Avocation: They were engaged in Fishing, Hunting and also in Agriculture. They have removed the forests and created farm lands. There were many more features of their lifestyle that are brought out by the researchers and historians:

- They ploughed their lands and cultivated the lands.
- They were found using sharp instruments for ploughing and other sharp instruments like Axes for cultivation.
- As they were farming, they stayed in places permanently.
- They built their house walls made of clay soil.
- The floors designed as circles, squares or rectangles
- Roofs were covered by leaves and kora grass .
- They reared animals also such as Dogs, Cows, Goats, and Bullocks

Cultural observations:

- They are found to be more cultured than the earlier stone age people
- They were engaged in more avocations
- They were sporting dress made out of Cotton threads, wooden barks and animal leather
- Stone Rocks were decorated by their Artwork and Paintings
- Wearing Ornaments was considered a fashion
- Giving importance to dressing and decorations was considered during this age
- Prayer methods were found to be present
- Worshipping the nature was also found

2.3.1 Metallic

Metallic Age represented a drastic change in the life and style of Tamil people. This age followed Neolithic age. All the instruments and weapons used in this Age were all made out of metals. Though the North Indian metallic age speaks about

wide usage of Copper, in Tamil Nadu, the usage of Iron was found more and evidences establish this fact.

Use of Iron brought a sea change in the economic and social activities of this metallic age people. They found the use of iron in making Swords, Axes, Household articles. This alone brought a change in their lifestyle also.

As they were confined to one place carrying out Agriculture, their living as a Society caught up as a Social Pattern for Development.

They grew paddy, and pulses in their fields.

Check Your Progress

3. What were the location of the Tamil people during the Neolithic age?
4. Why Metallic Age represents a drastic change in the life of Tamil people?

2.4 MEGALITHIC CULTURE

Megalithic Age is estimated to have been in existence between 700 to 300 BCE. The primary identity of this Age is represented by the Memorials with Big Round Stones that were built in memory of the dead. They erected memorial structures around and above the burial place of the dead with big stones. Hence, the name Megalithic.

Tamil Nadu witnessed different burial practices like

- (a) Mudpot system
- (b) Midstone system and
- (c) Capstone system

Cemeteries were built in different styles using the big stones. The dead were buried around the plateaus and valleys in the same fashion.

These types of burials have been located by the Researchers at Adichanallur, Chingelput, Nilgiris, in Tamil Nadu.

Importance to Agriculture : More of an Agrarian avocation was observed in this age. They grew Paddy and pulses.

Implements and Instruments: They were found using Showels, Pick Axes, boulders and sickles for their agricultural activities.

Megalithic utensils: Mud pots of black and red colours were found to be in use by the people of Megalithic Era. These pots carried markings such as arrows, triangle, stars which have different connotations in the eyes of the historians and researchers.

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Society: They lived in a permanent abode by building houses in a village style. They were found to be using Bows, Arrows, Spears, Swords, made of Iron.

Gold and Silver Ornaments are found to have been in use during these years. People were found to decorate their homes.

Conclusion: All these evidences indicate a remarkable development in the Megalithic age under

Social, Economic, and Religious life of the Tamils.

This Unit gives us a glimpse of the levels of Social and Economic Developments in the respective periods of the Prehistoric Ages dating back to 5 lac years BCE. Evidences show that the Tamil population was found in these ancient periods also. Due to lack of written literature on these Ages, the time duration is based on matching inferences and Research results. Historians conclude that Tamil Race is oldest, Tamil Culture is ancient and the language is also used since 300 BCE .

Check Your Progress

5. What is the identifying quality of Megalithic Age?
6. What kind of crops were grown by Tamil people during Megalithic Age?

2.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The researcher Robert Bruce Foote, discovered a stone axe used in Old Stone Age during one of the excavations in 1863, at Pallavaram.
2. Tamils living in the Mid Stone Age, were using smaller stones for making their weapons instead of the quartzite stones. They made weapons such as knife, triangular implements, hammers, spoons, swords, etc. This is known as Levasian Technology.
3. The locations in which Tamil people stayed during the Neolithic Age were North Arcot, Salem, Krishnagiri, Cheroy Hills, Pudukottai, Palani, Kodaikanal, and Bodinayakanur.
4. The Metallic Age is known for the use of metals, mainly iron in the case of Tamil people. This brought a sea change in the economic and social activities of these people. They used iron in making swords, axes, household articles, etc. This alone brought a change in their lifestyle too.

5. The identifying quality of the Megalithic Age is represented by the memorials with big round stones that were built in memory of the dead.
6. During Megalithic Age, Tamil people grew paddy and pulses.

2.6 SUMMARY

- Many details of the Pre-historic era remain unknown due to the fact that there are no written evidences on the era and its historical details.
- However, due to the availability of a few evidences such as mud pots, human bones, implements and tools, the historians are able to establish connections with their assumptions, theories as well as their inferences.
- This Unit gives us a glimpse of the levels of social and economic developments in the respective periods of the Prehistoric ages dating back to 5 lac years BCE.
- Tamil Nadu's pre historical period could be classified into five types namely: Paleolithic Age, Mid Stone Age, Neolithic Age, Metallic Age, and Megalithic Age.
- It is concluded by the historians that the Tamil Race is the oldest, its culture is ancient and the language is also used since 300 BCE .

2.7 KEY WORDS

- **Prehistoric Era:** It is the period between the use of the first stone tools c. 3.3 million years ago by hominins and the invention of writing systems.
- **Quartzite:** It is an extremely compact, hard, and granular rock consisting essentially of quartz.

2.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What is the relevance of prehistoric findings?
2. List the cultural observations made with regards to the Neolithic Age.
3. What are the important features of the Megalithic Age?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Explain the Paleolithic culture.
2. Discuss the important features of Neolithic Age.
3. 'Mid Stone Age was important for the development of Tamil people.' Evaluate.

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2.9 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 3 SANGAM AGE AND CLASSICAL LITERATURE

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Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 What is Sangam?
 - 3.2.1 Classical Literature
 - 3.2.2 The Sangam Span: (Sanga Kaalam) and the Social and Economic Practices
- 3.3 Tamil Powers of the Sangam Age: Socio-Economic and Religious Conditions
 - 3.3.1 Cheras
 - 3.3.2 Chola Kings
 - 3.3.3 Pandya
 - 3.3.4 Territorial Chieftains
- 3.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Key Words
- 3.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 3.8 Further Readings

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Sangam Age is considered a unique time period in the Tamil country wherein all round developments witnessing a civilization that created and gave unto itself with all types of activities that were relevant for a contented pioneering lifestyle filled with heroism, political activities of kingdoms, education, entertainment, leisure, music, art, drama and culture, economic activities with trade and commerce including exports and imports, growth of path breaking literature covering the emotions, beliefs and cults, religious, cultural moral and ethical values.

Education was given the utmost importance by every parent. All the Sangam literature harp on the education and ethical values covering Akam and Puram. While Akam dealt with the personal and human side with more emotional and sentimental ethos, Puram dealt with the society and other aspects of human experience including that of economic factors.

There Sangam Academies were nurtured and brought up by the Pandya Kings. The Sangam Age denotes the Age during which the Sangam Academies gained importance and developed into a historic pride and fame.

In the Ancient Tamil Nadu, it is believed that three Sangams were actively involved in the development of tamil language, literature and culture, under the patronage of the Pandya Kings. In this unit, you will learn about the concept of Sangam literature, the socio-economic conditions of the age and the Tamil powers reigning during the time.

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3.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the history of Sangam age
- List the classical literature that comes from the Sangam age
- Explain the Tamil powers of the Sangam Age

3.2 WHAT IS SANGAM?

Sangam is the Academy of Tamil Poets. The word has its origin from Sanskrit Language. The Sangam literature is the ancient Tamil literature of the period in the history of south India spanning from c. 500 BCE to 300 CE.

What is special about Sangam Age Literature? It is believed that Sangam Literature provided the roadmap for the entire Tamil literature, life and values for the future generations of Tamils. The Sangam Literature was the composition by Tamil Poets belonging to both the genders of men and women who were from various professional backgrounds. These compositions were later on collected into various anthologies during 1000 A.D. They went into oblivion soon afterwards until they were rediscovered in the 19th century, by Tamil Scholars like U.V.Swaminatha Iyer, Arumuga Navalar, and C.W.Thamotharampillai.

Why the name: The name is after the Sangam Academies constituted with Divin Presence/Sages/Poets as Heads during the period.

Significance: There were patronized by the Pandya Kings.

- (1) The Primary Sangam (Thalai Sangam) was held at Thenmadurai. Chairman of the Sangam is said to be Sage Agastya.No literary work of Madurai Sangam survived and available.
- (2) The Middle Sangam (Idai Sangam) is popular by its literary work Tolkappiyam, authored by Tolkappiyar. Second Sangam was held at Kapadapuram. Initiated by Sage Agastya, it was later taken up by Tolkappiyar, a disciple of Agastya.
- (3) The Last Sangam (Kadai Sangam) The Last Sangam (Kadai Sangam) was organized at Madurai under Nakkeerar. This Sangam has contributed a large number of literary corpus in Tamil. The founder of this Sangam is Mudathirumaran

Three Sangams (Muchchangam)

While Early Sangam was founded at the then Madurai, Middle Sangam was functioning from Kapadapuram and the Last Sangam was founded at Madurai. It is learnt that the Early Sangam of Then Madurai (South Madurai) and Middle Sangam of Kapadapuram, submerged due to a deluge and the Third Sangam

which is considered the Last Sangam, was established by the Pandya Kings at Madurai. The Sangam and its literature that we learn and understand belong to the Last Sangam of Madurai as other two Sangam's Literary as well as other resources went under the water world of Indian Ocean.

The Sangam Literature is referred to as the ancient Tamil Literature in the ancient South India known as Thamizagam or Tamilagam. *Akananooru*, *Kurunthogai*, *Natrinai* are the classic collections which contained 2381 poems composed by 473 poets of whom 102 were remaining as anonymous.

Categorization of the literature

Sangam Literature fell into two categories such as: Akam(Inner) and Puram(outer). The classification of Akam and Puram though not strictly adhered to, the interpretation mattered, and the literature got distinguished under the appropriate category logically.

Except *Paripaatal*, all other Sangam literature deal with human emotions and human relationships (K.A.Neelakanta Sastri, *A History of South India*, OUP(1955)).

Compilation: Sangam Literature was compiled in the 10th century into two categories on the basis of chronological order. 1) Pathinenmelkanakku 2) Pathinenkilkanakku

Pathinenmelkanakku ("the eighteen greater text series") comprised of *Ettuthogai* and *Pattupaattu*. The rest were under Pathinenkilkanakku("the eighteen lesser text series").

Tirukkural authored by Tamil poet and philosopher, Thiruvalluvar is considered the most important work among the literature.

While Thiruvalluvar focused on ethics, virtue, wealth and love, Mamulanar, who lived during the Sangam period, related his writings to the historical happenings of that age.

As quoted by the Indologist Kamil Zvelebil in the words of A.K.Ramanujam, 'In their antiquity and in their contemporaneity, there is not much else in any Indian literature equal to these quiet and dramatic Tamil poems. In their values and stances, they represent a mature classical poetry: passion is balanced by courtesy, transparency by ironies and nuances of design, impersonality by vivid detail, austerity of the line by richness of implication. These poems are not just the earliest evidence of the Tamil genius.'

3.2.1 Classical Literature

Sangam Literature is divided into Epics and other Literature.

Epics that are prominent in Sanga Ilakkiyam: 1. *Silappathigaram* and 2. *Manimekalai*

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Elango Adigal authored the epic *Silappathigaram*. Seethalai Sathanaar authored the Epic *Manimekalai*.

Sangam Literature includes: Pathupattu, Ettuthogai, Pathinenkilkanakku & Tolkappiyam.

Two Main Topics in Sangam Literature

1. Akattiyam
2. Tholkappiyam

The Popular Sangam Literature:

A. *Tolkaapiyam* was written by Tolkaapiyar. Though considered as grammar, it encompasses the political and socio-economic scenario of that age.

B. *Ettuthokai* (Eight Anthologies) comprises of eight works such as:

Eighteen Greater Texts (*Pathinenmelkanakku*) comprise of eight anthologies and ten idylls. eight anthologies are:

1. *Ainkurunuru* was compiled by Pulathurai Mutriya Kudalur Kizaar. Consisting of 500 lines, it covers the 5 types of the thinais. Each thinai is dedicated with 100 poems speaks about Pandya Kings of Sangam Age.
2. *Akananuru* consists of 400 poems of the emotion based inner subjects. Pandya King Ukkira Peruvazudi got this compilation made. References on Mauriya's Invasion, Thondai Nadu, Sangam Period local administration, marriage customs are available in this.
3. *Purananuru* gives information on the Sanga Period Kings and rulers. This exhibits the warfare skills, charity qualities of that Age. It also brings the picture of domination of Aryas in Tamil Nadu.
4. *Kalittokai* was composed by 5 poets consisting of 250 poems giving a glimpse of the love and emotional life of 5 thinais. (land styles)
5. *Kurunthokai* was compiled by Purikko. This contains 402 lines covering the life and habits of Samanas.
6. *Natrinai*: Consists of 400 poems narrating the rulers of the Smaller Kingdoms such as Omu, Pamu, Athigan, Ninnan, Malayan, and Panan. It mentions important places such as Thondi, Korkai, Maruthurpattinam, Punalvayil, Irappaiyur, and Kudanthai. It also presents the lifestyle and social beliefs, food habits and also dressing habits of the people living in the 5 different Thinai (Kurinji, Mullai, Marutham, Neithal and Paalai)
7. *Paripatal* is a resource to understand the Religious life of Sangam Age.
8. *Patitrruppattu* is a compilation of poems on the Chera Kings. It also brings out the economic and social status of the Sangam Period

Pathupattu (Ten Idylls) contains ten different literary works:

1. *Tirumurugatrupatai* was composed by Nakkeeran. This is in praise of Lord Muruga.

2. *Kurinchipattu* deals with the life style and people of Kurinji
3. *Malaipatukatam* is composed to bringout the akam aspects of life.
4. *Maaturaikkanci* describes the Kingdom of Madurai and the lifestyles. It also gives an account of the Warfare of Pandya King, Thalaiyalanganathanu Cheruvenra Pandiyan.
5. *Mullaippattu*, composed by Nipputhanaar deals with more of Mullai landscape and the people living in that landscape.
6. *Netunalvatai*, authored by Nakkeeran, deals with the Outer Factors such as Valour, Policies, Qualities and life in the Pandyan Kingdom led by Nedunchezian.
7. *Pattinappalai* deals with the life and people of Paalai landscape.
8. *Perumpanatruppatai* was composed by Nallur Kadiyalur Uruthirankannar. This Literature informs on Kanchi King Thondaiman and also description of the sanga period instrument Yal.(musical instrument)
9. *Pournaratruppatai*: was composed by Mudaththaama Kanniyaar. The Literature deals with Scholars getting rewards from the Kings or Philonthrappists for their works. Motivating other Scholars to approach the same Kings for their rewards. More information on King Karikala Chola is discussed in this.
10. *Sirupanatrappatai*, composed by Nallur Naththathanaar, discusses the Charitable Provincial Chieftains holding the title of “Kadai Ezu Vallalgal” Many of the poems are consider older than Sangam Age and consist of 269 lines.
Pathinenkilkanakku comprises of eighteen works about ethics and morals.

Eighteen Lesser Texts: (*Pathinenkilkanakku*)

1. Naladiyaar
2. Nanmanikkatikai
3. Inna Narpatu
4. Iniyavai Narpatu
5. Kar Narpatu
6. Kalavali Narpatu
7. Aintinai Aimpatu
8. Tinaimoli Aimpatu
9. Ainthinai Elupatu
10. Tinaimalai Nutru Aimpatu
11. Tirukkural
12. Trikatukam

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13. Acharakkovai
14. Palamoli Nanuru
15. Sirupangamulam
16. Mutumolikkanchi
17. Elathi
18. Kainilai

3.2.2 The Sangam Span: (Sanga Kaalam) and the Social and Economic Practices

We need to understand the era of happening of Sangam Literature to have a glimpse of the parallel developments in the social and economic practices of the people living in that age. At the same time, the literature will portray the exact lifestyle and the ethos of the society and different segments of landscapes in the Sangam age.

Noted historians are yet to arrive at a consensus in determining the actual Sangam Period inferred out of the various sources of evidences that are available through the Literature and also the Stone with us at present. Generally, the Sangam Period or Sangam Span is calculated from Century 300 BCE to 300 AD.

Table 3.1 Historians and their Estimated Period of Sangam

Historian	Estimated Period of Sangam	Sources of the Evidences
V.Kanagasabai	Prior to 2000 years from now	Sangam Literature
V.R.Ramachandra Dikshithar & K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar	From 6 Century BCE to 5 Century AD Approximately 7000 years in total	Sangam Literature and Asoka's stone inscriptions
K.A.Neelakanta Sastri	1 Century AD to 3 Century AD	Sangam Literature and stone inscriptions

Determining the Start of the Sangam Period

Many of the Brahmi inscriptions are considered the oldest usage of Tamil Language and their creations date back to 200 BCE. Unsupported by any other Literary Notes confirming the period, it is inferred that Sangam Age could have begun at

300 BCE. The majority of the literary experts and researchers nearly confirm the Age of Sangam as between 300 BCE and 300 AD. These conclusions have been drawn from the various historic evidences such as:

- (a) Inscriptions on the stones of various locations of historic and cultural importance under different rulers of different dynasties.
- (b) Archaeological surveys and excavation findings of ancient implements, articles and artefacts belonging to this age
- (c) Literature in Tamil by the Last Tamil Sangam of Madurai. (As the Literature emerged during the first and the second Sangam of Tamil Nadu could not survive due to the deluges that destroyed the literary treasure and other evidences of Sangam Age, Pandya Kings established a fresh Sangam at Madurai which alone could reach the valuable Tamil Literature to the Tamil speaking World of the future).

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Determining the End of Sangam Era

- (a) The Epic *Silappadigaram* and Ceylon's epic *Mahavamsam* (in Pali language) explain the closing dates of Sangam Period as 200 AD.
- (b) In *Silappadigaram*, there is a reference on the celebrations for Kannagi by the King Chera Senguttuvan, attended and honoured by Ceylon King Kayavahu. In Ceylon's popular Literature Mahavamsam, the reference of this function and King Kayavahu's participation is cited. This King Kayavahu ruled between 180 AD and 198 AD. This estimates the period of King Chera Senguttuvan as at the close of 200 AD. It could be determined that the same period of Last Sangam Age also falls in this era.
- (c) Evidences and references in literature *Ettuthogai*, Pathupaattu bring out the references by Roman Travellers Pili and Dalami on the port towns of Korkai, Musiri and Pukaar. These travelers lived in 200 AD which is also considered to be the end of Sangam period as 200 AD.
- (d) *Pathiruppathu*, a popular literature in Tamil, refers to Chera Kings individually into two dynasties of Udiyan Cheralaathan and Irumborai. Sangam Chera Kings were given titles as Vaanavar, Villavar and Malayar. Senguttuvan's period is estimated as the last part of 200 AD. After him 4 kings have ruled and the logical 25 years per King leads to 300 AD which concludes Sangam Period.

Table 3.2 Sources of Evidences to Determine the Sangam Age

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Sl.No	Sources of Proof	Types	Locations	Time Period
1	Stone Inscriptions	Birami Inscriptions	Caves of Samana Sages	300 BCE
A	Stone Inscriptions mentioning the existence of 5 States in Tamil Nadu namely, Chola, Pandya, Sathyaputhirar, Kerala Puthirar and Thamirabarani	Asoka's Inscriptions	Second Cave Inscriptions	300BCE
B	Stone Inscriptions These inscriptions reveal the historic information on the Conquering of the Tamil Syndicates by Karavelar. It is inferred that the birth of Tamil Kingdoms dates back to 113BCE	Kalinga Karavelar	Hadikumba Inscriptions	Sangam Age
C	Stone Inscriptions confirming the re-gifting of the Brammadeya Villages by Paranthaga Nedunchadayan, originally gifted to him by Pandya King Mudukudumbi Peruvazhudi	Paranthaga Nedunchadayan	Velvikudi	Sangam Age
D	Stone Inscriptions revealing the tragic end of Poet Kabilar who chose to end his life by starving unto death	Sangam Poet Kabilar's Vadakkiruthal	Thirukoviloor	Sangam Age
2	Coins indicating the Trade and Merchandise dealings with Tamils and Romans	Augustus Ceasar's Time of Roman Coins were found	Nearby Madurai	Sangam Age
3	Archeological Evidences confirm the trade relations between Rome and Tamil Nadu during Sangam Age	Archeological Sources and Evidences	Arikkamedu near Pondichery	Sangam Age
4	Literary Evidences Though many Works are cited as Sangam Period Literature, only Two Major Literature Works are claimed to belong to Sangam period.	Pathuppaattu and Ettuthogai	Madurai Sangam	300BC

Conclusion of the Sangam Duration: It is generally accepted that Sangam commenced in 300 BC and concluded in 300 AD, as supported by various Literature and other historic evidences.

Sangam Period References

Geographical References: The South India as described in the historical references lead to the geographical area falling beyond the South of Thungabhadra and Krishna Rivers.

Trade & Commerce: References on the Sangam Period are derived from various Foreigner Writings/Reports/History. Megasthenes, Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy make a passing reference of the Western Contacts with South India on Commercial Trade and Merchandise.

Political references

Inscriptions of Asoka recognize the Chera, Chola and Pandyan Kingdoms on the South of Mauryan Empire.

References on the Kingdoms of Chera, Chola and Pandya are traced from the literary evidences of the Sangam Period.

Tamil Kingdom references are also available at the inscriptions of Hathikumbha (Kharavela of Kalinga)

Geographical and Environmental Classifications: Tolkappiyam describes the thematic classification of the Sangam landscape and environment.

These classifications interleave the emotions in *akam* poetry to a specific landscape. *Landscapes* in Sangam Age are called Tinai.

Description of Tinai

Kurinchi (Mountains and surrounding areas)

Mullai (forests and adjacent areas)

Marutham (agricultural fields and its surrounding areas)

Neithal (sea and the coastal areas)

Paalai (desert areas)

Puram poems do project classifications about Tinai but under a different context of activities rather than the landscapes Puram Tinai are as follows (identified with the activities in the areas)

Vetchi

Karanthai

Vanchi,

Kanchi,

Uzhignai,

Nochchi

Thumbai

Vaagai

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Populating the works after Rediscovery of the Sangam Literature

First Sangam Text, *Thirumurugattrupadai*, was brought out into print in the year 1851 by Arumuka Navalar.

In 1887, C.W.Thamotharampillai brought out the first of the Eight Anthologies (Ettuthokai) as *Kalithokai*.

U.V.Swaninatha Iyer brought out *Pattupattu* (Ten Idylls) in print form, in 1889.

More than 100 works on all were published by these scholars with scholarly commentaries.

- Tholkappiyam Nachinarkiniyar urai (1895)
- Tholkappiyam Senavaraiyar urai (1868)
- Manimekalai (1898)
- Silappadikaram (1889)
- Pattupattu (1889)
- Purananuru (1894)

Pattupattu english translation was brought out by J.V.Chelliah of Jaffna College in 1945.

Check Your Progress

1. When were the works from the Sangam literature rediscovered?
2. Where and by whom was the Second Sangam conducted?
3. What is the period between which the Sangam Period is calculated?

3.3 TAMIL POWERS OF THE SANGAM AGE: SOCIO-ECONOMICS AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

Sangam Age witnessed a memorable rule under the various Kingdoms of Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas.

Let us discuss each of these Tamil powers in this section.

3.3.1 Cheras

Chera Kingdom is said to have spread over the West Coast starting from Konkan on the Northern side to Kollam on the Southern side. Musiri and Thondi were the port towns of Chera Kingdom.

Cheran Kings were known for their territory expansions and sea borne warfares.

*Sangam Age and
Classical Literature*

1. Udayan Cheralathan: The First Chera King was ruling from Vanji as his capital. In Purananooru, there are references of his victories in many Sea Borne wars . Some historians treat this King as an imaginary reference.
2. Imayavaramban Neduncheralathan: He invaded Himalayas and defeated the Ariyans. He hoisted the Bow and Arrow flag of the Cheras on the Himalayas. He is titled as Imayavaramban due to this victory over the Aryans on the Himalayas. He defeated Romans and captured them. In the war between Chola King Verppakaradakkiya Peruverarkilli and Imayavaramban Neduncheralathan, both the kings were killed.
3. Palyanai Selkeluguttuvan: Imayavaramban's brother Palyanai Selkeluguttuvan succeeded as the King. He captured Kongu Country. His territory expanded from West coast to East Coast. He divided his Empire into various sub divisions and gave it to his elders to rule provincially.
4. Kalangai kanni Naarmudicheral: He won Pooli Country. He defeated his rival Nannan at Kadambil Peruvayil. Further he defeated Athiyamaan Nedumaan Anji, who was ruling Thagadur.
5. Kadarpiragottiya Cheran Chenguttuvan: The most popular Cheran King. His brother Ilango Adigal is the author of Silappathigaram.
 - a. He defeated the Arya Kings of North India when he went to the banks of Ganges
 - b. Senguttuvan defeated the Kongu Kings and brought them under his powers
 - c. Kadambas, who were having Sea Supremacy indulged in Sea Piracy of the Foreign Ships. Senguttuvan brought them under control by defeating them and establishing Sea Supremacy over the Kadambas. He got the title 'kadarpiragottiya' (one who sent back the Sea Pirates back to the seas)
 - d. War with Pazayan: Provincial Chieftain Pazayan was defeated at Mogur by Senguttuvan.
 - e. War with 9 Chola Kings: In order to Coronate Perungilli as Chola King, Senguttuvan waged a war with 9 rebel Chola Kings and defeated them at Nerivayil. Perungilli was coronated at Uraiur.
 - f. Senguttuvan invaded Himalayas and defeated Aryan Kings. Hearing the story of Kannagi, he decided to install a statue for Kannagi –the Goddess of Chastity. He defeated Kanaga Vijaya, Chieftains and made them carry the stones for Kannagi Statue at Kodunganur. This function was attended by King Kayavahu of Ceylon.

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Cheran Senguttuvan ruled for fifty-five years and is considered the most popular King. After his rule there were notable Kings who ruled the Chera country.

1. Adu Kotpattu cheralaathan
2. Selvakadungo Vaziyaathan
3. Peruncheral Irumborai
4. Ilancheral Irumborai

3.3.2 Chola Kings

Asoka's stone inscriptions mention about the Chola Kings of Sangam period. Chola Kingdom was spread from Venkata Hills on the Northern side to Vellaru on the Southern side; Kotta banks on the west to Bay of Bengal on the East.

Chola Country was also called as Cauvry Country. Their flag was decorated with Tiger insignia.

- A. Kings of the First Order: Chola Kings Sibi, Kanthan and Sembian are considered as the Kings of the First Order, who are portrayed as Courageous, Judicious and with unimaginable super human powers.

King Sibi is said to be an example for justice where he sacrificed flesh from his body as food to the Vulture to release the dove which fell as prey to the vulture.

King Kanthan is claimed to have created the township of Kaveripoompattinam.

King Sembian is mentioned in Silappadigaram for his courage and Military Supremacy. He was a pioneer to the later Cholas in Military Efficiency.

- B. Manu Neethi Cholan: He was ruling from Thiruvarur. His policy for justice is exemplary. When his son ran over a calf under his chariot, the mother cow pulled the string and rang the palace bell for justice. Manu immediately decided that his son has erred and he should do justice. He punished his son with death under the chariot wheel.

- C. Ilanchetchenni: He is called as Cherupazhi Erinda Ilanchetchenni. He is considered as the most humble Chola King. When Maurias tried to enter Tamil Nadu through Paazhi, by sending Sathiya Puthiran (Kosar), Chenni defeated him and captured the fortress of Paazhi.

- D. Karikala Cholan: Karikala Chola is considered as an Emperor of Chola dynasty. He is praised in the Sangam Literature including Pattinapalai, Porunartruppada. During his rule, he won Chera and Pandya Kings. He conquered Ceylon also, with the strength of his Navy. He constructed a dam across Cauvery River at Tiruchi which is claimed as the Engineering Wonder. It is called Kallanai (stone dam)

Apart from Wars, the Social and Economic status of Chola Kingdom developed well and Art and Culture grew well. Karikalan himself was an expert in 7 music systems.

- a. Sangam Period Chola history had a turning point with Karikala Cholan's Rule. He had to face Chera, Pandya and 11 Velir chieftains. In the war at Venni, Karikala Cholan defeated all his rivals and the Chera King Peruncheralathan who got injured on his back, killed himself by the practice of voluntary death by starvation facing the north.
- b. He defeated 9 Velir Chieftains again in a war at Vagaip perunthalai.
- c. He captured Nagapattinam by defeating Nagas. He also defeated Kurumbas. He annexed the entire Chera territories. Entire Tamil Nadu came under his rule.
- d. Karikala chola conquered Aryans and invaded the Himalayas. These are also mentioned in the literature.

The last of Chola kings in the Sangam Period was King Kochenganaan.

3.3.3 Pandya

Pandya Kingdom in the Sangam Period is popular for their dedication to patronise Tamil and Tamil Sangam. The Pandya Kingdom was on the South Tamil Nadu covering Madurai, Ramanathapuram, and Tirunelveli.

Table 3.3 Pandya Kings and their Main Achievements

No.	Name of the Pandya King	Main achievements
1.	Vadivambalam Ninra Pandiyan	He annexed territories in the northern side as the southern portion of his kingdom got submerged into the Indian Ocean. Tholkappiyam was published in his court.
2	Palyagasalai Mudukudumip peruvazuthi	Gifted Velvikudi village as donation to the Vedic Brahmins
3	Ariyappadai Kadantha Neduncheziyan	Ruled from Madurai. He won the Ariyans and hence the title. He gave his life when Silappadigaram Kannagi questioned his erratic judgement that Kovalan was found guilty.
4	Vetriver Cheziyan	Ruled from Korkai. He was contemporary to Cheran Senguttuvan.
5	Thalaiyananganathu cheruvenra NeduncheZiyan	He won the Thalaiyananganam War and hence the title. At the end of Sangam Period, he was considered as Noble King.
6	Kanappereyil kadantha uggiraperuvazudhi	The last of Pandyas in Sangam Period. He was a poet and during his time Aganaanooru was composed. The last sangam was patronized by him.

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3.3.4 Territorial Chieftains

There were Territorial chieftains in Tamil Nadu during the Sangam Period. They were either under the Three rulers Chera, Chola and Pandya or they were ruling outside the territories of these kingdoms. About 20 territorial chieftains were ruling in the Sangam Period.

Popular Chieftains:

1. Aai ruling Podigai hills falling south of Madurai
2. Pari ruled Purambu hills in the Pandya Kingdom. He donated his chariot to support the jasmine plant.
3. Kari was ruling in the Thondai Mandalam at Thirukkoviloor
4. Ori was ruling the Kolli Hills
5. Pegan ruled a hill region of Nallur. He is said to be a kind hearted King and he gave away his shawl to the peacock who was shivering in cold.
6. Nalli was ruling Thottimalai. He was coming under the Cheran Rule
7. Athiyaman Neduman Anji was ruling from Thagadur and Kudirai Malai. He patronized poetess Avvayaar, who has given a lot of Tamil literature and also a Religious belief on Lord Murugan.
8. Nannan ruled Palkunra kottam
9. Nalliyakodan was ruling the oyma nadu which is around Mahabalipuram.
10. Porunan was ruling the Western part of Podigai Hills near Madurai
11. Pandiyan Maaran: He belonged to the Pandya dynasty ruling the territories around the Podigai Hills.
12. Thondaiman Ilanthirayan was ruling from Kanchi during the sangam period. He belongs to the Chola dynasty

Apart from the Territorial Chieftains, Kadambas and Kogas were also ruling a few areas.

Conclusion: Sangam period Tamil powers were spread over the entire south starting from Venkata Hills on the North till Indian Ocean on the South; Arabian Sea on the West to Bay of Bengal on the East.

Check Your Progress

4. Name two port towns of Chera Kingdom.
5. Who was the most popular Cheran King?
6. Name the Chola emperor who is praised in the Sangam Literature including Pattinapalai, Porunrartruppada.

3.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The works from Sangam literature went into oblivion soon afterwards until they were rediscovered in the 19th century, by Tamil Scholars like U.V.Swaminatha Iyer, Arumuga Navalar, and C.W.Thamotharampillai.
2. Second Sangam was held at Kapadapuram. Initiated by Sage Agastya, it was later taken up by Tolkappiyar, a disciple of Agastya.
3. Generally, the Sangam Period or Sangam Span is calculated from Century 300 BCE to 300 AD.
4. Musiri and Thondi were the two port towns of Chera Kingdom.
5. Kadarpiragottiya Cheran Chenguttuvan was the most popular Cheran King.
6. Karikala Chola is considered as an Emperor of Chola dynasty. He is praised in the Sangam Literature including Pattinapalai, Porunartruppada.

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3.5 SUMMARY

- Sangam Age is considered a Unique time period in the Tamil Country wherein allround developments witnessing a civilization that created and gave unto itself with all types of activities that were relevant for a contented pioneering lifestyle filled with heroism, political activities of kingdoms, education, entertainment, leisure, Music, Art, Drama and Culture, economic activities with trade and commerce including Exports and imports, growth of path breaking literature covering the Emotions, Beliefs and Cults, Religious, Cultural Moral and Ethical values.
- Sangam is the Academy of Tamil Poets. The word has its origin from Sanskrit Language. It is believed that Sangam Literature provided the roadmap for the entire Tamil Literature, Life and Values for the future generations of Tamils. The Sangam Literature was the composition by Tamil Poets belonging to both the genders of men and women who were from various professional backgrounds.
- There were three Sangams referred to as Muchchangam. Patronized by the Pandya Kings.
- The Primary Sangam (Thalai Sangam) was held at Thenmadurai. The Middle Sangam (Idai Sangam) is popular by its literary work Tolkappiyam, authored by Tolkappiyar. Second Sangam was held at Kapadapuram. The Last Sangam (Kadai Sangam) The Last Sangam (Kadai Sangam) was organized at Madurai under Nakkeerar.

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- The Sangam Literature is referred to as the ancient Tamil Literature in the ancient South India known as Thamizagam or Tamilagam. *Akananooru*, *Kurunthogai*, *Nattrinai* are the classic collections which contained 2381 poems composed by 473 poets of whom 102 were remaining as anonymous.
- Sangam Literature fell into two categories such as: Akam(Inner) and Puram(outer). The classification of Akam and Puram though not strictly adhered to, the interpretation mattered, and the literature got distinguished under the appropriate category logically.
- Sangam Literature was compiled in the 10th century into two categories on the basis of chronological order. (1) Pathinenmelkanakku (2) Pathinenkilkanakku
- *Pathinenmelkanakku* (“the eighteen greater text series”) comprised of *Ettuthogai* and *Pattupaattu*. The rest were under Pathinenkilkanakku (“the eighteen lesser text series”)
- Epics that are prominent in Sanga Ilakkiyam: 1. *Silappathigaram*, and 2. *Manimekalai*.
- Many of the Brahmi inscriptions are considered the oldest usage of Tamil Language and their creations date back to 200 BCE. Unsupported by any other Literary Notes confirming the period, it is inferred that Sangam Age could have begun at 300 BCE. The majority of the literary experts and researchers nearly confirm the Age of Sangam as between 300 BCE and 300 AD.
- Sangam Age witnessed a memorable rule under the various Kingdoms of Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas.
- Chera Kingdom is said to have spread over the West Coast starting from Konkan on the Northern side to Kollam on the Southern side. Musiri and Thondi were the port towns of Chera Kingdom. Chera Kings were known for their territory expansions and sea borne warfares.
- Chola Kingdom was spread from Venkata Hills on the Northern side to Vellaru on the Southern side; Kotta banks on the west to Bay of Bengal on the East.
- Chola Country was also called as Cauvery Country. Their flag was decorated with Tiger insignia.
- Pandya Kingdom in the Sangam Period is popular for their dedication to patronize Tamil and Tamil Sangam. The Pandya Kingdom was on the South Tamil Nadu covering Madurai, Ramanathapuram, and Tirunelveli.
- There were territorial chieftains in Tamil Nadu during the Sangam Period. They were either under the Three rulers Chera, Chola and Pandya or they were ruling outside the territories of these kingdoms. About 20 territorial chieftains were ruling in the Sangam Period.

3.6 KEY WORDS

- **Sangam literature:** It refers to the ancient Tamil literature of the period in the history of south India spanning from c. 500 BCE to 300 CE.
- **Muchchangam:** It refers to the three Sangams.
- **Pathinenmelkanakku:** It refers to the ‘the eighteen greater text series’ comprised of *Ettuthogai* and *Pattupaattu*.
- **Akattiyam:** It was the earliest book on Tamil grammar. It is believed to have been compiled in the First Sangam, by Agathiar (Agastya), who is considered to be “father of the Tamil language”.
- **Tholkâppiyam:** It is a work on the grammar of the Tamil language and the earliest extant work of Tamil literature and linguistics.

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3.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on three Sangams.
2. How is the literature from the Sangam Age categorized?
3. Write a short note on Sangam period references.
4. Who were the popular Pandya rulers during the Sangam Age?
5. Briefly mention the Territorial chieftains during the Sangam Age.

Long-Answer Questions

1. What are the Eighteen Greater Texts (*Pathinenmelkanakku*) of the Sangam Age?
2. Explain the Sangam span.
3. Discuss the famous Chera rulers during the Sangam Age.
4. Describe the Chola Kings who were popular during the Sangam Age.

3.8 FURTHER READINGS

- Manoranjithamoni, C. 2015. *History of Tamil Nadu*. California: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
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UNIT 4 THE KALABHRAS

NOTES

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 The Age of Kalabhras
 - 4.2.1 Sources and Information on Kalabhras Rule
 - 4.2.2 Historians' Views on the Kalabhra's Origin
- 4.3 Spread of Jainism and Buddhism in Tamilagam
- 4.4 Legacy of the Kalabhras
- 4.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 4.6 Summary
- 4.7 Key Words
- 4.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 4.9 Further Readings

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Third century AD was the period of **Sangam Age** i.e., the rule of Chola, Pandya and Pallavas in South India. Tamilagam, which went through an illustrious history during the Sangam Age, entered a Dark Age under the Unknown Alien rulers, who were totally strange to the Tamil Culture and Heritage. These unknown alien rulers were the Kalabhras.

Majority of the historians have described Kalabhras as a hill tribe consisting mostly of migrant peasants in Tamil region of South India and they are referred to as Kurumbas who speak a dialect of Kannada which is also called as Kurumba Kannada.

In this unit, you will learn about the advent of the alien rulers named as the Kalabhras. Also, you will also learn about their geographical domain, their invasion strategy and the legacy of the Kalabhras. In addition to this, you will also learn about the spread of Jainism and Buddhism in Tamilagam.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the Age of Kalabhras in Tamil region of South India
- Explain the sources and information on Kalabhra dynasty
- Discuss the historian's views on the Kalabhra's origin
- Describe the spread of Jainism and Buddhism in Tamilagam

- Explain the legacy of the Kalabhras
- Analyse the growth of Tamil literature and culture in the age of Kalabhras

4.2 THE AGE OF KALABHRAS

The Third Century reign from 250CE to 690CE is also called as the Interregnum. Interpreted as the interval when the normal administration or government is suspended and the period falls in between two successive reigns or regimes. Though branded by a few as a 'Black Age', few other historians certainly uphold the rule as a stable rule and the zenith period for the spread of Jainism and the wider usage of Prakrit language in Tamil Nadu.

- It is a controversial rule and rulers. To understand clearly, we need to understand and formulate our theories on Kalabhras, as projected in the History by the historians.
- Whether Kalabhras are from the Royal families? While Dr. Rajamanikanaar does not accept them as from the Royal family, Krishna Sastri confirms that they are from Royal Family though there are varying inputs on their status, Kalabhras are considered to be from the Royal Background and that they had their own country. The historical sources do indicate that they belong to the Royal Families of Bordering Hill Kingdoms.

Kalabhras' Aggression: Kalabhras are depicted in the history as the invaders from Karnataka, who ruled entire Tamil Nadu, with Kaveripattinam as their capital. Kalabhras displaced the ancient Chola, Pandya and Chera dynasties, who by virtue of lack of strong successors had to submit to the force. Traditional powers in Tamil Nadu surrendered to the Kalabhra Authority. Kalabhras subdued powers of Pandyas, Cholas and Cheras – bought them under a common authority. Their flag incorporated all the three insignia of Chera, Chola and Pandya.

The Geographical Domain: Kalabhras ruled the geographical landscape from Venkata hills (Tirupathi Hills) spread over to Kanyakumari. At the zenith of their power, Kalabhras rule extended to Lanka also. Kaveripattinam grew into a centre of maritime, political and social activities.

The Duration of The Rule of Kalabhra Dynasty: The reign of Kalabhras is claimed to be between 3rd and the 7th century C.E. The Kalabhras were at their peak for nearly 75 years in the 7th century CE. This resulted the Kalabhra Dynasty. Though historians do express their difference of opinions in the Kalabhra rule and the duration, it is widely accepted by a majority of the historians that the rule lasted for 3 centuries. Except a few sources, there are no historical evidences of sources establishing the factual positions of the history.

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The Invasion Strategy

The capture of Thondai Nadu (Thondai Mandalam)

Driven out of their own native country by the Kadamba King, the earliest Kalabhra Pulli made an exit from Northern Venkata Hills towards Thondai Nadu, where Pallavas were the rulers. During the two invasions, Kalabhras could not succeed due to the strong Pallava King Pappadevan and also during the Rule of Pallava King Sivaskanda Varman. Due to the political uncertainties in the Thondai Nadu, Kalabhras captured Thondai Nadu in the 3rd and 4th century CE. This king is mentioned as Kuutruva Nayanaar in Thiruthonda thogai, as published in Periya Puranam.

Annexing Chola Nadu

After infiltrating into the Thondai Nadu, Kalabhras moved towards the South and invaded Chola Nadu. Chola Nadu at that juncture did not have a stable rule and strong rulers. Succession disputes and internal disturbance in the society also contributed to Kalabhras' Success. It is also claimed that they could provide a stable Rule and also could ensure some public good.

4.2.1 Sources and Information on Kalabhras Rule

There are no artefacts or monuments or inscriptions that are found to have been left by the Kalabhras dynasty. Scattered informations are available in certain Buddhist and Jain Literature which are the sole sources of information on Kalabhra rule.

By design, they did not leave any artefacts or monuments as in the case of the other dynasties. According to these literature, Achyuta Vikranta of Kalavr Kula (Kalabras ruler) kept many Chola, Chera, Pandyas kings imprisoned. These prisoner kings were ordered to compose Navalar Charithai in praise of Kalabras.

Text from early Cholas mentions about King Achyuta Vikranta of the Kalabharakula, who ruled the Chola country from Kaveripumpattinam. He followed Buddhism.

The Karnataka inscription refers to Kali Deva and Velvikudi grant refers to Kali arasan (meaning wicked king of Kalabras)

A. Literary Sources

1. According to Poygai Alvar, the Vengadam hill was the habitat of elephants, in which the "Kuravars" or "Kurbas" lived. He observes that, the Tamil term Kuravar used by the early Alvars is corruption of "Kuraba", who were residents of this area and also of Kurnool, Mysore, Salem, Coimbatore and the Nilgiris. He mentions the names of Kurubalakota, Kurubalpatti, Kuruba Nagalapuram, Kurumba Palayam, Kurumbapatti, Kurumbharhalli etc. in various areas. He says Kurabas or Kuravar were a verile people,

who were in possession of Tirupathi Hills and surrounding area before Pallavas conquered it. Kalabhras are claimed to be from Karnataka.

2. Tamil Navalar Charithai poems number 154-157 (four) mention about Kalabhras. The note further informs that Achutha Kalappaalan, Kalabhra King, who ruled from Nandi Hills was ruling the entire Tamil Nadu from the Chola Country. This note further confirms that Chera Chola and Pandya kings were subordinated to Kalabhras under a single rule.
3. Kootruva Nayanar mentioned in the Periya Puranam belongs to Kalabhras Tribe. Being one of the 63 Nayanmars he is mentioned as Kalappaalan by Nambiyandaar Nambi.
4. In the 5th Century Buddadattar, a Tamil Buddhist wrote a book called Vinayavinichayam in the language of Pali. Achyuta Vikrantan, Kalabhra King, who ruled from the Chola Kingdom, is praised in this book as Kalabagulanandan. Aganaanuuru and kalladam literature too mentions about Kalabhras.
5. Buddadatar composed another Literary Work called Abidammavataram, when Vikranthan (kalabhra) was very popular. \

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B. Grants and Inscriptions

1. Velvikkudi grants (of Pandya King Parandaga Nedunjadayan) mention and confirm the defeat of Kalabhras at the hands of Kadungon who is also called as Maa Kadungon.
2. Kuram grants (of King Parameswarar I) have confirmed the victory of Kalabhras by the Pallavas. Simha Vishnu retrieved Chola Country from the Kalabhras. Besides Chalukya King Vikramadithyan II
3. In the Vaikunda Perumal Inscriptions at Kanchi, it is shown that one Mutharaiyan attended the Coronation Ceremony of Pallava King Nandi Varma Pallava. Some historians believe that Muttaraiyar (Mudirajas) are the descendants of Kalabhras, who lived in the uplands of Karnataka (Hampi Region), and Tirupati (Vengadam) Hills. The areas of Hampi and Tirupati hills were part of Dandakaaranya in Deccan India.
4. Senthalaithun Inscriptions describe one Big Bidugu Mutharaiyan Kalvar Kalvan is from the Kalabhras.
5. Thirupugalur Inscriptions mention one Nerkunram Kilar, a Kalabhra King
6. Kotra Mangalam and Vinayadithya's Hariharar grants refer to Kalabhras
7. Kalabhras → karabhras → kurabhras = kurabaskurabars ↔ kuravarskurubas ↔ kurugas ↔ kurubas
8. Kurubas are a major community in Karnataka, who are also present in large number in western districts of Tamil Nadu. The community speaks Kannada dialect.

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4.2.2 Historians' Views on the Kalabhra's origin

- T.A. Gopinatharao opines that based on the Kanchi inscriptions, it can be inferred that Kalabhras are Mutharaiyar. The title *Kalvar* is interpreted in the Prakrit language as Kalabhras. Hence Kalabhras are Mutharaiyars.
- M. Ragava Iyengar differs from the opinion of T.A. Gopinatharao and argues that Kalabhras are Peasant Kalappalars belonging to Tamil Nadu and not outsiders. He cites an evidence from a literature Yapperum kalagam wherein the Kalabhra King Achuthavikkandan is said to have supported and sponsored the Brahmins.
- S. Krishnasami Iyengar firmly defends that the Kalabhra King cited in Yapperum Kalagam is originating from Nandi Hills, north of Tamilagam, in the Karnataka area. Hence, they are not Tamils. He takes examples from Sangam Literature to take a step ahead to associate Kalabhras to the Kallar Tribes lived in Venkata Hills (Tirupathi) and their Chief Pully was a Kalabhra. Due to the suppression by Andhra Kings and also the strong Pallava Kings, this tribe entered into Thondai Nadu and later established their Rule in the Chola Kingdom. Later they moved and acquired the Pandya Kingdom. He further claims that in the later part of the history, Mutharaiyars lived in Tanjore and Kodumbalur are the descendent of Kalabhras.
- S. Krishnasami Iyengar's arguments and conclusions are widely accepted by the other contemporary Historians including N. Subramanian.
- K.R. Venkatarama Iyer's opinion differs when he relates Kalabhras to the early 5th Century CE living near to Bengaluru and Chittor. Living nearer to Sravanabelagola in the beginning, Kalabhras were driven away by the Kadamba Kings, they later moved eastwards and entered into the Tamil Nadu at the close of 5th Century CE. The grants refer to them as Kaliyarasar and Kalikulam, it is related to Kalabhras. The point of entry into Tamil Nadu at the end of 5th Century CE is not acceptable to N. Subramaniam as his description of Kalabhras existed prior to 3rd Century CE.
- Venkayya cites Murthinayanaar Purana and Tiruvalayadal Purana information's on the Kalabhra's capturing Tamil Nadu. Besides, in the War of Thalaiyalanganam, one of the opponents to King Nedunchezian is considered to be Erumaiyuran, who is a Kalabhra.
- P.T. Sreenivasa Iyengar reiterates that Kalabhras are to be considered Tamil Small Rulers of Tamil Nadu as Chera Chola and Pandya Kings have praised them with Tamil verses.
- Maraimalai Adigal confirms that Kalabhras belong to Karnataka State. This opinion he holds due to the recent sources of historic evidences confirm the theory. The sources relating to Kalabhras are available more in Karnataka.

In one of the inscriptions at Hoskote Stone Monument, a mention of Kalavara Nadu is seen. There is also a mention in the inscriptions that Kadamba King Kagustan is a declared enemy of the Kalebora Tribals. In Asoka's Inscriptions mention on a tribe Kalapuriar, point to the Kalabhras, as per the theory of Maraimalai Adigal.

- T.V. Sadasiva Pandarathar takes an analytical view that Kalappalar and Kalabhras are two different tribes. While Kalappalar means peasants from Kalappaz near Thanjore. According to him, the mention in Periya Puranam on Kuutruvanayanaar leads to Kalappalar and not Kalabhras. However, the recent grants available near Dalavaipuram reveal that Kaliyaran of Chinnamanur Grant and Kalappalar of Dalavaipuram Grant are one and the same.
- T.V. Mahalingam opines that Oliyars belonging to Oli Nadu situated in the Southeast side of Tamil Nadu, can be considered as Kalabhras taking the lead from the Velvikudi grants.
- This argument is not fully acceptable to N. Subramaniam and he denies that Venkata Hills Kalabhras and Oli Nadu Oliyars do not have any connection, whatsoever.

Other Arguments

1. Dr. Panneerselvam subscribes to the view that Kalabhras are rulers from Venkata Hills and further agrees to the concept that Kalabhras and Mutharaiyars are the same.
2. K.P. Aravanan stresses that Kalabhras are Tamils.
3. Natana Kasinathan views that Kalabhras belong to Velir tribe from South of Mysore and Northern border of Tamil Nadu.
4. Apart from all these arguments, it is also concluded that Kalabhras are from Kolar District, Karnataka and they were the followers of Jainism.

It is also observed conclusively that the Kalabhras entered Tamil Nadu through Thondai Nadu and later on sneaked into the Chola Kingdom and annexed Pandyan Kingdom leading to their reign in the entire Tamil Nadu.

Check Your Progress

1. Who were Kalabhras and how they expanded their dynasty in Tamil Nadu?
2. What helped Kalabhras to invade Chola Nadu?
3. What is the view of Dr. Panneerselvam on Kalabhras?

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4.3 SPREAD OF JAINISM AND BUDDHISM IN TAMILAGAM

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The Kalabhras were both Jains and Buddhists in their religious practices. Early Kalabhras were Buddhist and later Kalabhras were Jains who made Kanchi centre of Buddhism and Madurai centre of Jainism. Buddhist viharas and Jain monasteries were built in large numbers.

The spread of Jainism and Buddhism, into Tamil Nadu was more spelt, after the invasion of Kalabhras from Karnataka which has its origin and long history there.

Historians portray Kalabhras rule as a dark period in the history of Thamizhagam this could be due to the fact that Jain culture was a challenge to the Brahmin culture during Kalabra era. Buddhism also grew in Kalabhras era from Kanchi, thereby suppressing the Brahmins and the spread of Brahminism. Besides, Brahmins were reduced in their positions and possessions. Grants were not continued as before. During Chera, Chola and Pandya reign, in the age of Brahmanism, where kings used to grant vast lands to the Brahmins of the temples. The Brahmins became rich and often mistreated the people belonging to lower caste. This was the main reason for the Kalabhras to revolt and attack the Brahmins, dethrone the king and establish their own rule. When they came into power they executed Brahmins on large scale, and put ban on custom of granting lands to the Brahmins, collection of taxes from villages to run the temple affairs. The Kalabhras were called 'Evil people' by the citizens of Chola, Pandyan kingdoms because of their barbaric attitude towards Brahmins and nobles of Royal family.

4.4 LEGACY OF THE KALABHRAS

- Best of the legacy left by Kalabhras could be the streams of Jainism and Buddhism in the Religious framework.
- Kalabhras have also established the stability in their Rule and dispel the instability in the governance and the internal chaos and intolerance.
- The Administrative System of Kalabhras also displays a sense of consistency and also a definite system of governance.
- Kalabhras' pattern of administration was identical and followed in the same way throughout the Kalabhras period.
- During their administration there was no much development in society, but few steps of development were seen under them in few fields of society, including Literature and Administration methods.

- For administration purpose the country was divided into large provinces, namely Naadu, Mangalams/Kurams, Urs.
- Literature growth is also attributed to them as the immortal great works in Tamil were written in Kalabhras Eera.
- The three Kings of Chera, Chola and Pandya were brought under a single umbrella of command and a common flag was adopted keeping the three insignias together.
- Prakrit, a northern language was widely used in Tamil Nadu and benefitted in general.
- Trade and Commerce, Maritime activities were also thriving during Kalabhras reign.
- Port City was filled with activities and development.

Literature: Jaina Sangam founded by Kalabhras encouraged the growth of Tamil literature. The Immortal great works of Kalabhras age include: Kural, Silapadigaram and Manimegalai.

The authors of these classics were themselves Jains and Buddhists.

Downfall of Kalabhras - The kalabhras kept on invading territories belonging to the Cheras Cholas, Pallavas. To put an end to this anarchy, the three kingdoms of South Tamil region came together. King Simhavishnu son of Simhavarman 2 the Pallava king defeated the Kalabhras. Similarly, Pandyan king Kadungon ended the Kalabhra rule in a coalition with Pallava Simhavishnu. He is credited for the triumph of Brahmanism over the evil Kalabhras. The Chola Pallava and Pandyas regained their powers in South India. Kalabhras were displaced in the 7th Century CE by the revival of Pandya and Pallava Powers in Tamil Nadu.

Check Your Progress

4. Why historians portray Kalabhras rule as a dark period in the history of Thamizhagam?
5. Why Kalabhras were called 'evil people' by the citizens of Chola, Pandyan kingdoms?
6. What is the best legacy left by the Kalabhras?
7. Write a note on administrative pattern of Kalabhras.

4.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. As described in the history, Kalabhras are the invaders from Karnataka, who ruled entire Tamil Nadu, with Kaveripattinam, a town located in the

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Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu, as their capital. Kalabhara subdued the powers of Pandyas, Cholas and Cheras dynasties and brought them under a common authority.

2. After infiltrating into the Thondai Nadu, Kalabhras moved towards the southern region of Tamil Nadu and occupied Chola Nadu. As Chola Nadu did not have a stable rule and strong rulers at that point of time and these succession disputes and internal disturbance in the society helped Kalabhras' to invade Chola Nadu.
3. Dr. Panneerselvam subscribes to the view that Kalabhras are rulers from Venkata Hills and further agrees to the concept that Kalabhras and Mutharaiyars are the same.
4. Historians portray Kalabhras rule as a dark period in the history of Thamizhagam this could be due to the fact that Jain culture was a challenge to the Brahmin culture during Kalabra era. Buddhism also grew in Kalabhras era from Kanchi, thereby suppressing the Brahmins and the spread of Brahminism.
5. The citizens of Chola, Pandyan kingdoms call the Kalabhras as the 'evil people' because of their cruel attitude towards Brahmins and nobles of Royal family.
6. The streams of Jainism and Buddhism in the religious framework could be the best legacy left by Kalabhras.
7. The administrative system of Kalabhras was identical and followed in the same way throughout the Kalabhras period. Their administrative pattern also displays a sense of consistency and also a definite system of governance.

4.6 SUMMARY

- Third century AD was the period of **Sangam Age** i.e., the rule of Chola, Pandya, Pallavas in South India. Tamilagam.
- Majority of the historians have described Kalabhras as a hill tribe consisting mostly of migrant peasants in Tamil region of South India and they are referred to as Kurumbas who speak a dialect of Kannada which is also called as Kurumba Kannada.
- Kalabhras are depicted in the history as the invaders from Karnataka, who ruled entire Tamil Nadu, with Kaveripattinam as their capital. Kalabhras displaced the ancient Chola, Pandya and Chera dynasties, who by virtue of lack of strong successors had to submit to the force.
- Kalabhras ruled the geographical landscape from Venkata hills (Tirupathi Hills) spread over to Kanyakumari.

- The reign of Kalabhra's is claimed to be between 3rd and the 7th century C.E. The Kalabhra's were at their peak for nearly 75 years in the 7th century CE. This resulted the Kalabhra Dynasty.
- Owing to the political uncertainties in the Thondai Nadu, Kalabhras captured Thondai Nadu in the 3rd and 4th century CE.
- After infiltrating into the Thondai Nadu, Kalabhras moved towards the South and invaded Chola Nadu. Chola Nadu at that juncture did not have a stable rule and strong rulers.
- According to the literature, Achyuta Vikranta of Kalavr Kula (Kalabras ruler) kept many Chola, Chera, Pandyas kings imprisoned. These prisoner kings were ordered to compose Navalar Charithai in praise of Kalabras.
- According to Poygai Alvar, the Vengadam hill was the habitat of elephants, in which the "Kuravars" or "Kurbas" lived. He observes that, the Tamil term Kuravar used by the early Alvars is corruption of "Kuraba", who were residents of this area and also of Kurnool, Mysore, Salem, Coimbatore and the Nilgiris.
- Kuram grants (of King Parameswarar I) have confirmed the victory of Kalabhras by the Pallavas.
- Thirupugalur Inscriptions mention one Nerakunram Kilar, a Kalabhra King
- Kurubas are a major community in Karnataka, who are also present in large number in western districts of Tamil Nadu. The community speaks Kannada dialect.
- T.A. Gopinatharao opines that based on the Kanchi inscriptions, it can be inferred that Kalabhras are Mutharaiyar. The title *Kalvar* is interpreted in the Prakrit language as Kalabhras. Hence Kalabhras are Mutharaiyars.
- Maraimalai Adigal confirms that Kalabhras belong to Karnataka State. This opinion he holds due to the recent sources of historic evidences confirm the theory.
- Dr. Panneerselvam subscribes to the view that Kalabhras are rulers from Venkata Hills and further agrees to the concept that Kalabhras and Mutharaiyars are the same.
- Apart from many arguments, it is also concluded that Kalabhras are from Kolar District, Karnataka and they were the followers of Jainism.
- The Kalabhras were both Jains and Buddhists in their religious practices. Early Kalabras were Buddhist and later Kalabras were Jains who made Kanchi centre of Buddhism and Madurai centre of Jainism.

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- Historians portray Kalabhras rule as a dark period in the history of Thamizhagam this could be due to the fact that Jain culture was a challenge to the Brahmin culture during Kalabra era.
- Kalabhras have also established the stability in their Rule and dispel the instability in the governance and the internal chaos and intolerance.
- For administration purpose the country was divided into large provinces, namely Naadu, Mangalams/Kurams, Urs.
- Literature growth is also attributed to them as the immortal great works in Tamil were written in Kalabhras Eera.
- Trade and Commerce, Maritime activities were also thriving during Kalabhras reign.

4.7 KEY WORDS

- **Interregnum:** It refers to a period when normal government is suspended, especially between successive reigns or regimes.
- **Infiltrate:** It refers to enter or gain access to a place surreptitiously, especially in order to acquire.
- **Insignias:** It refers to a distinguishing badge or emblem of military rank, office, or membership of an organization.
- **Anarchy:** It refers to the state of absence of government and absolute freedom of the individual.

4.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Briefly mention the period of Sangam Age.
2. Write a short note on geographical domain of the Kalabhras.
3. Mention a few literary sources of Kalabhras rule.
4. What was the position of Brahmins in the Age of Kalabhras?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Why is the period of the Kalabhra dynasty called the 'Black Age' in Tamil history?
2. Discuss a few historians' views on the Kalabhara's origin.

3. Describe the administration system of the Kalabharas.
4. Explain the growth of literature during the Kalabharas period.

The Kalabhras

4.9 FURTHER READINGS

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BLOCK - II
AGE OF EMPIRES

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UNIT 5 THE PALLAVAS-1

Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 The Origin and Sources of Pallavas
 - 5.2.1 Sources of Information
- 5.3 Early Pallavas
- 5.4 The Great Pallavas
- 5.5 Pallava-Chalukya Conflict
- 5.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 5.7 Summary
- 5.8 Key Words
- 5.9 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 5.10 Further Readings

5.0 INTRODUCTION

There are different opinions regarding the origin of the Pallavas. The famous historian and author Dr V.A. Smith considers them to be Parthians while some other scholars accept them as Kadama or Pahlava. Historians, however, are anonymous in believing that they were Kshatriya by caste. The first known king of the Pallava dynasty was Simhavarman. It is evident from an inscription, written in Prakrit, that it was Simhavarman who founded the Pallava dynasty. Simhavarman was succeeded by Skandhavarman who was perhaps his son. Initially, he was a yuvaraja (prince) and later took the title of Maharajadhiraja. He made Kanchi his capital and performed horse sacrifices, Agnistoma and Vajapeya Yajnas. His kingdom extended up to the River Krishna in the north and the Arabian Sea in the west.

In this unit, you will be learn about the origin of the Pallavas, great Pallava rulers and the Pallava-Chalukya conflict. The principal interest in the political history of peninsular India from the sixth to the eighth century centres around the long struggle for supremacy between the Pallavas and the Chalukyas.

5.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the background and origin of the Pallavas
- Discuss the history of the popular Pallavas
- Understand the reason behind the Pallavas-Chalukya conflict

5.2 THE ORIGIN AND SOURCES OF PALLAVAS

Tamil Nadu was under Kalabhras' Rule between the 3rd Century and the 6th century, in an interregnum period. Though there are a few positive features observed in the Kalabhras' rule by a few historians, by and large the rating of the rule is said to be a Dark Age in the history of Southern Peninsula. During this period, Tamil Nadu lost its lustre and its values and its dynamism that it enjoyed during the Sangam Age of Chera Chola and Pandya Dynasty rulers. Besides, the Rulers' origin determined as of Karnataka, outside Tamil Nadu, different in Culture and Values as well as beliefs, brought an ill-will into Tamil Nadu. By spreading Jainism and Buddhism into Tamil Nadu and by introducing Prakrit language widely, the Kalabhra Rule is said to have destabilized the lustre of the Tamils and the vibes of the Sangam Age. Besides, the Brahmins were persecuted and the Religious sentiments were damaged irreparably. It is true that Kalabhras had to flee from their own Country in Karnataka into Tamil Nadu due to the pressure from the Andhra Rulers and also the Kadamba Rulers. The timing was apt with the chaos and lawlessness prevailing in Tamil Nadu at that time, due to the incompetent Successors to the Chola, Pandya and Chera Dynasty Kings. A combined effort was being made by Pallava, Chera, Chola and Pandya kings to regain their states from the Kalabhras for a couple of centuries. Kalabhras were defeated in the 7th Century by the Kanchi Pallavas at the North and by the Madurai Pandyas at the South

Pallava's Rule was spread over from Krishna River bed in the Northern side and extended upto Palar bed in South. The area was called as Thondai Mandalam.

Pallavas provided a Worthy and Stable Tenure upto 900AD. The origin of Pallavas is under conflicting opinions of the Historians. However, the evidences arising out of the various sources give us the leads to infer the sequences of the History of Pallava Rule.

5.2.1 Sources of Information

Sources

Varied opinions on the Origins and moorings of the Pallavas lead to different conclusions amidst the Historians and the Researchers. However, unlike the age of Kalabhras, Pallavas left behind a lot many artefacts and monuments alongwith inscriptions and copper plate grants, recording the Pallava Age highlights and various other information.

To Know more about the Pallavas, there are sources such as Literatures, artefacts, stone carvings and Inscriptions apart from the Foreigners' Diary notings.

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Sl. No	Source origin	Source Definition	Source Identity
1	Inland	Literary	Tamil/Sanskrit/Prakrit
2	Inland	Archaeological	Stone Inscriptions/Copper plate grants/inscriptions/Memorials-Monuments
3	Foreign	Literature	Mahavamsam/Deepa Vamsam from Lanka
4	Foreign	Literature	Siyuki (Hiuen Tsang-the Chinese traveler)

Evidences from the Literature: There are many literatures in Tamil and Sanskrit that share the notings on Pallavas and their Rule.

- a. Devaram: Devaram is a Religious Composition. Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar have composed several hymns in praise of the God. Devaram is a compilation of the hymns composed by the three shaivites.
 - i. Through this Book, we come to know about the presence of Jainism in the Pallava Country. Pallava King Mahendravarman I was a Jain and he got converted into a shivite with the association of Appar who was a staunch devotee of Lord Shiva.
 - ii. Sundarar, who belongs to the 9th Century in his Thiruthonda Thogai, has made a mention about the Pallava King Nandivarman III.
- b. Periya Puranam: This is a Shaiva Literature written by Sekkizhaar. He makes a mention about the Nayanmars who happened to be the Pallava Kings and few others occupying positions such as the head of Pallava army.

For example,

 - i. Iyadigal Kadavar Kon was earlier known as Pallava King Simhavarman III
 - ii. Similarly Kalarchingan a Nayanmar mentioned was earlier known as Pallava King Nandivarman III.
 - iii. Siruthonda Nayanar was earlier known as Paranjothiyar, Head of the Pallava Army.
 - iv. Periya Puranam also carries notes on various Small Kingdoms and their Rulers, who were under the Pallava Sovereignty.
- c. Nalayira Divya Prabandam: This is a Vaishnavite Religious Book written by Thirumangai Alwar, a Vaishnavite. She belongs to the age of Pallava King Nandivarman II. Notes are found in this literature, on the Nenmeni War where Nandivarman II participated directly. Nalayira Divya Prabandam also describes on the Pallava Warfare, their Army, their war weapons and also the Musical Instruments of that age.

- d. Logavipaaga: This is a literature belonging to the Jain faith. The author of this literature is Sarvanthi, who belongs to the age when Pallava King \Simhavarman commenced his rule.
- e. Nandi kalambagam: A literature portraying the valour and war skills of the Pallava King Nandivarman III. A vivid mention on the Thollar War is found in this literature. Apart from this, the title of praise 'Thollaru erintha Nandi Poththaraiyan' is found in this literature. The literature also makes a mention on the Capital, the spread of the Kingdom and also the Poets who were honoured in Pallava's Court and who were also patronized by the Pallava Kings.
- f. Bharatha Venba is another poetic literature in Tamil, wherein the Thollaru War details, participated by King Nandivarman III are discussed.
- g. Sanskrit Literature as a source: Pallava King Mahendra Varman I has authored Sanskrit Dramas and Texts. He lived during the time period of Appar Adigal. His drama literature named Mattavilaasa prahasanaa brings information on the Jains, Buddhists, Kabalikal, Pasupadar who lived at Kanchi. Bhagavat Ajikiyam is another literature authored by the King. Another literature avanthi Sundara Kathachaara informs on the Commemoration of the Poet Baravi by the Pallava King Simha Vishnu at Kanchi.
- II. Stone Inscriptions artefacts and Grants also provide sufficient information on the Pallavas Rule. Historian R.Gopalan segregated the Inscriptions into three language groups:
- a. Prakrit
 - b. Sanskrit
 - c. Sanskrit and Tamil

Majority of these sources inform the details on the Pallava Kings' Gifts, Prizes, Grants to the Charitable & Religious purposes. Donations to the Temples are also mentioned in these inscriptions.

- (i) Manchikallu stone Inscriptions belong to the age of Simha Varman of the 4th Century
- (ii) Prince Sivaskandavarman's Moida Volu Donation Grants were presented at the 10th Year of rule of Simha Varman.
- (iii) When Sivaskandavarman became the King, at his 8th year of Rule, he released the Gragada Kalli grant sheets in copper metal.
- (iv) Rani Charu Devi's Copper plate grants which are in the British Archaeological exhibition, is inscribed in Prakrit language. In this inscription, Vijayaskandavarman, Vijaya Buddhavarman, and Buddankuran find a mention.

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- (v) Apart from these Prakrit language Copper plate grants, King Samudragupta had released many a Stone inscriptions at Allahabad, carrying information on Pallavas. In this, Vishnugopar's name is mentioned. These stone inscriptions speak about the names of the Pallava Kings and their heroic actions.

Check Your Progress

1. Why was the Kalabhra rule considered as a dark age by some historians?
2. What is Devaram?

5.3 EARLY PALLAVAS

Let us understand the origin of Early Pallavas: The researchers are holding different opinions on the Pallavas' Origin; but there is no consensus in determining the Correct origin of the Pallavas.

Opinion 1: Pallavas are Pahlavar of Persia and this could be inferred from the factual evidences as pointed out in the Purana Sources. The Prakrit has similarity with Persian Holy Scripts. Idea that 'Pallavas could be from Central Asia' is asserted by various historians including Levisrice, Luvedooprai, Venkaiah and Venkitasubbaiah. Professor.Venkaiah relates the Copper Plate Grants of the Pallavas and the nature of Persian Language strongly attract towards the conclusion that Pallavas have Persian roots.

Opinion 2: Pallavas are either from Central India or North India as they were living outside Tamil Nadu for over a Century. It is presumed that Pallavas could have originated from Central India in the Vakkadaga Sect According to Dr.Jaiswal. Similarity of Bharadwaja Gothra between Pallavas and Vakkadaga Sect, conclude that both were Brahmins. It is also presumed that after the fall of Sadavagana Empire, both these sects remained in different parts of India.

Opinion 3: "Pallavas belong to Andhra" is the view subscribed by K.A.Neelakanda Sasstri, R.Gopalan, C.Meenakshi, and Mahalingam.Crisis in East Andhra made Pallavas to migrate to Thondai Mandalam where they turned a new leaf with a new political philosophy and New Life.

Opinion 4: Pallavas are Naga Tribes:Prof.M.Sreenivasa Iyengar considers Pallavas to belong to Naga Tribes. He further adds that they are from Mani Pallava Island of Naga Country. This opinion is supported by Lanka Professor Rajanayagam.

Opinion 5: Pallavas are Pulinthar, according to Prof.R.SathiyaNadha iyer. In Asoka's Inscriptions there are mentions about Pulinthar. It is also claimed that Pallavar title got to be used as Kurumbar.

Opinion 6: Professors K.Rajaiyan and N.Subramanian clearly mention that Pallavas are not outsiders but Tamils belonging to the Thondai Mandalam. Thondaiman Ilanthiraiyan is the offspring of Chola King Killivalavan and his wife Naga Princess Peelivalai. It is an established fact that Ilanthiraiyan became the First King of Kanchi Pallavas.

Conclusion: Based on the above mentioned opinions held by the Historians and researchers It is established and concluded that Pallavas are the descendants of the Chera, Chola Pandya and naga dynasties. It is also a historical fact that these successors branched out into Andhra, Naga and South East Asian Countries like Indonesia.

Check Your Progress

3. How many opinions were prevalent surrounding the Pallavas' origins?
4. What opinion does K.A.Neelakanda Sasstri, R.Gopalan, C.Meenakshi, and Mahalingam subscribe to, when it comes to Pallavas' origins?

5.4 THE GREAT PALLAVAS

Rule of the Great Pallavas of the later years started with King Simha Vishnu. Pallava History and its Rulers' names are concisely tracked after Simha Vishnu, who conquered the Kalabhras and captured Kanchi. He was considered the pillar of Pallava dynasty with his establishing of the Pallava Empire after defeating the Chera, Chola and Pandya Kings. His rule spread over from Kanchi to Kumbakonam. Simha Vishnu is also said to be staunch Vaishnavite.

1. The Pallava Rule was centric with all round development in Art and Culture and building of temples especially of Cave Temples and One Stone Temples and also sculptures of unique beauty and perfection.
2. The Rule gave a lot of focus on the literature, Drama, Music and also the Paintings.
3. Languages such as Tamil, Sanskrit, Prakrit were side by side developed and synergized approach was found in the development of grammar. Dandi's sanskrit grammar was the basis for Dandi Alangaram in Tamil.
4. Religions such as Shivism, Vaishnavism, Buddhism, were all thriving, while the Jainism was eliminated or discouraged.
5. The Pallavas' Prime Time of the most of the Pallavan Regimes was occupied with the Revengful wars with the Chalukyas and on a few occasions with the Gangas, Pandyas and Cholas too.
6. Not all the Pallava Kings made a sizeable and memorable contributions and the imprint of their rule. However, the details of those Kings who have a

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larger contribution to the Pallavan Legacy and Pride, are discussed elaborately and the rest of the Kings are mentioned with their smaller achievements whatsoever.

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Mahendravarman I : (600-630 A.D) Simha Vishnu's son Mahendravarman I succeeded him as the Pallava King. Apart from the titles that he decorated himself with, the achievements and also the allround expertise of Mahendravarman I is noteworthy.

Pallava Chalukya War during Mahendravarman I: It is learnt through the Aikol inscriptions that Chalukya King Pulikhesin II, ruled from Vaatapi, defeated Mahendravarman I and as a result, Mahendravarman I went into an exile inside a fortress. On the other hand, Kasakkudi Copper inscriptions have recorded that the Chalukya Army was eliminated by Mahendravarman's forces at Pullalur when the Victorious Chalukya Army was on their way back from Cauvery.

As a Powerful and Effective King, Mahendravarman I had the titles on him:

- (i) Shatru Mallan
- (ii) Maththa Vilaasan
- (iii) Gunabaran
- (iv) Vichithra Chittan
- (v) Kalaka Priya

King Mahendravarman I was providing an Effective Rule wherein the developments under various portfolios were far reaching and vibrant:

- (a) Religion
- (b) Arts
- (c) Literature
- (d) Warfare
- (e) Administration

Religion: Mahendravarman I was following the Jainism initially got converted as a Shaivite later. In his time, he built many Temples for Lord Shiva and he also built a Vishnu Temple at Mahendravadi, named as Mahendra Vishnugraham. With the changed philosophy, he developed a hatred towards Jainism and it is said that he also eliminated the Jain establishments and built Shaivite Temples.

Besides the performance of Vedic sacrifices, the worship of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, especially of the last two, was becoming popular. From the seventh century onwards, the Alvar saints, who were great devotees of Vishnu, popularized the worship of this god. The Nayanars rendered a similar service to the cult of Shiva. From the seventh century onwards, the cult of bhakti began to dominate the religious life of south Indians, and the Alvars and Nayanars played a great part in propagating it.

Architecture: That was a turning point in the Architectural history of Tamilnadu during the period of Mahendravarman I. Temples were built with Stones and caves instead of bricks and metals. These stone temples and cave temples are still recollected as a Pallava style of architecture.

These cave temples built by Mahendravarman has a distinct identity of being created in the midst of the hills drilling the caves in the middle of the hills. These temples were decorated with the carvings on the walls and statues depicting the purana stories. Mahendra's title names were also inscribed on the walls of these Cave Temples.

List of cave temples and their deities:

Sl. No.	Location	Deity details	Other Historic
1.	Pallavaram Cave Temple	Shiva	Stone inscriptions on the titles of Mahendravarman in Telugu and Prakrit
2.	Vallam Cave Temple	Shiva Linga	It is called Vasantheswaram
3.	Thalavanur Cave Temple	Shiva Linga	Named as Malleswaralayam Carved Hanging Decorations are named Thiruvasi
4.	Mandagapattu Cave Temple	Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu	Stone Inscriptions recording the speciality of cave temples without the use of stone, wood, Lime, Metal
5.	Tiruchi Rock Fort Temple	Shiva Temple	Many Sculptures in this temple are the artistic wonders. A special sculpture of Gangadharan is the attraction in this temple

Townships: Mahendravarman did not stop only with building the Cave Temples. He formed townships with quality architectural values. Mahendravadi is one such Township. A lake has been formed by Mahendravarman.

Paintings: The rule of Mahendravarman I is remarkable in its contributions to the posterity on Music, Dance, Sculpture, Paintings and Drama. Sithannavasal, a Cave Temple near Pudukottai, was constructed during the period of Mahendravarman I. The Wall paintings named as 'Farcoes' represent the Excellence of Art and Paintings in Tamilnadu during the 7th Century AD. They remain for ever as the sign

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of beauty and the temple of arts. These Arts and the Paintings not only make the onlookers amazed on the beauty and realistic nature of the carvings on caves, but also establish the supremacy of the Art & Painting during the Pallava Rule especially of Mahendravarman I.

Music : Mahendravarman is considered as a Musical Expert. He has recorded in Pallavaram inscriptions that he belongs to the 'Sangeerana caste' leading to the inference that he has created five New types of Musical Thalas in music namely Chathurasram, thiharam, Misram, kandam, and sangeeranam. This inference is confirmed by the researchers based on the Pallavaram Cave Temple Inscriptions. Kudimiyan malai stone inscriptions are considered to be educative to the music students on the Songs and Thalas that are well explained presumably on the orders of the King Mahendravarman , a student of music teacher Uruthirachariyar of that Era. This leads to the conclusion that Mahendra was a Musical Expert also.

Literature: With his deep knowledge and expertise in the Sanskrit Language, Mahendravarman wrote a Literary Work titled as Maththavilasa Prakasanam. This work describes on the existence and status of Buddhism, Kaapalikam, and Pasupadam Religions. This work was written after Mahendran got converted into Shaivism

Narasimha Varman I (630-668) AD: Following the footsteps of his father, the successor to the Pallava throne, Narasimha Varman I led the country through a glorious tenure packed with supremacy in all aspects. He gave Special titles on himself as Mamallan, Vaathapikondan, Ranajeyan, Nayananguru. He supported architecture as his father Mahendravarman I.

Pallava Chalukya War during Narasimha Varman I: To Take the revenge on the defeat faced by Pulikhesin II at Pullalur during the Mahendra Varman I, the Chalukyas once again invaded on Kanchi. Narasimha Varman I organized a Big Army under Paranjothi to stall this Invasion. At Pariyalam and Suramaaram, Narasimha Varman I won the two battles. The Chalukyas were defeated at Manimangalam, near Kanchi in a fierce battle and their army retreated. Narasimha Varman I chased them and entered Chalukya Country capturing Vathapi City. Vathapi was torched by the Pallava Army. Pulikhesin II was killed in the battle grounds. There emerged the title 'Vathapi Kondan' (The conquerer of Vathapi) for Narasimha Varman I.

Lanka Invasion: Narasimha Varman I waged a war across the ocean by leading a Naval Force in the year 631 AD. He won the war and gave the Royal Rights to Sinhala prince Manavarman. This information is recorded in Mahavamsa.

War with Pandyas: When Narasimha Varman I was on a War with Chalukyas at Vathapi, Pandya King Arikesari Parangusan waged a war on Pallavas and defeated them at Sankaramangai. Hearing this, Narasimha Varman I handed over

the Vathapi Invasion to General Paranjothi and immediately returned to his country , defeated the Pandyas and drove them away.

Visit of Hiuen Tsang: The Chinese Traveller Hiuen Tsang visited Kanchi in the year 642 AD. In his writings, he has described the qualities and Religious belief of the people of Pallava Country. He has given a vivid description on the formation of Kanchi. He has also named the places surrounding Kanchi as Dravida Country.

Art and Architecture during the Era of Narasimha Varman I: Following the foot steps of his father, Narasimha Varman I also earned an immortal fame, by building Temples and by making everlasting lively sculptures . His Cave Temples and the Mahabalipuram Sculptures shot him to fame due to its uniqueness and also the Artistic Values and Architectural expertise. Narasimha Varman built many Cave Temples such as:

- (a) Namakkal Narasinga Perumal cave temple
- (b) Tiruchi- Cave Temple in the South West rock
- (c) Thruvellarai- Unfinished big cave temple
- (d) Thirumaiyam- Vaishnavite Cave temple

Mahabalipuram Sculpture and Paintings: After winning the Vathapi War , Narasimha Varman I built many Cave temples and also created sculptures with more artistic designs and beauty. In Mahabalipuram itself one could observe three varieties of workmanship:

- (a) Cave Temples
- (b) Single Rock Temple
- (c) Stone sculptures

Cave Temples: In Mahabalipuram, the cave temples so built by Narasimha Varman I are called as Mahidasura Mantap, Varaha Mantap and Thirumurthy Mantap. Just as the information in the form of Paintings depicting and Purana stories on the walls of Cave Temples at Vaathapi, we find at Mahabalipuram Cave Temples also. At Mahidasura Mantap, the sculptures are worthy sights displaying the sculpture skills of the pallava style.

Single Stone Temples: In addition to the continuation of his father's speciality of Cave Temples , Narasimha Varman I yearned to establish his identity in building a Unique Temple Structure made out of a Single Stone. These Single Stone temples are still considered a wonder in the architectural excellence.

Stone Sculptures: Narasimha Varman I in his passion for unveiling purana stories in the form of aesthetically created of sculpture, created the monuments in the form of stone sculptures made out of single rocks, beautifully depicting the purana episodes with art and artistic values. These Pallava sculptors are unforgettable in the History of Pallava Architecture and Sculpture Arts.

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Mahendran II: After Narasimha Varman I, his son Mahendran II became the Pallava King. Though for a short period of only 2 years, he reorganized many of the portfolios. However, he is feared to have died during the war with the Chalukyas.

Parameswaravarman I: After Mahendran II, Parameswaravarman I came to power. Vikramathithyan I, Chalukya King, resolving to take revenge on his father Pulikhesin II 's defeat and death, invaded Kanchi and defeated Parameswaravarman I. In the war, Vikramathithyan I recorded that the Mamallan's dynasty was wiped out and Kanchi was captured. The Army entered upto Uraiyur. This is seen in the inscriptions released as Gadwal copper plates.

Upon the defeat, Parameswaravarman I returned with a big army and fought against Vikramathithyan I at Peruvalanallur, near Lalgudi, Tiruchirappalli. In this war, Parameswaravarman I declared and recorded in the Kuram grant inscriptions and Udayendram Grant inscriptions released by Nandivarman II, that Chalukyas were defeated and all the lost territories were regained by the Pallavas.

Parameswaravarman I is also called as Ranajeyan in one of the stone inscriptions found on the Darmaraja Charriot in Mahabalipuram. He constructed a Unique temple for Shiva at Kuram which is considered to be the first stone temple of tamilnadu,

Narasimha Varman II: His Rule brought in a lot of peace in the country. The developmental works were carried out and the country prospered in all areas. Narasimha Varman II is also called as Rajasimhan.

Rajasimhan is considered a strong willed Ruler and non challengeable Warrior in wars. A few wars with Gangas took place during his Rule.

Rajasimhan patronized Dandi who decorated the King's Court. He patronized many other Sanskrit poets also. Dandi's grammar work called Kavya Darshini became the source for Dandialangaram in Tamil.

A New Educational Centre for the Four Vedas Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana, was renovated and named as Kadigai, during Rajasimhan's regime.

Rajasimhan also patronized Theatre. He got a title as 'Vadhya Vidhyadharan' for his keen interest in music and his support to the growth of Music and Musical Instruments.

Trade Overseas: In 720 AD, Rajasimhan sent an Emissary to China. This is revealed by the Chinese notes. He also permitted the Chinese Emperor to build a Buddha Vihar at Nagapattinam. Rajasimhan also faced the ire of Arabian Countries in view of the Competition in Trade with South East Asian Countries. At the end of his rule, the Chalukyas restarted their invasions on Kanchi. Vikramaditya II waged a war with Pallavas and Mahendran III, son of Rajasimhan was killed.

Temples: With its Architectural Excellence, Kailasanathar temple in Kanchi was built by Rajasimhan. Irvathechurar Temple in Kanchi, Panamalai Temple and Seashore Temple at Mahabalipuram were also built during his time.

Thus Sculpture, Painting, Dance & Drama, Literature had consistent growth with quality.

Parameswaravarman II: After Rajasimhan, his son Parameswaravarman II became the King. The invasion made by the Chalukyas supported by the Upper Ganga Rulers was negotiated by Parameswaravarman II by giving away huge treasures and gifts to the Chalukyas. To take a revenge on this, he declared a war against the Gangabadi country. He was killed in the war at Vilarthi.

Nandivarman II : Nandivarman II, known as Pallava Mallar was chosen to be the King when Parameswaravarman II was killed in the war with Chalukyas. During his rule which is considered the longest rule of around 65 years from 731 to 795 AD, Nandivarman faced the following wars:

1. War with the Pandyas in 730 AD for the sake of Chitramayan who wanted to grab Pallava Kingdom, with Pandya's help.
2. War with Chalukyas in 740 AD when Vikramaditya II invaded and defeated Pallavas. Vikramaditya's son Keerthivarman II followed Nandivarman II and defeated him at several places
3. Nandivarman II waged a war against Gangapadi King Sripurushar, in 775 AD and defeated him, by recovering all the wealth, territories and power.
4. Thandidurgan, the Rastrakoota King invaded Chalukya Country when King Keerthivarman II was the Ruler. He captured Ellora and also invaded Pallava Territory, with the capture of Kanchi. However, this invasion ended in the Marriage of Reva, daughter of Thandidurgan, with Nandivarman II. This wedlock resolved the longstanding enmity between the two countries.

Nandivarman II and his contributions to Art, Literature and Culture: He was following Vaishnavism. Tirumangaialwar belonged to his time and in her books Nandipura Vinnagaram, and Parameswara Vinnagaram she has made special mention on the deep rooted faith of Nandivarman II in Vaishnavism. Apart from building artistic temples, Nandivarman II equally a scholar in poetry

Decline of Pallava Power

Nandivarman: (795 to 845) AD: Nandivarman, son of Nandivarman II lost Kanchi and his territories to Govindan III, King of Rashtrakoot. Nandivarman compromised with Govindan III and started paying the PROTECTION MONEY (KAPPAM).

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Similar attacks were made by the Pandya King Varagunar followed by his successor Sri Mara Sri Vallabar on Pallavas and Nandivarman lost most of his territories to them. Here began the decline of the Pallava Power.

Nandivarman III: (845 to 866) AD: His achievements are learnt through many copper plate grants and inscriptions apart from a literature called Nandikalambagam. Pandyas were defeated during his time and in Thollatru War, he won the war against Pandyas. He spread his popularity and power to overseas countries also.

Nrupathungan (866-896) AD Nandivarman II had his son Nrupathungan to succeed him for 30 years. Pandyan wars continued during his regime.

Aparajitavarman (885-903) AD displaced Nrupathungan and became the Pallava King. In this war of succession, Pandya Varagunar II supported Nrupathungan and the Chola King Aditya I supported Aparajita varman

In a war at Tiruppurambiyam, during 885 AD. Aparajitan won the war and he had to give away the controls over many territories of Pallava Kingdom, to the supporting Chola King Aditya I.

Aparajitavarman is considered the Last King of the Pallavas and he was killed by Chola King Aditya I during a war in 897 AD (This time is claimed to be 903 AD also).

However, the Pallava's Rule ended with Aparajitavarman and Cholas established their power.

Check Your Progress

5. Which languages were prevalent during the times of later great Pallavas?
6. Who was the last king of Pallavas?

5.5 PALLAVA-CHALUKYA CONFLICT

During the Sixth Seventh and Eighth Centuries, Chalukyas of Badami and Pallavas of Kanchi always fought for their supremacy over the territories in the Peninsular India with a preset goal to move to further glory and power. The domain running between Krishna River and Tungabhadra River was their original bone of contention. The same geographical domain became the bone of contention for the later rulers of two different kingdoms.

These conflicts continued intermittently for ever as the feeling of revenge was inbuilt in the minds of the successive Kings on both sides. Pallava Chalukya Conflicts were not on any immediate disputes/quarrels or happenings. They were concurrently carried over from one King to another King, successors to the throne on the basis of establishing or reestablishing. It was a revenge over revenge and teaching lessons to each other!

In the process, the Pandyas of Madurai who were also in control of Tirunelveli got engaged themselves in the conflict without any significance. Even the Cholas entered the fray when it mattered to them for annexing fresh territories.

The Similarities between Pallavas and Chalukyas identified to be their common grounds for passion and supremacy in faith towards the Brahminism and also towards the religious rites and vedic performances, grants to the Brahmins and Temples, did not cement them. Instead, made them to fight for their thirst for the territorial resources, and the wartime plunder. It was a race to prove the supremacy of their Race!

The Process of the conflicts: Pallava Princes were repeatedly attempting to cross the Deccan boundary Thungabhadra River, throwing an open challenge to the Rulers of the other side, the Chalukyas. Chalukyas are well known for their territorial control as well as their strength to block intrusions on all sides.

Pulikeshin II (609-42)AD was the most popular Chalukya King of the Era. His control over the Kadambas of Banavase and Gangas of Mysore demonstrated his strength and valour. At the same time, he defeated and kept the Harsha's army at bay on the banks of Narmada River thereby preventing them from their advance to the Deccan province.

The Pallava king Narasimhavarman I invaded and torched the Chalukya capital at Vatapi in about 642AD, when Pulakesin II was believed to have been killed in that war. Narasimhavarman I assumed the title of Vatapikonda or the conqueror of Vatapi. He is also said to have defeated the Cholas, the Cheras, the Pandyas, and the Kalabhras.

The first important event in this long conflict took place during the reign of Pulakeshin II (609-42)AD, the most famous Chalukya king. He is known to us from the eulogy written on him by the court poet Ravikirti in the Aihole inscription. This inscription is an example of the poetic excellence achieved in Sanskrit, and despite its exaggeration is a valuable source for the life of Pulakeshin.

Around 610 AD Pulakeshin II also conquered the entire area between the Krishna and the Godavari, which came to be known as the province of Vengi. Here, a branch of the main dynasty was set up and is known as the eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. However, Pulakeshin's second invasion of Pallava territory ended in failure. Towards the end of the seventh century, there was a lull in this conflict, which was again resumed in the first half of the eighth century. The Chalukya king Vikramaditya II (AD 733—745) is said to have overrun Kanchi three times. In 740 AD he completely routed the Pallavas. He is said to have stayed at Kanchi for some time and he had the occasion to learn the beauty of Kanchi Kailasanathar Temple and also the huge wealth of the City of Pallavas. He donated a lot of wealth to the Brahmins and he left an inscription in the Temple, written in Kannada. His victory ended the Pallava supremacy, sowing the seeds for the Pallava decline in the far south although the ruling house continued for over a century thereafter. The last King of Pallavas is believed to have been

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killed in a war in 903 AD. However, the Chalukyas were unable to enjoy the fruits of their victory over the Pallavas for long, because their own Supremacy was challenged and the Rule was ended in 757 AD by the Rashtrakootas. At that time, the Pallavas reestablished themselves, through the Marriage alliance of Rashtrakoota King Thandidurgan's daughter Reva with Nandivarman II. After this event, Pallavas went unchallenged, in the absence of Chalukyas, until they were again challenged and defeated by Rashtrakoota King Govindan III who invaded Kanchi ruled by Nandivarman (son of Nandivarman II), thereby ending with an arrangement of payment of Lease Money to Rashtrakootas by Pallavas. This is called as Kappam in Tamil.

Check Your Progress

7. What was the bone of contentions in Pallavas-Chalukya conflict?
8. How Chalukyas' rule finally ended?

5.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The time of Kalabhras' rule was considered as the dark age by few historians, because during this period, Tamil Nadu lost its lustre and its values and its dynamism that it enjoyed during the Sangam Age of Chera Chola and Pandya Dynasty rulers.
2. Devaram is a compilation of the hymns composed by the three shivites, Appar, Sambandar, and Sundarar, in praise of the lord.
3. Six opinions are held by various historians surrounding the origins of Pallavas.
4. According to the view subscribed by K.A.Neelakanda Sasstri, R.Gopalan, C.Meenakshi, and Mahalingam. Crisis in East Andhra made Pallavas to migrate to Thondai Mandalam where they turned a new leaf with a new political philosophy and New Life.
5. Languages such as Tamil, Sanskrit, and Prakrit were prevalent during the time of Great-Pallavas.
6. Aparajitavarman is considered the last King of the Pallavas, who was killed by Chola King Aditya I during a war in 897 AD.
7. The domain running between Krishna River and Thungabadra River was the original bone of contention in Pallavas-Chalukya conflict.
8. Chalukyas rule was ended in 757 AD by the Rashtrakootas.

5.7 SUMMARY

- Pallavas provided a Worthy and Stable Tenure up to 900AD.
- Although the origin of Pallavas is under conflicting opinions of the Historians, the evidences arising out of the various sources give us the leads to infer the sequences of the History of Pallava Rule.
- Rule of the Great Pallavas of the later years started with King Simha Vishnu.
- Pallavas' history and its rulers' names are concisely tracked after Simha Vishnu, who conquered the Kalabhras and captured Kanchi.
- The Pallavas's Rule ended with Aparajitavarman and Cholas establishing their power in 897 AD.
- The Pallavas-Chalukya conflict over the domain running between Krishna river and Thungabadra river, resulted in a lot of conflict and wars.
- Although Chalukya defeated Pallavas, they themselves lost their acquired lands to other kings, while the Pallavas managed to secure themselves through an alliance.

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5.8 KEY WORDS

- **Prakrit language:** 'Prakrit' meaning natural is an Indo-Aryan language, having its origin in Sanskrit.
- **Dynasty:** It is a line of rulers, ruling on the basis of their hereditary right.
- **Jainism:** A religion founded in India in the 6th century BC by the Jina Vardhamana Mahavira as a reaction against the orthodox Brahmanism.

5.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the sources of information regarding the origins of Pallavas?
2. What does the opinion 3 hold regarding Pallavas' origins?
3. List the merits of the rule of Simha Vishnu.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the rule of Narasimha Varman I.
2. Discuss the conflict between Chalukyas of Badami and Pallavas of Kanchi.
3. Explain the literary evidences for the origins of Pallavas.

5.10 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 6 EMERGENCE OF PALLAVA DYNASTY

*Emergence of Pallava
Dynasty*

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Structure

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 Emergence of the Pallavas
- 6.3 Socio-Economic Conditions
- 6.4 Art and Architecture of the Pallavas
- 6.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 6.6 Summary
- 6.7 Key Words
- 6.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 6.9 Further Readings

6.0 INTRODUCTION

Study of the Pallava History requires an analysis of the Pallavas in three different phases and time period. Hence, we may divide the Pallava presence in Tamil Nadu into three phases:

Period 1 pertains to the rule of the early Pallavas falling in the 3rd and 4th century AD. The Early Pallavas are said to have established their kingdom in the geographical area running between the River Krishna in the North and the South Porunai in the South. There are no direct evidences for the establishment of the early Pallava rule. However, there are some copper grants which reveal certain events on early Pallavas.

Period 2 pertains to the rule of the interim period wherein Pallavas ruled in the 4th, 5th and 6th Century AD. Period 3 pertains to the rule of the later Pallavas who ruled Tamil Nadu during the 7th and 8th Century AD. The later Pallavas are said to have controlled the Thondai Mandalam area.

In this unit, you will study about the emergence and administration of the Pallavas regime. You will also study about socio economic conditions during the period and also about the art and architecture of the Pallavas.

6.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explore the different phases of Pallavas Dynasty
- Discuss the emergence of Pallavas

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- Describe the socio-economic conditions during the Pallava regime
- Explain the economic status, agricultural produce, trade and irrigation during Pallavas administration
- Explore the development of art and architecture during the Pallava era

6.2 EMERGENCE OF THE PALLAVAS

Early Pallavas

With the descriptions in the Prakrit Copper plates, the early Pallavas ruled Tamil Nadu and King Pappa Devan and King Sivaskanda Varman are noted as the popular kings of Pallavas. Later succeeded by Buddhavarman and Buddahayanguran. During this period, the King Sivaskanda Varman donated a small town called Viriparam, to the Brahmins. He also participated in the Aswa Meda Yagnas.

Interim Pallavas

Interim Pallavas are also known from the Copper plates, beginning with Kumara Vishnu. Followed by Kanda Varman, Veera Varman, Kandavarman II, Simhavarman.

While Kandavarman contributed more for the religious development, Shimha Varman established himself as a victorious warrior. He is said to have won the land lying between the three seas. At the end of his reign, Kadambas became stronger and brought about a turning point to the Pallava history.

Later Pallavas

Later Pallavas are also called as Great Pallavas. They enhanced their grip and status in the Thondai Mandalam area. They belong to the dynasty of Pallavas as the Simha Vishnu descendant.

Historical evidences are available for the Greater Pallavas, while much of the data for interim Pallavas and the early Pallavas has been derived out of the copper plate inscriptions.

At the hands of the Kalabhras, in general Tamil Nadu lost its luster and its values and its dynamism that it enjoyed during the Sangam Age of Chera, Chola and Pandya Dynasty rulers. Besides, the rulers' origin determined as of Karnataka, outside Tamil Nadu, different in Culture and Values as well as beliefs, brought an ill-will into Tamil Nadu. By spreading Jainism and Buddhism into Tamil Nadu and by introducing Prakrit language widely, the Kalabhra rule is said to have destabilized the luster of the Tamils and the vibes of the Sangam Age. Besides, the Brahmins were persecuted and the religious sentiments were damaged irreparably. It is true

that Kalabhras had to flee from their own country in Karnataka into Tamil Nadu due to the pressure from the Andhra rulers and also the Kadamba Rulers. The timing was apt with the chaos and lawlessness prevailing in Tamil Nadu at that time, due to the incompetent successors to the Chola, Pandya and Chera Dynasty Kings. A combined effort was being made by Pallava, Chera, Chola and Pandya kings to regain their states from the Kalabhras for a couple of centuries. Kalabhras were defeated in the 7th Century by the Kanchi Pallavas at the North and by the Madurai Pandyas at the South.

Thus with the advent of Simha Vishnu's rule, the Pallavas emerged into the Tamil Nadu to rule it until 900 AD. The rule, with its inadequacies, however improved in many facets and many aspects of the administration. The economy and social conditions improved and departed from the past practices towards growth and development.

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6.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The socio-economic conditions of Tamil Nadu have been drastically changed during the rule of various rulers and dynasties. A wide change in the socio and economic conditions of the Pallava Country (Thondai Mandalam) as compared to the Sangam Age has been observed by the historians and researchers. All these changes positive or negative were resultant to the political conditions in the country and the religious policies of the respective Kings and their respective empires. People followed the systems as they were provided by the ruler. Pallava Dynasty certainly brought about a vibrant socio and economic condition in their domain.

I. **Social Conditions:** Society during the Pallava Regime, had undergone many significant changes even as compared to the Sangam Age. Basically, Pallava Society was designed as an Agrarian Economy in majority of the areas. It was during the Pallavas that Agriculture was seen predominant and spread over the entire country. Besides, a special social set up of Brahmins and Peasants was formed during this regime.

A. **Caste System:** During this regime, the caste system was deep rooted due to the migration of Brahmins from Andhra and Karnataka. The Aryas system followed by the Brahmins created split in the local Tamils. There were four prominent caste divisions in the country namely, Brahmins, Kshathriyas, Vysyas and the Sudhras.

a. Low caste, High Caste distinctions were very patent. Purana stories built up from the religious angles added strength to these beliefs. It is also recorded in the Kuram grant that King Mahendravarman I followed the caste-based ethical principles and the caste divisions religiously. Pallava Kings proclaimed that

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their duty was to protect the Arya dharma and this policy afforded a deep rooted caste system in Tamil Nadu.

- b. Apart from the primary caste distinctions, there were other castes that were holding different levels of status in the Pallava Society. The Vysyas (traders) enjoyed the next best status as compared to the Brahmins.
- c. Other sub castes based on their professions, within the lower castes were seen living in the labour strata of Pallava Society as weavers, traders, carpenters, iron smiths, native doctors, sculptors, gold smiths. Pulaias (workers in the burial ghats) were considered the last of the strata in addition to the Eezavas (labourer climbing and plucking coconuts and palm fruits).

In each Caste, there were different communities based on Gotras (family root). Within the Gotras, there were further divisions.

B. Brahmins: In the Pallava Society, Brahmins enjoyed the highest status on account of other excellent knowledge in Literature and skills in delivering the Vedas. Their intelligence and ability made the Pallava Kings to give them the respectable status and also the required support. Brahmins were sporting the holy threads and they were engaged in conducting various Yagyas and religious ceremonies in the temples, also working for the official duties. Some were even ministers in the court.

- a. Towns habitated by the Brahmins were called Brahmadeya. They worshipped Shiva and Vishnu. Brahmins had a social set up uniformly to build a temple and to construct a lake around. They also formed a Council which had many functional divisions to administer.
- b. Lower caste members were generally not permitted to worship in the temples built by Brahmins.
- c. The Brahmins created a new social set up wherein the other caste members such as Vysyas, Peasants, pot makers enjoyed a lower status in the strata of the society. The low caste people lived in hutments and lived away from the Brahmadeya.

C. Position of Women: Women and their status under the Pallava Rule: Women enjoyed a privileged status in the Pallava regime. One man one wife principles were accepted in general within the society. However, in the King's domain a few men married with more than one wife.

- a. Women had their status based on their Culture and background
- b. They were permitted to have properties in their names

- c. Asset status for women can be inferred from the future stone inscriptions mentioning Paradhanam, Angamani denoting Sthreedhan.
- d. Women were seen engaged in religious activities and were more dedicated to Bhakti principles
- e. Some women constructed temples for their Gods
- f. From an example of Karaikkal Ammaiyar, a Shiva devotee, renounced life and comforts to become a Siva devotee.
- g. Another example of Thilagavathi Ammaiyar, sister of Thirunavukkarasar (who composed the Thevaram) was a staunch devotee of Lord Siva. She influenced Thirunavukkarasar to follow Saivism.
- h. Household women were seen engaged in spinning, weaving, flower vending, milk vending and small trades. They independently earned their remunerations and were economically sound.
- i. Women artists were seen active in all the three facets of music, drama and dance. In Tamil it is called as Iyal, Isai and Natakam. They were engaged in the Temples.
- j. Women from the royal families were sporting costly and extravagant jewelleries on themselves and beautified themselves.
- k. Queens were also engaged in the religious works. They donated for the religious spread and growth.
- l. Pallava Kings married princes from different dynasties for specific purposes.

D. Marriage Customs: The Sanga Period Marriage Customs underwent a sea change during the Pallavas. There seemed to be an Aryan influence on all the new customs. Chanting the Vedic Manthras, tying a knot to the bride, stepping on the grinding stone, couple going round the fire, finding an auspicious date, looking at the planet positions for fixing marriages were all the drastic changes that were observed.

E. Food: Stone carvings, inscriptions and literary evidences inform on the food and clothing pattern of the Pallava Age Citizens. Majority of the religious and orthodox personalities were found consuming rice and pulses as staple food. Those who were consuming more of vegetables gave a lot of importance to milk and milk products. Habit of consuming alcohol was also found in the society. Those who were in the untouchable strata of society ate animal flesh.

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F. Dress and Ornaments: Dressing in stylish costumes was observed in women of the Pallava kingdom. Women coming from upper castes and women from the royal families put on silkish robes. Ascetics were wearing the amber colour dresses. Soldiers were wearing simple dresses suitable for a warfare.

Queens were sporting the crowns and costly jewels and gold ornaments. They were also decorating their ankles with chain anklets and silambu- a solid metal anklet.

Other women were also wearing variety of necklaces, anklets and costly ornaments on them in the Pallava Reign

G. Social Customs

- a. Erecting stone memorials in memory of the dead, was in practice of Sangam Period. During the Pallava Period, the Stone thus erected on the memorial carried the picture of the dead person. Alongwith this, there was a practice of inscribing the brave and courageous deeds of that person in the statue.
- b. Cow herds were driven out for grazing away from home, collected and brought back to the homes in the evening.
- c. In the Tamil Month of Margazhi (Dec-Jan) unmarried women went round on *bhajans* in the early hours of the morning seeking Lord Krishna's blessings.
- d. To carry out the daily religious routines at the temples, separate pundits were appointed. They were called Sivacharyas. All the religious ceremonies of the temple were carried out in Sanskrit language.

H. Town Planning under Pallavas:

- a. Details of Pallava Capital Town Kanchi, is available from the stone inscriptions of the Kailasanatha temple.
- b. Researcher Gettis has appreciated the town planning design of Kanchi. With this planning, the city accommodated all its subjects in a surrounding, depending on their avocation. Soldiers lived in one place, Potters were accommodated in a place, together. Roads were well planned and wider in breadth and specified for usage such as Chariot streets, soldiers' streets etc.,
- c. The height of the fortress encircling the entire King's Capital, was observed to be tall and strong enough to protect from aggressions.

II. Economic Status: Like Sangam Period, Pallava's economy was at a comfortable level. These informations are available in many copper inscriptions and also the literature belonging to the Pallavas Age.

- a. Agriculture was the Primary avocation as it was in the Sangam Age. Besides, small business and trade were also the additional economic activities.
 - i. Lands gifted to the Brahmins were called Brahmadeyam
 - ii. Lands gifted to the temples were called Devadhanam
 - iii. Lands donated to the Jains were called Palli Chanda Lands. Cultivation was done on the basis of the lease tenants.
 - iv. Lands called Payal were having an arrangement of 50 per cent for owners and 50 per cent for the agriculturist.
 - v. Adai Lands represented the government lands where taxes were payable to the King.
 - vi. By and large, the land ownership was not in individual capacity. All were in joint capacity.
 - vii. Landless labourers were treated as slaves of the upper caste and were deployed in land development.
- b. Agricultural Produce: Lands were classified into different categories and the basic produce was paddy.
 - i. Rice was considered staple food and also was the source of revenue in trade activities.
 - ii. Rice was also considered as a medium of exchange
 - iii. Coconut trees were also grown in a large scale
 - iv. Cotton, plantain, sugarcane were also cultivated
 - v. Oil seeds, betel leaf, flowers and fruits were also grown
 - vi. Commercial trees for timber were also grown
 - vii. Herbal cultivation was also carried out to produce medicines out of herbal leaves. Ayurveda was becoming popular. They were also exported
- c. Irrigation: A lot of importance has been given on the irrigation system in the Pallava rule.
 - i. Lakes and water sheds were created. They were also named attaching a lot of importance.
 - ii. From river to lakes and from lakes to fields, channels were created.

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- iii. Administering the lakes and the channels and the quantum of water for the usage of each area was left with the Lake Corporation managed by the members of the local public in those areas.
- iv. Taxation and maintenance were on the user public.
- d. Famines: There were famines reported during the Pallava age. A reference could be seen in Thevaram and Periya Puranam.
 - i. During Narasimha Varman's period and Nandivarman III period there were famines referred to in the stone inscriptions.
 - ii. Famine Corporation was also established.
 - iii. Grains were acquired and also stored for facing the famine situations
 - iv. All famine management tasks were executed by the Famine Corporation
- B. Other Business Activities :
 - a. Spinning, Weaving were also found in the economy.
 - b. Men and Women equally participated in the employment
 - c. Kanchi and surroundings had a good cotton growing belt
 - d. Kanchi became a Trade centre in weaving and production of clothes
 - e. Sugar cane crushing and Bee keeping were also considered as business.
 - f. Wooden Implements and Wodden Products were also becoming popular
 - g. Gold and metal related Ornament making became a specialized skill
 - h. Oil extraction, potteries, vax production were also seen as present
 - i. Fishing, Animal Husbandry were also being carried out in agricultural locations.
 - j. King's Licence to start any business was found essential and there was a Profession Tax levied.
- C. Inland Trade:
 - a. Trade was carried out as permitted by the King
 - b. The King supported Inland Trade
 - c. Inland trade was channelized through the local shandies
 - d. Each village had a Shandy and normally all products were sold in temporary shops created around the temples

- e. Traders were living in groups dividing themselves into different trade names depending on their trade activities. Wholesalers, Retailers, Cloth Merchants and General Merchants were the main classifications.

D. Export Trade:

- a. Nandikalambakam literature reveals the export (external) trade of the Pallavas
 - b. Some Stone inscriptions reveal the trade relations with the Persian Gulf countries
 - c. Trade has been happening with Indo china, Ceylon, Indonesia and South of Gulf countries.
 - d. Narasimha Varman II constructed a Buddha Vihara at Nagappattinam, to encourage Trade with Chinese Traders
 - e. Trade relations with Thailand have been cited in stone inscriptions of Taguba
 - f. Kasthuri, Chank, Gems, Silk, Wine, Medicines were imported
 - g. Pots, Pearls were exported
 - h. Mahabalipuram, Nagapattinam, Mahendrappalli, Thirumaraikkadu, Thiruvotriyur were important ports during the Pallava Rule
 - i. Mahabalipuram Port is referred to by the Chinese Traveller Hiuen Tsang
 - j. Naval force for overseas trade and overseas transportation was separately maintained by the Pallavas.
 - k. Vangam (Big Ship) Thoni (small round boat) Marakkalam (Yatch with Sails) were the different water transportation modules used.
 - l. Examining the Gold coins with Ship Image released by the Pallava Kings substantiates the Foreign Trade
- E. Various measurement indices were introduced in measuring the lands, the produce on one side and the metals such as gold and silver on the other side.
- F. Coins of Pallavas: Coins in Copper, Silver and Gold were released during Pallavas Age. Dr. Meenakshi has made a research on Pallava Coins.
- a. Gold coins were used primarily in the trade transactions
 - b. Nandi and Two Yatch images were shown on the coins
 - c. Mahendravarman's coins carried a Tamil writing "katha chithra"

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- d. Narasimha varman II released coins containing word “Shree Badra”
- e. Temples were donated with Gold coins carrying the King’s Insignia called in other words ‘Raja Mudhra’

It is observed that Pallavas Economic Status records a total deviation from the Sangam Period Economic Activities, in many aspects.

III. Heritage and Culture

- A. The development in the Heritage and Culture during the Pallava Age is seen as a development over the Sangam Age. Of the several areas covered, the following areas are worth mentioning.
 - a. Education
 - b. Literature
 - c. Religion
 - d. Sculpture
 - e. Painting
 - f. Dance
 - g. Music
- B. Education was seen in three segments
 - i. Hindu Educational Institutions
 - 1. Kanchi was the centre of education
 - 2. Teaching were at Temples and Mutts as the Educational Institutions
 - 3. The Institutions were named KADIGAI. Some Kadigais were under the direct supervision of the Kin
 - 4. Sankara Mutt occupied a predominant position
 - 5. Students from all over India had attended the sessions
 - ii. Buddhist Educational Institutions
 - 1. Hiuen Tsang mentions about the existence of 100 Buddhist mutts at Kanchi, during his visit
 - 2. Religious Discussions and Elocution Competitions were conducted in Buddhist Institutions
 - 3. Buddhist institutions played a prominent role in promoting tamil language and literature
 - iii. Jain Educational Institutions
 - 1. To spread the Jainism and to develop the tamil language, Vajra Nandi established a Tamil Sangam at Madurai in 76AD

2. Out of the various centres, Pataliputram Jain mutt has the pride of having Thirunavukkarasar as its Head in the name of Dharma senar, when he was following the Jainism before taking up the Saiva Faith due to his sister's influence.
3. Jain Institutions taught in Sanskrit, Tamil and Prakrit languages
4. Kanchi Jain Institution was patronized by King Simha Vishnu and Mahendravarman I

Apart from the various developments, Pallavas had registered their contribution to the field of a) Literature b) Science c) Music d) Dance and e) Painting, that are referred to concurrently.

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6.4 ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF THE PALLAVAS

During the Pallava era, art and architecture developed its excellence in reaching the prime-place. There are several archaeological evidences, with the variety of monuments, temples and sculptures still attract the eyes of every visitor and triggers the intelligence of any practicing architect.

In the fields of Music, Painting, Sculpture, Dance, Building Technology (Architecture) Epic, Pallava Dynasty has certainly made a memorable and appreciable contribution. Apart from being a contributor to the posterity, the Kings themselves were proving out to be an expert in many fields and desired that their quality and skills should reach the future generations, by creating and establishing cultural and heritage wonders to reach the level of a living legend.

1. **Architecture:** Prior to the Pallavas Rule, temples were made out of wood, lime, and bricks. It was during the regime of the Pallavas that we come to know the technology of constructing stone temples
 - a. Mahabalipuram Beach Temples
 - b. Kanchi Kailasanathar templeThe above two could be cited as the best living examples of the supremacy of the Architectural skills of Pallavas.
 - c. Cave Temples made by Mahendravarman
 - d. Single stone boulder temple and the Charriots of Narasimha Varman
2. **Music:** The field of music which suffered a lot under the Kalabhras Rule, had its survival and growth during the rule of Pallavas. It is like a dying plant in a desert gets saved by the sudden raindrops.
 - a. The Nayanmars and Alwars through their Bhakti Movement, not only developed the Music but also served the growth of the Tamil Language and Literature.

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- b. In Kudimiyanmalai stone inscription, a new pluck instrument “parivathini” a veena and new composition of ‘thala’ are cited.
- c. Kolli, Seegamaram, Sevvazhi, Thakkesi, Nattaikkurinji- all Thevaram Songs were at their supremacy in Pallava regime.
- d. Mahendravarman was a noted Artist in music. He got his title “sangeerna saathi” clearly brings his expertise in the music.
- e. Rajasimha Pallavan was called as “Vaadhya Vidhyadaran”

3. Dance

- a. The paintings in Sittannavasal reveal the supremacy of Pallavas in the art of Dance.
- b. Several paintings bring before us the facial expressions of many dancers, capturing the dance mudhras at the same time.
- c. Lord Nataraja’s ‘Chathur Thandava’ position is also brought out nicely as a painting, and the dance titled “stavirichika” displayed as an immortal painting enlightens the Dance Quality level and also the expertise in the Pallava Dance skills.
- d. In the sculptures also Pallavas have brought in the dance expressions and the positions by combining the dance skills expressed through the sculpture skills
- e. The Sculptures in Vaikunda Perumal Temple reveal these qualities of dancing
- f. Both men and women devoted in learning the skill of dancing
- g. Music and Dance became a distinct tool of the Temple Administration in promoting the Bhakti Movement

4. Sculpture

- a. Pallava’s Sculptures are claimed to be the living legends of the supremacy in Sculpture.
- b. Arjunan Penance and Mahishasura Mardhini, at Mahabalipuram are claimed to be the most lively and tell-tale sculpture with its aesthetic and workmanship values.
- c. Kailasanadhar temple and Vaikunda Perumal Temple Sculptures and Siva Thandava Sculptures are worth seeing
- d. Dwara palakar, Thoranas, Lotus, Swan Parade, Twin Thiruvasi Sculptures displayed are claimed as the most artistic and attractive.
- e. Rock Sculpture of Mahabalipuram unveils the Stories from the Puranas through the sculpture on an one to one basis.
- f. Govardhana Giri Krishna Sculpture shows the artistic supremacy of the sculptor.

5. Art

- a. The Oldest Art of Tamil Nadu are claimed to be those at Sittanna Vasal . These belong to the Pallava Age. King and the Queen Art as well as the Lotus pond Art which are several 100 years old still remain with the same colour textures.
- b. Dancing girls and other arts displayed on the ceilings as well as on the pillars remain as testimony for the artistic supremacy of the pallava artists. In these arts, one could also learn the type of dressing and the types of ornaments, hair style, dressing and the costume perfection.
- c. Lotus Pond displays all the items painted in it such as, leaves, fish, swan, elephant, buffalo, jains plucking flowers, as the most realistic and energized with life.

6. Literature

- a. During the Pallava Reign, Hindus patronized Education by opening the Veda Education Institutions; Jains established Jain Schools to enhance the value of education in languages of Tamil, Sanskrit and Prakrit; Buddhists opened Buddha Vihars to promote education
- b. Pallavas though originate from the North, the adoption of tamil with Sanksrit gave birth to a new trend in the literature.
- c. Pallavas prepared their Copper grants with a lot of taste and epic inputs.
- d. Literature in other languages include Maththa vilasa prakasanam, kavyadarsanam and avanthi sundari katha
- e. Religious Literature saw its peak with the compositions such as
 - i. Thevaram,
 - ii. Thirumular thirumandiram
 - iii. Alwars thiruvaimozhi
 - iv. Naalayira Divyaprabhandam
 - v. Thiruvagasam
- f. Jains and Buddhists were pushed to fight for their existence and both the faiths lost their credibility due to the growth of saiva and vaishnava growth. In the process, to discount the philosophy of the other faith, some literature was brought out by both the factions of jains and Buddhists.
 - i. Valaiyapathi
 - ii. Kundalakesi
 - iii. Neelakesi

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- g. This period also witnessed the compositions of Grammar and Dictionaries
- h. Bharatha venba and Nandi kalambagam were composed during the Pallava era.

To conclude, we may appreciate the contributions of the Pallavas to the Art and Architecture during their Rule which directly or indirectly set the stage for the social renaissance in the time to come.

Check Your Progress

1. What are the three phases of Pallava presence in Tamil Nadu?
2. How did the Kalabhra rule destabilize the lustre of the Tamils?
3. What was the caste system situation during the Pallava regime?
4. What was the food and clothing pattern of the Pallava Age citizens?
5. What was the basic agricultural produce in Pallava rule?
6. What sorts of coins were released during the Pallavas Age?
7. Name the three segments of education during Pallavas administration.

6.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. The three phases of Pallava presence in Tamil Nadu include: Period 1 which pertains to the rule of the early Pallavas falling in the 3rd and 4th century AD. Period 2 pertains to the rule of the interim period wherein Pallavas ruled in the 4th, 5th and 6th Century AD. Period 3 pertains to the rule of the later Pallavas who ruled Tamil Nadu during the 7th and 8th Century AD. The later Pallavas are said to have controlled the Thondai Mandalam area.
2. The Kalabhra rule destabilized the lustre of the Tamils and also the vibes of the Sangam Age by spreading Jainism and Buddhism into Tamil Nadu and also by introducing Prakrit language.
3. The caste system during the Pallava regime was deep rooted due to the migration of Brahmins from Andhra and Karnataka. The Aryas system followed by the Brahmins created split in the local Tamils. There were four prominent caste divisions in the country namely, Brahmins, Kshathriyas, Vysyas and the Sudhras.
5. In the Pallava age, majority of the religious and orthodox citizens were found consuming rice and pulses as staple food. Those who were consuming more of vegetables gave a lot of importance to milk and milk products. Habit of consuming alcohol was also found in the society. Those who were in the untouchable strata of society ate animal flesh.

5. Rice was considered the basic and staple food during Pallava rule. Also, it was the source of revenue in trade activities. Other agricultural produce include coconut trees, cotton, sugarcane, oil seeds, betel leaf, flowers and so forth.
7. Coins in copper, silver and gold were released during Pallavas Age wherein gold coins were used primarily in the trade transactions.
8. The three segments during Pallavas administration are the following:
 - (a) Hindu Educational Institutions
 - (b) Buddhist Educational Institutions
 - (c) Jain Educational Institutions

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6.6 SUMMARY

- With the descriptions in the Prakrit Copper plates, the early Pallavas ruled Tamil Nadu and King Pappa Devan and King Sivaskanda Varman are noted as the popular kings of Pallavas.
- Interim Pallavas are also known from the Copper plates, beginning with Kumara Vishnu. Followed by Kanda Varman, Veera Varman, Kandavarman II, Simhavarman.
- Later Pallavas are also called as Great Pallavas. They enhanced their grip and status in the Thondai Mandalam area. They belong to the dynasty of Pallavas as the Simha Vishnu decendant.
- The socio-economic conditions of Tamil Nadu have been drastically changed during the rule of various rulers and dynasties.
- There were four prominent caste divisions in the country namely, Brahmins, Kshathriyas, Vysyas and the Sudhras.
- In the Pallava Society, Brahmins enjoyed the highest status on account of other excellent knowledge in Literature and skills in delivering the Vedas.
- Women and their status under the Pallava Rule: Women enjoyed a privileged status in the Pallava regime. One man one wife principles were accepted in general within the society.
- The Sanga Period Marriage Customs underwent a sea change during the Pallavas. There seemed to be an Aryan influence on all the new customs.
- Agriculture was the Primary avocation as it was in the Sangam Age. Besides, small business and trade were also the additional economic activities.
- Rice was considered staple food and also was the source of revenue in trade activities.
- Coins in Copper, Silver and Gold were released during Pallavas Age. Dr.Meenakshi has made a research on Pallava Coins.

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- The development in the Heritage and Culture during the Pallava Age is seen as a development over the Sangam Age.
- During the Pallava era, art and architecture developed its excellence in reaching the prime-place. There are several archaeological evidences, with the variety of monuments, temples and sculptures still attract the eyes of every visitor and triggers the intelligence of any practicing architect.
- During the Pallava Reign, Hindus patronized Education by opening the Veda Education Institutions; Jains established Jain Schools to enhance the value of education in languages of Tamil, Sanskrit and Prakrit; Buddhists opened Buddha Vihars to promote education

6.7 KEY WORDS

- **Copper plates:** It refers to a polished copper plate with a design engraved or etched into it.
- **Prakrit language:** It is one of the several Middle Indo-Aryan languages that was spoken in India.
- **Ascetic:** It refers to severe self-discipline and abstention from all forms of indulgence, typically for religious reasons.
- **Avocation:** It refers to a hobby or minor occupation.

6.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the emergence of the Pallavas.
2. Briefly mention the social customs during Pallava period.
3. List the additional economic activities during the Pallava age.
4. How was the irrigation in the Pallava period?
5. How was trade carried out during the period?
6. Write short notes on the following:
 - (a) Hindu Educational Institutions
 - (b) Buddhist Educational Institutions
 - (c) Jain Educational Institutions

Long-Answer Questions

1. Explain the status of Brahmins during the Pallava Society.
2. Elaborate the status of women under the Pallava Rule.

3. Describe the other business activities prominent in the Pallava regime.
4. Describe art and architecture of the Pallava administration.

*Emergence of Pallava
Dynasty*

6.9 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 7 BHAKTI MOVEMENT

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Structure

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 Bhakti Movement: Genesis
- 7.3 Bhakti Movement: Causes
- 7.4 Saints: Saivism
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7.0 INTRODUCTION

The word Bhakti means a path for salvation. Etymologically, it is derived as a word originating from 'Bhaj', a Sanskrit root word, which literally means 'to utter' but the inner significance of the word is 'to love with honour'. Bhakti as a philosophy, as a cult, penetrated into the daily life of the people and took shape as a movement between the 7th and 10th centuries.

Ancient Indian texts, dated to be from the 1st millennium BCE, such as the Shvetashvatara Upanishad, the Katha Upanishad and the Bhagavad Gita mention Bhakti.

In this unit, you will study about the Bhakti Movement and its dimensions interwoven with the political patronage, cultural support and economic welfare, Brahminism, Buddhism and Jainism, amidst multitude of invasions and social changes. In addition to this, you will also study about the genesis and causes of Bhakti Movement.

7.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the genesis of Bhakti Movement
- Explain the causes of Bhakti Movement

- Discuss the evolution and contribution of Saivism, Nayanmars, Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar, Manikavasagar, Devaram and Thiruvvasagam

7.2 BHAKTI MOVEMENT: GENESIS

The Bhakti movement refers to the theistic devotional trend originated in eighth-century in South India and spread northwards. From the 15th century onwards, the Bhakti Movement swept over North and East India. This movement reached its pinnacle of glory between the 15th and 17th century AD.

The movement started regionally around different Gods and Goddesses, inspired by poet-saints, who preached Dvaita and Advaita Vedanta Cults. Apart from this, sub religions also emerged as Shaivism, Vaishnavism.

This Bhakti movement is considered as a tool for the Social Reformation in Hinduism and directed as an individual-focused alternate spiritual path irrespective of one's caste or gender.

Scholars share varied opinions in rating the movement as a revival or renaissance instead of elevating it to a status of rebellion or reform. They opine that this movement aimed at repositioning and recontextualisation of ancient scriptures and the practices.

It is noteworthy that the Bhakti Movement started from the South (Tamil Nadu and Kerala) and spread towards the North and the East at the later stages.

7.3 BHAKTI MOVEMENT: CAUSES

The interregnum period of Kalabhras' rule witnessed a lot of negative aspects on the religious growth and development in the Hindu religion, as compared to the Sangam Period.

1. During Sangam period the Hindu Religion had its unquestioned popularity and supremacy. The supremacy declined on account of the reign of Kalabhras. Apart from that, Jainism and Buddhism found their new vistas of patronage in Kalabhras' period.
2. Due to this suppression, the Hindu Religion was starving for a new momentum for its growth and spread. There was an immediate necessity that was found to re-establish the Hinduism and Brahminism.
3. Between the 7th and the 10th century AD, Bhakti emerged from a mere religious doctrine, touching the region wise sentiments, into a popular movement. It was named as 'Bhakti Movement' later. Bhakti means devotional surrender to supreme God for attaining salvation or moksha. There was no movement in the initial stages of Sangam Period as well as during the age of Kalabhras. After the Kalabhras' rule, Hindu religion, especially the Brahminism, felt the pinch and was driven to the wall for survival.

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4. From the stage of superstitions the Bhakti concept brought into a streamlined devotion and surrender to the God for attaining salvation. Bhakti became a path of life intertwined with the day to day life, during the Bhakti movement.
5. A movement necessarily has more participation by the implementer and also the user. For the first time in South India, based on religious equality and broad-based social participation the Bhakti movement entered the society as a validation programme. Many scholars rank this as a Revolution, while few others limit the movement as a renaissance.
6. The movement which was spearheaded by popular poet-saints reached its zenith in the 10th century after which it began to decline.

Let us go through the various stages of evolution of the Bhakti from a religious expression into a movement.

1. Decline of Brahminism during the Kalabhra Period:

Considering the origin of this Bhakti Movement as Brahminist and Buddhist traditions, the causes of the movement had a historical background and political implications. Historians portray Kalabhras rule as a dark period in the history of Tamizhagam possibly due to the fact that Jain culture was a challenge to the Brahmin culture during Kalabhra era. Grants were not continued as before. During Chera, Chola and Pandya reign, in the age of supremacy of Brahmanism, kings used to grant vast lands to the Brahmins of the temples. When they came into power Kalabhras executed the Brahmins on a large scale, put ban on custom of granting lands to the Brahmins and on collection of taxes from villages to run the temple affairs.

2. Supremacy of Buddhist and Jainist Religious Beliefs:

Buddhist and Jain culture were posing threats to the Brahmins' customs and traditions during Kalabra era on one side and Kalabhras took a large scale destruction of the Brahmins and sealed the spread of Brahminism. The Kalabhras were called 'Evil people' by the citizens of Chola, Pandyan kingdoms because of their barbaric attitude towards Brahmins and the nobles of Royal family. Whereas, the Kalabhras supported Jainism in a major way and Buddhism in a small way.

3. Need for revival and re-establishment of the Hinduism.

Brahmins were reduced in their positions and possessions. This blocked the spread of Hinduism and the society was drawn towards the other alternative faiths. The scenario changed from the Brahmins becoming rich and often dominating the society, ill-treating the people belonging to the lower caste, to a situation of fright of the Brahmins and also the Hindu apostles. This was the main reason for the Kalabhras to revolt and attack the Brahmins, dethrone the king and establish their own rule.

4. Society's literary and cultural levels at the time of Kalabhra's departure

Factors of Cultural evolution played a major role in this period that the Brahminism met its own decline during the period of Kalabhras. Buddhism and Jainism seamlessly grew into big Religious umbrellas, sponsored by the Political will of the Kingdoms. Literary and scant cultural developments blossomed in Kalabhra's rule of the Sangam Age, enabled a better informed society than before. This awareness led to the renaissance in religion and development of Bhakti, before it became a full-fledged movement.

5. Pallavas philosophy of religion and support to Art & Culture

This was the stage at which the Hindu Religion realized that there should be a Revolution and rehabilitation for the survival of Hinduism and also for the growth and development. Pallavas not only supported Hindu Religion but also changed the supremacy of Jainism and Buddhism. Both Saivas and Vaishnavas took up their fight for existence and establishment. In the process, they were also able to influence the Pallava Kings to support the Hindu Religion. The Shaiva cult became more prominent and the Pallava Kingdom sported the 'Nandi' as their emblem. Nandi is Lord Siva's Vahan. Pallava's coins also carried the Nandi logo. History confirms that Pallavas were the guardians of Shaivism.

6. Poet-Saints were intermediating the new path of Bhakti

Poet-saints were intermediating the new path of Bhakti through love and faith to realize God without penance and to reach salvation within their own lifestyles and professions.

In this mission, Alwars and Nayanmars played a pivotal role. These poet-saints simultaneously resisted the domination of the orthodox Brahmins by making bhakti accessible to all without any caste and sex discrimination. Between the 7th and 10th centuries AD, the Alwars and Nayanmars who were referred to as poet-saints penetrated into the society through their personal teachings and conceptual philosophies on Bhakti and surrender to the God. As some of these poet-saints themselves emerged from lower castes, including a few women saints, the earlier social gap of discrimination of upper and lower caste for the purpose of religion reduced. Hindu religion got rejuvenated and got accepted to become stronger than before. Jainism and Buddhism lost their supremacy in the due course during the Pallava Regime.

7. Literature supporting the spread of self-realisation by the people through their chosen God

During the Sangam Era and thereafter, the spread of Literature as well as the moral and ethical values through poems, dramas, hymns and songs attracted more and more literate people to follow faiths as a precursor for societal development and social change.

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7.4 SAINTS: SAIVISM

Those who worshipped Lord Shiva were named as Saivites. Saivite saints were also called poet-saints as they also composed poems in praise of the God and spread the message through these poems as a module to develop followers in smaller groups to take the cult forward. Their basic teachings supported the people living in their own domains without making a penance and taking sanyasa (relinquishment) To prove this, these poet-saints lived amidst the people and followed a lifestyle combined with worship and prayers. In addition, they were also composing poems and visiting and guiding Kings on religion and other matters. Their teachings centred around the principle of realizing the God in every thought, deed and speech, without discrimination and inequalities. As they moved with the people, they imbibed the habit of following ethical and moral values as well as speaking truth and following pure thoughts and righteous actions. This attracted many and the Bhakti concept became prominent in the society and their social customs. Religion became a determining factor of social customs, prayer methods, building temples, worship in temples, singing hymns in the praise of the God. Worship in temples and visiting temples and Kshetras became a part of the Bhakti expression. Festivals of temples and standard rituals for the temples redefined as a part of the Bhakti movement. Temples regained their supremacy and turned into a point of convergence. The Alvar and Nayanmar saints used the Tamil language and not Sanskrit for preaching and composing devotional songs. Thus the movement could acquire a popular base and akin to one's own ethnic sentiment of expression.

7.5 63 NAYANMARS

In Saivism, the history of 63 Nayanmars is a very notable one. They worshipped Lord Shiva as their Principal Deity. They followed the rituals and the scriptures set out for the Siva Worship.

Complete List of Nayanmars (Nayanars)

1. Sundaramurthi Nayanar
2. Tiru Neelakanta Nayanar
3. Iyarpahai Nayanar
4. Ilayankudi Mara Nayanar
5. Maiporul Nayanar
6. Viralminda Nayanar
7. Amaraneedi Nayanar
8. Eripatha Nayanar
9. Enadinatha Nayanar

10. Kannappa Nayanar
11. Kungiliya Kalaya Nayanar
12. Manakanchara Nayanar
13. Arivattaya Nayanar
14. Anaya Nayanar
15. Murthi Nayanar
16. Muruga Nayanar
17. Rudra Pasupathi Nayanar
18. Tiru Nalai Povar Nayanar
19. Tiru Kurippu Thonda Nayanar
20. Chandesvara Nayanar
21. Tiru-Navukkarasar Nayanar
22. Kulacchirai Nayanar
23. Perumizhalai Kurumba Nayanar
24. Karaikal Ammaiyar
25. Appuddi Nayanar
26. Tiruneelanakka Nayanar
27. Nami Nandi Adigal
28. Tiru Gnana Sambandar
29. Eyarkon Kalikama Nayanar
30. Tiru Mula Nayanar
31. Dandi Adigal Nayanar
32. Murkha Nayanar
33. Somasira Nayanar
34. Sakkiya Nayanar
35. Sirappuli Nayanar
36. Siruthonda Nayanar
37. Cheraman Perumal Nayanar
38. Gananatha Nayanar
39. Kootruva Nayanar
40. Pugal Chola Nayanar
41. Narasinga Muniyaraiyar
42. Adipattha Nayanar
43. Kalikamba Nayanar

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44. Kalia Nayanar
45. Satti Nayanar
46. Aiyadigal Kadavarkon Nayanar
47. Kanampulla Nayanar
48. Kari Nayanar
49. Ninra Seer Nedumara Nayanar
50. Mangayarkarasiyar
51. Vayilar Nayanar
52. Munaiyaduvar Nayanar
53. Kazharsinga Nayanar
54. Seruthunai Nayanar
55. Idangazhi Nayanar
56. Pugazh Tunai Nayanar
57. Kotpuli Nayanar
58. Pusalar Nayanar
59. Nesa Nayanar
60. Kochengat Chola Nayanar
61. Tiru Neelakanta Yazhpanar
62. Sadaya Nayanar
63. Isaijnaniyar

It is important to note that Manickavachagar is not counted as a Nayanar but he is considered as one of the 4 Tamil Samaya Kuravas (Teachers).

Of the 63 Nayanmars that are listed, only four of them are popular and at the same time important from the angle of their contributions to the Bhakti Movement and its Renaissance. They are

- (1) Thirunavukkarasar (Called as Appar adigal)
- (2) Thirugnana Sambandar (Sambandar)
- (3) Sundarar and
- (4) Manickavachagar

These four Nayanars are considered as Tamil Samaya Acharyas (four Tamil religious Teachers) whose hymns are authentic hymns that pleased Lord Siva himself. In a few cases, the Lord himself has commenced the stanzas and lines.

They brought out Thevaram and Thiruvagasam which are the only Tamil prayer songs that are recited in all the Siva Temples, in Tamil Nadu even today. As against Sanskrit Slokas, these hymns have attained supremacy all over Tamil Nadu as an official worship adapted by the Shivites in Tamil Nadu. Though Sanskrit

shlokas as chanted in Siva Temples, Tevaram and Tiruvasagam are given the prime position in Tamil Nadu Temples. In other words, Saiva faith clings on to these two compilations, without which Siva Worship is incomplete.

A brief coverage of their contributions will portray the total magnitude of the contributions made by the Nayanmars (Nayanar) in taking forward the Bhakti Movement all through the ages.

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7.6 APPAR (APPAR ADIGAL)

- Though addressed as Appar, by the devotees, his real name, Thirunavukkarasar. He was born as a peasant in Tiruvarur.
- He was originally a Jain follower. On his sister Thilagavathi's influence, Appar started getting attracted towards Saivism.
- Appar is said to have influenced the Pallava King Mahendravarman ruling at that time to turn into a Saivite.
- This conversion is considered an important event with historical value and significance.
- Thirunavukkarasar composed 311 poems praising Lord Shiva.

His teachings:

1. All living beings are associated with Shiva and Shakti and one should view every living being as Shiva and Shakti.
2. God is colourless.
3. One cannot define God and explain in writing.
4. Service is the only path towards Salvation.

Appar Adigal lived till his 81st year of age.

7.7 SAMBANDAR (THIRUGNANASAMBANDAR)

Born as a Brahmin at Sirgazhi, in Tanjore District, Sambandar (Thirugnanasambandar) associated with Thirunavukkarasar for preaching Saiva Siddantha. He visited all the holy temples and recited the Bhakti songs. Though it is estimated that he had a composition of over 16,000 such songs, only 384 songs have reached this generation. He was the pioneer of the religious debates with the Jains and succeeding in his arguments on the Jainism Philosophy vis-à-vis the Hindu philosophy (Shaiva Doctrine). As a result of these continuous efforts, the Jainism lost its credibility in Tamilnadu.

He visited the Pandya Kingdom and convinced the Pandya King Maravarman Arikesari (640-670 AD) to accept the Shiva Philosophy. This led to the spread of Shaivism in Pandya Kingdom also.

7.8 SUNDARAR (NAYANMAR)

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Sundaramurthi Nayanar was born in Thiru Navalur, in South Arcot District, in an Adi Saiva Brahmin family, where the entire atmosphere was full of spiritual vibrations and Saivism was well established.

Sundaramurthi Nayanar, as he was addressed, flourished in the 8th century. He was a great devotee of Lord. He is one of the Tamil Samaya Acharyas (four Tamil religious Teachers). Sundaramurthi Nayanar sang the glories of Lord at all the holy temples that he visited. These hymns are called Thevaram. They have been collected into a book-form. All the devotees sing the Thevaram even today as a prayer song in Tamil language. Sundarar had the Sakhya Bhava or the attitude of a friend towards the Lord. He freely demanded of the Lord whatever he wanted. He did not do so with selfish desire, however. Whatever he asked for was for the sake of those who were dependent on him. He lived only eighteen years.

It is believed that Lord Siva played his Thiruvilayadal (God's Games) on Sundharar also. Sundharar was getting married. At that time the Lord came as an old man and told the people that Sundharar was the slave of Him. Sundharar denied having seen that person before. But that old man proved that Sundharar as His slave and took him. Sundharar was calling Him 'Piththaa' (mad) and following Him. That old man disappeared in the temple of Thiru vennai nalloor. Sundharar realised that it was the God who had come to bless Sundharar. He repented and cried to the Lord for calling Him 'Piththaa' by mistake. But the Lord said 'Using that word as the first word recite a hymn'. Then Sundhara sang a Hymn beginning with the word 'Pithaa'. Sundharar is categorized as 'Van thondar' (rebellion nayanar) because he praised the Lord as if he was cursing Him. Sundarar lived in the Era of Pallava King Narasimhavarman II.

His teachings:

1. He spearheaded against the casteism.
2. His belief was that Lord would hear the Prayers and will bestow what we desire for.
3. His module of praising the Lord was through the Hymns (songs) composed by him in tamil acceptable to all devotees of the Lord.
4. It is also mentioned that Lord Siva Himself has commenced the stanzas for Sundarar to complete the same.
5. It is also believed that Lord Siva loved the songs sung by Sundarar.
6. It is also mentioned that Lord Siva granted all the demands of Sundarar, which were in public interest.

Sundarar's songs were simple and pleasant that the Lord put him under more and more tests to push him to compose more hymns that pleased him the most.

7.9 MANIKAVASAGAR

Though he is not reckoned as one of the 63 Saiva Nayanmars he is accepted as one of the *Nalvars* ('The Four') consisting of himself and the first three Nayanmars Appar, Sundarar and Sambandar. He was born in an orthodox *brahmin* family in Tiruvataavur near Madurai. His father was an advisor to the Pandya king and he followed his father's footsteps in becoming the king's minister.

Manikkavasagar was appointed as minister by the Pandya king Arimarttanar and sent to purchase 10,000 horses from horse traders from Arabia. Manickavachagar, as the legend goes, spent the entire money building a temple in Tiruperunthurai.

Manickavachagar, revered as one of the four Saiva Samaya Acharyas, was born in Pandya Kingdom, at Tiruvarur. He composed Thiruvagasam and Thiruchitrabalakkovai literatures. Thiruvagasam is occupying its seat of glory by being considered as the authentic hymn that could be used as prayer to Lord Siva. Legends reveals that Thiruvachagam was sung by Lord Siva himself.

Thiruvagasam consists of 51 chapters with 656 songs. It is considered to be very sweet and pleasing as there is a saying in Tamil, '(if one cannot get enslaved by Thiruvagasam, he cannot get enslaved by any other Vasagam(utterance))

Manickavachagar lived in the 9th century AD and played a pivotal role in uplifting the Saivism in Tamil Nadu.

7.10 THEVARAM (PANNIRU THIRUMURAI)

Thirumurai is one of the first works in Saivism, one sect of the Hindu religions. It reflects important core values and preserves them literally as well as grammatically. The hymns (songs) contain all the information found in the Vedas. These holy hymns have been sung by Saivite Saints, poets, in a great spiritual wisdom and in seeking only the truth, having seen the God himself. They have numerous healing powers that make wonders, having staged many miracles such as restructuring bones into a woman and making a dumb person speak.

Panniru thirumurai (12 thirumuraikal) is a collection of 12 holy scriptures sung by 27 devotees in Tamil (from Thirugnanasambandar to Chekkizar) most of whom lived in different times. The songs reflect and teach the ways of present life, after-life and the path to Salvation. They help to live life and experience it to its fullest with happiness and prosperity. They are considered panacea with indiscriminate approach to the masses and the elite alike and apply to all in various states and conditions.

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One of the Panniru Thirumurai, is Thevaram. Thevaram is a compilation of the hymns on Lord Siva sung by Sundarar, Appar or Tirunavakkarasu, and Tirugnana Sambandar. These hymns are accepted as the prayer songs sung in praise of the Lord Siva who is pleased by its praise and melody.

Of the panniru thirumurai, thevaram, is considered as the most important. Thevaram refers to songs (pamaalai) sung in God's praise.

7.11 THIRUVACHAGAM (PANNIRU THIRUMURAI)

Thiruvachagam in Tamil means 'sacred utterances'. This is a compilation of the Tamil hymns in the praise of Lord Siva by poet Manickavachagar, who is considered as one of the four Saiva Samaya Kuravas (teachers).

One of the Panniru Thirumurai, is Thiruvagasam. Thiruvagasam. is a compilation of the hymns on Lord Siva sung by Manickavachagar. These hymns are accepted as the prayer songs in praise of the Lord Siva who is pleased by its praise and melody.

This was composed in 9th Century . It contains 51 compositions and constitutes the 8th Volume of the Thirumurai (of the 12 Thirumurai)

Thiruvagasam is believed to have been originated from Tirupperunturai also known as Avudayar Koil, Shiva temple where Manikkavasagar is said to have converted the king to Shaivism and built the temple with money that had been intended for war-horses.

Thiruvagasam is considered as a sacred anthology of Tamil Saiva Siddantha. Thiruvagasam is recited in the Tamil Saiva Temples alongwith Thevaram.

The South Indian bhakti poet-saints used to criticize the Jains and Buddhists who enjoyed a privileged status at the courts of South Indian monarchs during that era. They won over many adherents of Buddhism and Jainism both of which by then became rigid and formal religions. Bhakti movement in South was identified with Brahminism due to the intrinsic inequalities and imbalances that were existing in the Social Status of the Caste System. South Indian bhakti movement also had drawbacks. It never consciously opposed Brahmanism or the varna and caste systems at the social level. It was integrated with the caste system and the lower castes continued to suffer from inequalities in the social system. There was no elimination of Brahmin rituals such as worship of idols, recitation of the Vedic mantras and pilgrimages to sacred places in spite of the overriding stress on bhakti as the superior mode of worship. The Jains and Buddhists were its principal targets not the Brahmins. This perhaps was also the reason why the Brahman dominated temples played an important role in the growth of South Indian

bhakti movement. Temples were made the bases for promoting the Hindu Religion and many Monarchs devoted more resources in building State of Art Temple structures with Architectural Excellence. The ideological and social foundations of caste system were not challenged by the South Indian saint poets. As a result, the bhakti movement of the south in the long run strengthened that hierarchical system rather than weakening it. Ultimately after the movement reached its zenith in the 10th century, it was gradually incorporated by the traditional Brahmanical religion.

Despite these constraints, the South Indian bhakti movement in its shiny days succeeded in championing the cause of religious equality and consequently, the Brahmins had to accept the right of the low caste to preach, to have access to bhakti as a mode of worship and to have access even to the Vedas.

Thus, the Bhakti Movement was can be termed as a 'silent revolution' in restoration and redesigning of the human faith on a Super Power called God, in their own visualizations and in their own capacities or paths and economic status. Pilgrimages and Religious visits cemented the segments to get into a larger presence as a Religious Group representing all the Sects.

NOTES

Check Your Progress

1. What does the word 'Bhakti' mean?
2. When did the Bhakti Movement originate in India?
3. Name the religions which were supported by Kalabhras.
4. Which religions lost their supremacy during Pallava Regime?
5. Who were Saivites and what did they do?
6. Name the four popular Nayanmars who significantly contributed to the Bhakti Movement and its renaissance.
7. Who was Manickavachagar and why was he famous for?
8. What is Thevaram?

7.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The word Bhakti means a path for salvation. It is derived from the Sanskrit root word originating 'Bhaj', which literally means 'to utter' but the inner significance of the word is 'to love with honour'. Bhakti means devotional surrender to supreme God for attaining salvation or moksha. Bhakti as a philosophy, as a cult, penetrated into the daily life of the people and took shape as a movement between the 7th and 10th centuries.

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2. The Bhakti Movement was originated in the eighth-century in south India and spread northwards.
3. Kalabhras supported both Jainism and Buddhism.
4. Jainism and Buddhism lost their supremacy in the due course during the Pallava Regime.
5. Those who worshipped Lord Shiva were named as Saivites. Saivite saints were also called poet-saints as they also composed poems in praise of the God and spread the message through these poems as a module to develop followers in smaller groups to take the cult forward.
6. The four popular and important Nayanmars, who significantly contributed to the Bhakti Movement and its renaissance are:
 - (a) Thirunavukkarasar (Called as Appar adigal)
 - (b) Thirugnana Sambandar (Sambandar)
 - (c) Sundarar and
 - (d) Manickavachagar
7. Manickavachagar was one of the four *Nalvars* consisting of himself and the first three Nayanmars Appar, Sundarar and Sambandar. He was born in an orthodox *brahmin* family in Tiruvatavur near Madurai. Manickavachagar, celebrated as one of the four Saiva Samaya Acharyas, was born in Pandya Kingdom, at Tiruvarur. He played a pivotal role in uplifting the Saivism in Tamil Nadu.
8. Thevaram is a compilation of the hymns on Lord Siva sung by Sundarar, Appar or Tirunavakkarasu, and Tirugnana Sambandar. These hymns are accepted as the prayer songs sung in praise of the Lord Siva who is pleased by its praise and melody.

7.13 SUMMARY

- The word Bhakti means a path for salvation. It is derived as a word originating from 'Bhaj', a Sanskrit root word, which literally means 'to utter' but the inner significance of the word is 'to love with honour'.
- The Bhakti movement refers to the theistic devotional trend originated in eighth-century in South India and spread northwards. From the 15th century onwards, the Bhakti Movement swept over North and East India. This movement reached its pinnacle of glory between the 15th and 17th century AD.
- Between the 7th and the 10th century AD, Bhakti emerged from a mere religious doctrine, touching the region wise sentiments, into a popular movement. It was named as 'Bhakti Movement' later.

- Buddhist and Jain culture were posing threats to the Brahmins' customs and traditions during Kalabra era. The Kalabhras supported Jainism in a major way and Buddhism in a small way.
- Pallavas not only supported Hindu Religion but also changed the supremacy of Jainism and Buddhism. History confirms that Pallavas were the guardians of Shaivism.
- During the Sangam Era and thereafter, the spread of Literature as well as the moral and ethical values through poems, dramas, hymns and songs attracted more and more literate people to follow faiths as a precursor for societal development and social change.
- Those who worshipped Lord Shiva were named as Saivites. Saivite saints were also called poet-saints as they also composed poems in praise of the God and spread the message through these poems as a module to develop followers in smaller groups to take the cult forward.
- The Alvar and Nayanmar saints used the Tamil language and not Sanskrit for preaching and composing devotional songs.
- 63 Nayanmars worshipped Lord Shiva as their Principal Deity. They followed the rituals and the scriptures set out for the Siva Worship.
- Appar was originally a Jain follower. On his sister Thilagavathi's influence, Appar started getting attracted towards Saivism.
- Born as a Brahmin at Sirgazhi, in Tanjore District, Sambandar associated with Thirunavukkarasar for preaching Saiva Siddantha.
- Panniru thirumurai (12 thirumuraikal) is a collection of 12 holy scriptures sung by 27 devotees in Tamil (from Thirugnanasambandar to Chekkizar) most of whom lived in different times.
- One of the Panniru Thirumurai, is Thevaram. Thevaram is a compilation of the hymns on Lord Siva sung by Sundarar, Appar or Tirunavakkarasu, and Tirugnana Sambandar.
- Thiruvagasam is considered as a sacred anthology of Tamil Saiva Siddantha. Thiruvagasam is recited in the Tamil Saiva Temples alongwith Thevaram.

NOTES

7.14 KEY WORDS

- **Interregnum:** It refers to a period when a country or organization does not have a leader.
- **Apostle:** It refers to a vigorous and pioneering advocate or supporter of a particular policy, idea, or cause.
- **Hymn:** It refers to a religious song or poem Sung in praise of God.

7.15 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the genesis of the Bhakti Movement.
2. Why did the supremacy of the Hindu religion decline during the Sangam period?
3. What was the main reason of Kalabhras' revolt against Brahamins?
4. Write a short note on Nayanmars' contribution in taking forward the Bhakti Movement all through the ages.
5. Briefly mention the teachings of Appar.
6. Write a note on Panniru thirumurai in your own words.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the causes of the Bhakti Movement.
2. Discuss the decline of Brahaminism during the Kalabhra Period.
3. Explain the society's literary and cultural levels at the time of Kalabhra's departure.
4. How did Saivite saints helped in the progression of Bhakti Movement?
5. Discuss the teachings of Sundarar.
6. Why is the Bhakti Movement termed as a 'silent revolution'? Explain.

7.16 FURTHER READINGS

- Manoranjithamoni, C. 2015. *History of Tamil Nadu*. California: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
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UNIT 8 VAISHNAVISM

Structure

- 8.0 Introduction
- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 Twelve Alvars
 - 8.2.1 Nalayira Divya Prabhandam
 - 8.2.2 Thiruppavai
 - 8.2.3 Saivasiddantha Agamas
- 8.3 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 8.4 Summary
- 8.5 Key Words
- 8.6 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 8.7 Further Readings

NOTES

8.0 INTRODUCTION

Bhakti, a religious developed into a Bhakti Movement due to the effervescence effect of the Kalabhras' apathy towards Hinduism and the Brahminism. Once the Kalabhras' regime ended, it was a period of rebirth to Hinduism in Tamil Nadu. With the support and patronage of the Pallavas who were highly dedicated and devoted to Religion, it was possible that the Saints were able to influence the desired reformation in the Religious Philosophy of Tamil Nadu and at the same time not diluting the importance of the Brahmins who were serving the temple and temple lands.

Vaishnavism under the Pallavas Regime was spreading and Lord Vishnu was worshipped as the Presiding Deity by the Vaishnavites. Vaishnavite Sages were called Alvars. These Alvars were dedicated to the cult and they mingled with the devotees and ensured that the faith was growing and the rituals were carried out in a systematic way. They also ensured that they highlighted the supremacy of vaishnavism over all other faiths inclusive of Shaivism. However, the arguments amongst the Shiva and Vaishnava cults are co-existing.

8.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Prepare an overview of Vaishnavism
- Discuss the contribution of twelve Alvars to Vaishnavism
- Discuss some of the collection of the Alvars

8.2 TWELVE ALWARS

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The alvars (also spelt as alwars are immersed in god) Tamil poet-saints of South India who espoused bhakti (devotion) to the Hindu god Vishnu or his avatar Krishna in their songs of longing, ecstasy and service. They are venerated especially in Vaishnavism, which regards Vishnu or Krishna as the Supreme Being.

Many modern academics place the Alvars to the time brackets between 5th century and 10th century CE, however traditionally the Alvars are considered to have lived between 4200 BCE - 2700 BCE. Orthodoxy positions the number of alvars as ten, though there are other references that include Andal and Madhurakavi Alvar, making the number twelve. Andal is the only female saint-poet in the 12 Alvars.

Together with the contemporary sixty-three Shaiva Nayanars, 12 Alvars representing the Vishnu Cult spread the Bhakti Movement in the Era and they are among the most important saints from Tamil Nadu.

The devotional outpourings of Alvars, composed during the early medieval period of Tamil history, helped revive the Bhakti Movement, through their hymns of worship to Vishnu and his avatars. They praised the Divya Desams, 108 “abodes” (temples) of these Vaishnava deities. The poetry of the Alvars echoes bhakti to God through love, and in the ecstasy of such devotions they sang hundreds of songs which embodied both depth of feeling and felicity of expressions. The collection of their hymns is known as 4000 Divya Prabandham. The Bhakti literature that sprang from Alvars has contributed to the establishment and sustenance of a culture that broke away from the ritual-oriented Vedic religion and rooted itself in devotion as the only path for salvation. In addition, they helped to make the Tamil religious life independent of a knowledge of Sanskrit. As part of the legacy of the Alvars, five Vaishnava philosophical traditions (sampradayas) have developed at the later stages.

Twelve Alvars:

1. Poigai Alvar
2. Bhoothatalwar
3. Peyalwar
4. Thirumozhisai Alvar
5. Aandal
6. Nammalwar
7. Kulasekara Alvar
8. Thiruppanaalvar
9. Thirumangai Alvar

10. Madura Kavi Alwar
11. Periyalwar
12. Thondaradi podi alwar

Alvars are considered the twelve supreme devotees of Vishnu, who were instrumental in popularising Vaishnavism in the Tamil-speaking regions. The alvars were influential in promoting the Bhagavata cult and the two Hindu epics, namely, Ramayana and Mahabaratha.

The first three Alvars Poigai, Bhoothath and Pey belonged to the 7th century; while Nammalvar and Madhurakavi belonged to the 10th century; while rest of them lived in the 9th century.

Traditionally, the Alvars are considered to have lived between 4200 BCE - 2700 BCE. Traditional dates take them to the age of Shuka from the period of the *Bhagavata Purana*, many are from Dwaparayuga, while Nammalwar belongs to the early part of Kaliyuga.

Alvars were equally attacking the Jainism and its Philosophy, as was done by the Shaivites i.e., the 63 Nayanmars (Nayanars). Bhakti Movement touched its renaissance through the unstinted efforts and spread of messages by Alvars and Nayanmars. This alone placed them at the Pinnacle of glory resulting in the revival of the Hinduism with a greater push.

8.2.1 Nalayira Divya Prabhandam

The religious works of these Alvars in Tamil, songs of love and devotion, are compiled as *Nalayira Divya Prabandham* containing 4000 verses and the 108 temples revered in their songs are classified as *Divya desam*.

The verses of the various *azhwars* were compiled by Nathamuni (824-924 CE), a 10th-century Vaishnavite theologian, who called it the “Dravida Veda or Tamil Vedas.

The songs of *Prabandam* are regularly sung in all the Vishnu temples of South India daily and also during festivals.

Nalayira Divya Prabandham is divided into the following four sections of titles:

- (1) Muthal Ayiram
- (2) Periya Thirumozhi
- (3) Iraippa
- (4) Thirumozhi

Due to the undeterred efforts and devotion of the Alvars, the Vaishnava Cult became more and more vibrant and accepted and spread from South India to North and Eastern parts of India.

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8.2.2 Thiruppavai

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The Tiruppavai is a collection of thirty stanzas written in Tamil by Andal (also known as Nachiyar), in praise of the Lord (Vishnu). It is part of Divya Prabandha, a work of the twelve Alvars, and is important part of Tamil literature.

The period, from when the sun moves into the constellation of Dhanur-rasi or Sagittarius and until it moves out to the constellation of Makara-rasi or Capricorn is known as Dhanurmasam

According to the Vedic scriptures, the period just before the ensuing dawn is called Bramhamuhurtham. It is an auspicious time, for it gives good thoughts and intentions. Practices like meditation and penances done during this hour, give favorable results. According to the Vedic calendar, one Earth-year equals one celestial day. So the last six months on the earth (every year) is equal to one celestial night.

So, Andal performed a wonderful vratham or vow called Dhanurmasa vratham to tell us that, by practicing this one can attain all materialistic happiness along with the eternal bliss. She desired and attained Him. According to Thiruppavai poems, God is only one and He appears in various forms for our sake. He accepts our offerings and blessings even when He is worshipped in an idol-form in our house. . In Thiruppavai, Andal gives a universal call to all people to recite the name and glories of Lord Vishnu.

Kodhai Devi incarnated on earth in the 98th year after the beginning of the Kali Era (3102 BC). It is for this reason Kodha Devi performed the vratham near the deity Vatapathrasai. She desired for Lord Sri Ranganatha, she worshipped Lord Sundarabahu, she asked us to reach Sri Venkatachalapathi. This she did to create the faith that God exists in all forms. By whatever name one calls,

According to the poem, the symbolic undertone behind Andal's entreaty to her friends to wake up and seek Krishna subsumes the essence of the three basic mantras in the Vaishnava tradition — the

1. Tirumantram,
2. Dvayam and
3. Charama Sloka that signify the truth of the paramatma or the Supreme being who dwells in everything.

Tiruppavai is said to be the seed of the vedam. As the entire tree and the trees coming from it are hidden in the subtle seed, so is the entire essence of vedam hidden in Tiruppavai which can be revealed only under the guidance of an acharya or a guru who is well versed in vedic scriptures.

This entire hidden essence is mentioned in the Andal's verses in the form of poetry.

Thus, Thiruppavai poems became meaningful and popular such that even today in any Vaishnava Temple, especially in the month of Dhanur Month, Thirtuppavai is recited early in the morning i.e., Brahma Muhurtham.

8.2.3 Saivasiddantha Agamas

Saivasiddantha Agamas are the scriptures guiding the Saiva Philosophy that emerged in Tamil Nadu during the Bhakti Movement and thereafter.

There are 14 Scriptures under the Saiva Siddantha Agamas Classification. All these explain the three aspects of life and philosophy of the Saiva Siddantha cult:

- (a) Pathi denotes the ultimate being i.e., the God
- (b) Pasu denotes the Aanma or the Soul
- (c) Paasam denotes the Maya i.e., distractive forces on the earthly beings

Philosophy: It is to explain the process of the desire of the Soul to reach the Pathi, the ultimate being which is prevented and diverted by the Paasam or the Maya that detracts the soul from moving towards the God for salvation.

Agamas :

Sl. No	Name of the Agama	Author	Details and Age of the Agama
1.	Gnaanamirtham	Vakeesar	13 AD
2.	Siva Darumothiram	Maraignana sambandar	Not established
3.	Saiva Samaya Neri	Marignana sambandar	Not established
4.	Thiruvundhiyaar	Thiruviyalur Uyyavanda Devan	45 songs 12 AD
5.	Thiru Kalitru Padiyar	Thirukkadavuur Uyyavanda Deva Nayanar	12 AD 12 Songs
6.	Siva Gnana Bodham	Meikandaar	13 AD First Source Book in Tamil with 12 Soothras(Rules)
7.	Siva Gnana Siddhiyar	Arul Nandi Sivachaariyar	Contains Two Parts: 1. Supakkam 2. Parapakkam 629 stanzas 13AD
8.	Irupaa Iru pahthu	Arul Nandi Sivachariyar	Two parts of Venba and Agavarpa in the format of Question and Answers
9.	Unmai Vilakkam	Thiruvathigai Manavasagam kadandar	Question and Answer pattern 13 AD
10.	Sivaprakasam	Umapathi Sivachariyar	Types of Sivadeekshai are discussed 14 AD
11.	Siddanthaga Ashtagam	Umapathi Sivachariyar	Contains 8 Books Sivaprakasam Thiruvartupayan Vina Venba Potri pahtradai Kodikkavi Nenju vidu thoothu Unmai neri vilakkam Sangarpa niraaganam

The Bhakti Movement had its own designs and tools that formed the strategy

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to reach the people and their conscience to accept the God and to spread the essence of Bhakti to one and all.

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Check Your Progress

1. How did the Bhakti form develop into a Bhakti Movement?
2. What are Alvars?
3. Who are the first three Alvars?
4. Define Bramhamuhurtham?

8.3 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The Bhakti form developed into a Bhakti Movement due to the Kalabhras' apathy towards Hinduism and Brahminism.
2. The alvars, also spelled as alwars, are Tamil poet-saints of South India who espoused bhakti (devotion) towards the Hindu god Vishnu or his avatar Krishna in their songs, which are full of longing, ecstasy and service.
3. The first three Alvars are Poigai, Bhoothath, and Pey from the 7th century.
4. According to the Vedic scriptures, the period just before the ensuing dawn is called Bramhamuhurtham. It is an auspicious time as practices like meditation and penances done during this hour, give favorable results.

8.4 SUMMARY

- Vaishnavism spread largely under the Pallavas Regime, in which Lord Vishnu was worshipped as the presiding deity by the Vaishnavites. Vaishnavite Sages were called as Alvars.
- Alvars are considered the twelve supreme devotees of Vishnu, who were instrumental in popularising Vaishnavism in the Tamil-speaking regions.
- Due to the undeterred efforts and devotion of the Alvars, the Vaishnava Cult became more and more vibrant and accepted; and spread from South India to North and Eastern parts of India.
- Tiruppavai is said to be the seed of the Vedam. As the entire tree growing from it, is hidden in the delicate seed, so is the entire essence of vedam hidden in Tiruppavai which can be revealed only under the guidance of an acharya or a guru who is well versed in vedic scriptures.
- Saivasiddantha Agamas are the scriptures guiding the Saiva Philosophy that emerged in Tamil Nadu during the Bhakti Movement and thereafter.

8.5 KEY WORDS

- **Bhakti movement:** It refers to the devotional attitude towards God which emerged in medieval Hinduism.
- **Brahminism:** It refers to the domination of the priestly caste of Brahmins and their Hindu-ideology in Indian society.

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8.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on Nalayira Divya Prabhandam.
2. How Alvars contributed to the revival of Bhakti movement?
3. List the features of Alwar poetry.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the emergence of Bhakti movement.
2. Describe the scriptures of Saivasiddantha Agamas.
3. Critically comment on the poet, Andal.

8.7 FURTHER READINGS

- Manoranjithamoni, C. 2015. *History of Tamil Nadu*. California: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
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UNIT 9 PANDYAS OF MADURAI

NOTES

Structure

- 9.0 Introduction
- 9.1 Objectives
- 9.2 Early Pandyas
 - 9.2.1 Social, Economic and Cultural Contribution
- 9.3 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 9.4 Summary
- 9.5 Key Words
- 9.6 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 9.7 Further Readings

9.0 INTRODUCTION

The Pandyas of the Sangam period Pandyas reached their zenith of popularity and had to step down upon the invasion and defeat by Kalabhras.

Pandyas' popularity declined and Kalabhra's rule continued till 6th century AD. In 575 AD, the Pandiyan King Kadungon defeated the Kalabhras and expelled all the aliens and reestablished the Pandyan Rule at Madurai. He also defeated many territorial chieftains.

9.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- State the background of early Pandyas
- Discuss the contribution of early Pandyas
- Analyse the impact of the early Pandyas on future generations

9.2 EARLY PANDYAS

1. Pandiyan KADUNGON: (576-600) AD: Kadungon is responsible for the historic event of bringing an end to the kalabhra's rule in Pandya Kingdom. He defeated the Kalabhras and also recaptured the power of Pandya Kingdom. He brought back the Pandya Pride to Madurai, paving way for various developments by the future Pandyas. He is regarded as the Pandya king responsible for establishing the First Pandiyan empire.
2. Maravarman Avani Sulamani (600-625) AD: King Maravarman Avani Sulamani is the son of Pandiyan Kadungon.
 - a. He started the practice of using titles such as Maravarman, Sadaiyavarman.

- b. Pandiya and Pallava Wars started from the period of Maravarman Avani Sulamani.
3. Cheziyan Vendan (625-640) son of Maravarman Avani Sulamani continued the establishment of Pandiya Empire
 - a. He continued Pallava War.
 - b. He defeated the Cheras and got the title of VANAVAR.
 - c. He made friends with Chalukyas in the process of defeating the Pallavas.
 - d. At the stage of the last leg of his tenure, Hiuen Tsang visited Kanchi.
4. Maravarman Arikesari (640-670) AD: Arikesari assumed the powers of Pandya Kingdom on the death of his father, King Cheziyan Vendan, in 640
 - a. He had the titles of Koon Pandiyan and Sundara Pandiyan.
 - b. Velvikudi copper grants portray him as an able Warrior and list out the victory fides of the King.
 - c. He captured Chola City Uraiyur on the northern side.
 - d. He contained the Teritorial chieftains at the south of Pandya Kingdom.
 - e. He conquered the Cholas living on the northern side.
 - f. He also defeated the Cheras living in the western side of Tamil Nadu.
 - g. He defeated and contained Kalabhra King at Kodumbanur.
 - h. At Sankaramangai, he defeated the Pallavas.

Arikesari was a Jain. Nayanar Thirugnanasambandar influenced him to embrace the Saiva faith. Pandya State under his rule flourished in the trade and pearls were also exported to foreign countries establishing a robust economic activity.
5. Arikesari Parangusa Maravarman: (710-765) AD: After Maravarman Arikesari, Kochadaiyan ranadheeran became the Pandya King. His rule more territories under the Pandya Kingdom.
 - a. He had to fight the Pallavas initially. Pallava King Nandivarman invaded Pandya Kingdom and he was defeated.
 - b. Parangusa Maravarman defeated the Malava King.
 - c. He also defeated the Gangar and brought them under Pandya Kingdom territory.
 - d. He was an ardent Shivite and the Pandya State reached its peak during his rule.
6. Nedunchadaiyan Paranthagan (765-790) AD: He was a very powerful King who annexed more territories like the earlier Kings.
 - a. He defeated the Pallava King Nandivarman at Pennadagam and restored control.

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- b. He fought with the Kongu kings and annexed Kongu nadu.
 - c. He won the Venad territory and brought in a lot of plundered wealth into Pandya Kingdom.
 - d. He also defeated the Mutharaiyar and Velir Chieftain Aai.
 - e. Nedunchadaiyan Paranthagan was a Vaishnavite and he is rated as the most powerful Pandya King who annexed more territories during his rule to the Pandya Kingdom.
 - f. He built a Vaishnavite Temple at Kongu Nadu.
 - g. He Built a Temple in Anamalai for Vishnu.
 - h. He donated to Vaishnavite temples and patronized them.
7. Varaguna Pandiyan (800-830) AD.
- a. Pandya Kingdom spread over the Chola territories during this tenure.
 - b. Mutharaiyar near Tanjore came under the Pandya Rule.
 - c. Pallava King Nandivarman was defeated during the tenure of Varaguna Pandiyan.
 - d. Pandyan territories were expanded upto Pennaiyar in Thondai nadu.
 - e. He was a Shivite and was a donor to Religious activities.
8. Seemara Seevallaban (830-862) AD
- a. He defeated Chera King at Vizignam.
 - b. He invaded Ceylon and defeated Senan I.
 - c. With plundered Wealth from Ceylon and returned to Madurai.
 - d. Nandivarman III of Pallava Dynasty waged a war to recover the lost Pride of Pallavas. He won the War at Thellar.
 - e. Seemara Seevallaban lost Northern territories of the Pandya Kingdom.
9. Varaguna Pandiyan II (862-880) AD
- a. To recover the lost territories of Chola and Thondai Mandalam territories, Varaguna pandiyan invaded Idavai town.
 - b. Sensing the danger looming around Pallavas due to Pandiyan dominance, Pallava King Aparajithan combined with Aditya Cholan waged a war on Pandyan Kingdom. They defeated Varaguna Pandiyan and captured territories lost in the earlier wars.
 - c. Gangar King Prithivirajapathi I was killed in the Thiruppurambiyam war.
 - d. Thiruppurambiyam War changed the fortunes of the Pandiyan Kingdom and the Chola Kingdom.
 - e. Thirupurambiyam War set the trend for the Chola Kingdom to expand their rule in Tamilnadu for the next 200 years from Thungabadra on the North to Kanyakumari on the South.

f. He was charitable and patronized and donated for Thiruchendur Temple rituals.

10. Paranthaga Pandiyan succeeded his brother Varaguna pandiyan II
 - a. Tanjore and Kodumbanur territories were captured by him and the Chieftains subdued.
 - b. Following Jainism, Paranthaga Pandiyan donated to Jain Institutions.
 - c. In vellore war, the Cholas defeated the Pandyas and captured Madurai.
11. Veerapandiyan: Rajasimhan's son Veerapandiyan
 - a. He recaptured Madurai from the Cholas, when the Cholas were engaged in a war with the Rashtrakootas
 - b. Adithya chola killed Veerapandiyan and took control of Madurai again

With this war, the rule of Early Pandyas' Rule in Pandya Kingdom came to an end.

Check Your Progress

1. How Pandyas reestablished their rule after being defeated by Kalabhras?
2. Which King had the titles of Koon Pandiyan and Sundara Pandiyan?

9.2.1 Social, Economic and Cultural Contribution

Social status

Early Pandyas created a social set up based on Villages. Brahmins, Agriculturists, Traders, Artisans formed the society.

Brahmins were found as higher castes; agriculturists as the middle deckers and the rest of the lot as lower level.

Brahmins: Addressed as Vedics and Gurukkals. Their living places were named as Brahmadeyam. They formed a council in villages and were administering. They also enjoyed the patronage and status from the Kings. Brahmins were found to be engaged in trade also. Their women followed the Dhanur month Fasting and other fastings. The Brahmins were found to worship Krishna as their presiding deity.

Agriculturists: Addressed as Vellalas were engaged primarily in agricultural farming. They lived in families. Father and mother were given predominance. They also served the Kings by building the temples. Vellalas also formed a village council and administered. Landless agriculturists were dependent on the Landlords and took a share of the produce.

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Other artisans and traders: Rest of the subjects were found categorized in the lower category of the society. They included shepherds, carpenters, artisans—all types of traders.

The villages were found to be under the control of Landlords called Nattars during the Early Pandya Kingdom Rule.

Economy

The economic system of the Early Pandya Kingdom consisted of production. The agricultural produce was shared by the landlords and the Landless labourers called Kudi. People stayed permanently in the villages and the produce was shared between the Landlords and the Kudi representatives. Apart from this, some worked for survival through wages.

Livestock trade was also present in the economy. Agriculturists also reared the cattle and shepherds. There was production of Milk and the produce was exchanged for other items under the barter system.

People donated produce and items to the temples and the temples sold them to the public. This became the fund for the temples. Temple based economic activity is considered as the special feature of the Early Pandya Kingdom.

Money in circulation was called coins named as “kaasu” Kasu was made of gold. The medium of exchange was determined based on the quantity of Paddy in exchange with other commodities.

Society and Heritage

Religion and Culture had remarkable growth in the Early Pandya Rule.

Religion: People worshipped Lord Muruga (Subrahmanya). Temples were built in Tiruchendur, Tirupparankunram and Anamalais.

King Varagunavarman I embraced Saiva cult under the influence of Nayanar Thiru Gnana Sambandar. Due to this, Saiva thrived and Jainism declined. With the efforts of manickavachagar, and his literature, the Saiva cult grew as Saiva Siddantham (Saiva philosophy).

In the Period of Early Pandyas: Jains were more and they were found in Pallimadam, Kuranthai. Influence of Buddhism cult was found less penetrative in this regime. In Tirunelveli, one Buddhist monk called Dharmapala was living. Vacchira Bodhi was another Buddhist teacher, mentioned in the Buddhist literature.

Supremacy of Vaishnavism over Saivism: In the Early Pandya Regime, Vaishnavism took the supremacy as the Kings Nedunchadaya Paranthakan, Srimara Srivallaban were patronizing the Vaishnavism. Srivilliputtur turned out to be the centre of Vaishnav Cult.

Alvars spread the Vasihnava Philosophy. Nammalvar, Madurakavi Alvar, Periyalwar and Andal spread the Vaishnava principles.

Architecture: During this era, Temple constructions was found to be an important contribution of the Pandyas.

Temples were found in three major classifications:

- (1) Cave Temples
- (2) Monolith temples
- (3) Constructed Temples

Architecture and style: The architecture followed in the Cave Temples and monolith temples represent the Pallavan model as well as the Rashtrakoota model of temple building.

Pillayarpatti temple constructed as a cave temple belongs to the 6th century AD. Malayadikurichi Cave temple is near Sankarankovil. Tiruparankunram Cave Temple sculptures are more adored.

Early Pandyas' Monolithic Temple is found in Kalugu Malai. It belongs to the 8th century.

Besides, there are many constructions found in the Era of Early Pandyas which are of various designs and architectural styles. Some are constructed as Half stone and Half bricks and some are Full stone structures. Early Pandyas preferred Ashtanga Vimana types of temples in general.

Living examples of Pandya Temples:

1. Ambasamudhram Erichavudayar temple
2. Koodalagar temple, Madurai
3. Kutralanathar Temple
4. Thiruvaleeswarar Temple

Conclusion

Thus, the Early Pandyas dedicated and strengthened their religious faith through building temples of a combined architectural style and design followed by Pallavas, Rashtrakootas and Early Pandya's own Temple Structure with Eight Vimanas. Society developed in a better way with taking up various vocations with Agriculture as primary occupation.

With the plunders during their invasions, Early Pandyas got huge wealth and at the same time due to wars they lost territories as well as wealth.

The rule came to its dusk during the last King Veerapandian, who was deceived and killed by Adithya cholan before capturing Madurai.

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Check Your Progress

3. Who were Vellalas?
4. How Vaishnavism replaced Saivism?

9.3 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Pandyas reestablished their rule after being defeated by Kalabhras in 575 AD, when the Pandiyan King Kadungon defeated the Kalabhras and expelled all the aliens and reestablished the Pandyan Rule at Madurai.
 2. Maravarman Arikesari (640-670 AD), the son of the King Cheziyan Vendan, had the titles of Koon Pandiyan and Sundara Pandiyan.
 3. Vellalas were the agriculturists, who were primarily engaged in farming. They served the kings by building the temples as well. They also formed a village council and administered landless agriculturists.
 4. Vaishnavism replaced Saivism as the Kings Nedunchadaya Paranthakan and Srimara Srivallaban were patronising Vaishnavism.
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9.4 SUMMARY

- Kadungon is responsible for the historic event of bringing an end to the kalabhra's rule in Pandya Kingdom.
 - As Adithya chola killed Veerapandiyan and took control of Madurai, the rule of early Pandyas' rule in Pandya kingdom came to an end.
 - Early Pandyas created a social set-up based in villages; Brahmins, agriculturists, traders, and artisans formed the society.
 - The economic system of the early Pandya Kingdom consisted of production of agricultural produce, which was shared by the landlords and the landless labourers, called Kudi.
 - Religion and culture had a remarkable growth in the early Pandya rule.
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9.5 KEY WORDS

- **Vaishnavism:** It is one of the major traditions within Hinduism, which considers Vishnu as the Supreme Lord.

- **Monolithic temples:** It refers to the temples, which are carved, cast or excavated from a single piece of material, historically from rock.

Pandyas of Madurai

9.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short-Answer Questions

1. List the qualities of Maravarman Arikesari.
2. Write a short note on the rule of Varaguna Pandiyan.
3. What do you think about the architecture during the early Pandyas' period?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the cultural contribution of Pandyas.
2. Comment on the reign of the important kings of early Pandyas.
3. Discuss the social structure of during the rule of early Pandyas.

9.7 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 10 CHOLA EMPIRE

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Structure

- 10.0 Introduction
- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Emergence of Chola Empire
 - 10.2.1 Rulers of Chola Empire
 - 10.2.2 The Central and Provincial Administration
 - 10.2.3 Army and Warfare
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 - 10.2.5 Administrative Divisions
 - 10.2.6 Local Self-government
- 10.3 Socio-Economic and Religious Condition
- 10.4 Art and Architecture
- 10.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 10.6 Summary
- 10.7 Key Words
- 10.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 10.9 Further Readings

10.0 INTRODUCTION

The Chola dynasty was known as one of the longest-ruling dynasties in the history of South India. The Chola Empire ruled over Tamil Nadu as well as over some parts of Karnataka. The Karikala Cholas who ruled in the second century AD were considered significant for Chola Empire. After them, the Chola dynasty became dormant for a long period of time and it re-emerged in the reign of Vijayalaya. He captured Tanjore and also built a temple at Tanjore in order to commemorate its accession.

In this unit, you will learn about the emergence of Chola Empire in South India, different rulers of Chola Empire like Vijayalaya, Parantaka, Rajendra etc. You will also study about the socio-economic and religious condition during Cholas administration. In addition to this, the unit also focuses on the art and architecture of South India under the Cholas.

10.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the emergence of Chola Empire in South India
- Discuss the achievements of the various rulers of the Chola Empire
- Explain the socio-economic and religious conditions during the Cholas reign
- Evaluate the art and architecture of the state under the supervision of Cholas

10.2 EMERGENCE OF CHOLA EMPIRE

The Chola kingdom was a very ancient one. There is a reference to the Cholas in the Mahabharata. They are also mentioned in the account of Megasthenes and the inscriptions of Ashoka. Katyayana also refers to the Cholas. The *Mahavamsa* refers to the relations between the Cholas and the rulers of Ceylon. Ptolemy also refers to the Cholas. The Sangam literature refers to many Chola princes who were models of justice. The Periplus gives us information about Porus and inland towns of the Chola territory. The kingdom of the Cholas included modern Madras, several others districts of Tamil Nadu and the greater part of the Mysore State.

10.2.1 Rulers of Chola Empire

Important Chola rulers and their achievements are discussed as follows:

A. Vijayalaya (AD 850–871)

The founder of the Chola dynasty of Tanjore was Vijayalaya. He was a feudatory chief of the Pandyas. He also conquered the valley of Kosala and the lower valley of Kaveri.

B. Aditya I (AD 871–907)

The independent kingdom of the Cholas was created by Aditya I, the son and successor of Vijayalaya. Aditya helped his overlord, the Pallava King Aparajita, against the Pandyas, but did not remain loyal to him for long. Near about AD 893, he fought against Aparajita and killed him in a battle. He then occupied the entire territory of Tondaimandalam and became a sovereign ruler. He also occupied most of the territories of the Pandyas and the Western Gangas. He made Tanjore his capital, beautified it, and built several temples of Siva there. Thus, the foundation of the greatness of the Cholas was laid by Aditya I.

C. Parantaka I (AD 907–953)

Parantaka I was an ambitious ruler and engaged himself in wars of conquest from the beginning of his reign. His main conquest was that of Madurai. The Pandya ruler, Rajasinha II, sought the help of the Ceylonese king. Yet, he could not defend his kingdom against the attacks of Parantaka. It was a difficult task, but Parantaka succeeded in capturing Madurai and reduced it to obedience and order, though the task kept him busy for many years. Parantakas also defeated the Bana Country with the help of his ally Prithvipati II, the Western Ganga ruler. Thus, by his successive victories, he established an extensive empire.

The Rashtrakutas could not tolerate the new rising power of the Cholas in their neighbourhood. The Rashtrakuta king Krishna III attacked Parantaka I and defeated the Cholas in a decisive battle at Takkolam in AD 949. This defeat gave a rude shock to the imperialist ambitions of the Cholas. Rather, for the next thirty-

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two years they remained an insignificant power in the politics of the south, though sometime during the reign of Sundara Chola or Parantaka II, the successors of Parantaka I, the Cholas, probably, succeeded in recovering Tondaimandalam from the Rashtrakutas.

D. Rajaraja the Great (AD 985–1014)

The credit for reviving the lost glory of the Cholas went to Rajaraja who proved himself as the great ruler of the Cholas. He pursued a policy of war and conquest and defeated the Western Gangas, the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi, the Pandyas of Madurai, the Gangas of Kalinga, and the Cheras of Kerala and, thus, extended his empire and influence to the far south. Rajaraja also laid the foundation of the greatness of the navy of the Cholas. He conquered Kurga, the entire Malabara coast and a part of Ceylon, with the support of its navy. He also conquered the Maldives islands and attacked the islands of the south-east. He befriended King Tungavamana of Srivijaya Empire of the south-east Asia. He placed Vimaladitya, the younger brother of Saktivarman I, on the throne of Vengi and married his daughter to him which ultimately prepared the way for the union of the Eastern Chalukyas and the Cholas. Thus, Rajaraja succeeded in the establishment of a fairly extensive empire in the far south.

Rajaraja was one of the greatest rulers of South India. He was a conqueror, an empire builder, a good administrator and a patron of art and literature. He laid the foundation of the greatness of the navy of the cholas who, afterwards, became one of the foremost naval powers in south east Asia. He also laid the foundation of the local self-government in the administration of the Cholas. The navy and the local self-government were primarily the contributions of Rajarara to the chola Dynasty. Rajaraja was a Saiva. He constructed the saiva-temple of Rajmajeshwari which has been regarded as a remarkable specimen of Tamil architecture. However, he was a pious and a tolerant ruler. He also patronized Buddhist *Viharas* and monasteries.

E. Rajendra I (AD 1014–1044)

Rajendra pursued the policy of conquest and annexation adopted by his father and raised the power and prestige of the Cholas to its highest. His period was the period of zenith of the glory of the Cholas. He defeated and annexed the kingdoms of the Pandyas and the Cheras of the extreme south, he conquered Ceylon, though, and in AD 1029 south Ceylon became free from his control. He foiled the attempt of the Chalukya Jayasimha to conquer Vengi and, during his later years, he attacked and plundered the kingdom of the Chalukya king, Somesvara I. The Western Chalukyas accepted the river Tungabhadra as the dividing line between their boundary and the boundary of the Chola kingdom. Proceeding through Kalinga, Orissa and Bastara, Rajendra attacked West Bengal and defeated the Pala ruler Mahipala. However, he annexed no territory in North India. His main purpose in attacking the north was to get fame. His navy attacked the Srivijaya Empire which

was a great naval power in south-east Asia at that time and forced it to accept his suzerainty. Thus, he increased the prestige of his naval power in the Arabian Sea and succeeded in safeguarding the trade of his empire on high seas.

Rajendra, thus, was a great conqueror. He was the first Indian ruler who established the supremacy of Indian Navy in the Arabian Sea. Besides, he was a capable ruler and a good administrator. He patronized art and learning. He gave liberal grants to educational institution. He founded the city of Gangaikondacholapuram and made it his capital. Therein, he built beautiful palaces and temples and a lake named Cholagangam, which was sixteen miles in length. Rajendra proved even greater than his father, Rajaraja the Great, and expanded the glory of the Cholas which was established by his father.

F. Rajadhiraj I (AD 1044–1052)

Rajendra was succeeded by his son Rajadhiraj I. Mostly, he remained busy in suppressing the revolts in Ceylon and the Pandya territory. In AD 1052, he succeeded in defeating the Chalukya ruler Somesvara, but was himself killed during the course of the battle. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Rajendra II.

G. Rajendra II (AD 1052–1063)

Rajendra fought against the kings of Ceylon and the western Chalukyas and succeeded in defending the frontiers of his empire.

H. Virajendra I (AD 1063–1070)

Rajendra II was succeeded by his younger brother Viranjendra I. He kept his suzerainty over Ceylon and Srivijaya Empire and defeated the Chalukya rulers Somesvara I and Somesvara II.

I. Athirajendra

He succeeded his father Virajendra, but he was soon killed in a rebellion. The main dynasty of the Cholas ended with the death of Athirajendra. After him, Kulottunga I (AD 1070–1118) the great-grandson of Rajaraja I, ascended the throne. Kulottunga I defeated the ruler of the Pandya kingdom and that of Kerala. He married his daughter to a Ceylonese Prince and kept diplomatic relations with Kannauj, Kamboja, China and Burma. He also brought prosperity to his empire.

J. Kulottunga I

He was succeeded by Vikram Chola, Kulottunga II, Rajaraja II, Rajadhiraja II, Kulottunga III, Rajaraja III and Rajendra III respectively, who, put together, ruled for more than a century. However, the powers of the Cholas gradually declined during their reign. The neighbouring rulers of Pandya, Hoysala, Kakatia and Eastern Gangas constantly threatened their territory and went on occupying parts of it. Ultimately, in AD 1258, the Pandya ruler Sundara forced the Chola Rajendra III to accept his suzerainty and that finished the independent status of the Cholas.

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Importance of the Cholas

The Chola dynasty was one of the most important ruling dynasties in the ancient India. It maintained a well-organized administrative system. It is famous for its promotion to local self-government.

10.2.2 The Central and Provincial Administration

The king was the head of the administration and all powers were concentrated in his hands. The Chola king assumed high sounding titles. Tanjore, Gangaikondacholapuram, Mudikondan and Kanchi remained the various capitals of different Chola rulers at various times. The Chola Empire was extensive and prosperous and the rulers enjoyed high powers and prestige. The images of the kings and their wives were also maintained in various temples which indicated that they believed in the divine origin of kingship. Yet, the Chola rulers were not despotic rulers. They accepted the welfare of their subjects as their primary duty. The Chola rulers started the practice of electing their successor or Yuvaraja and of associating him with administration during their life-time. That is why, there were no wars of succession among the Cholas. The position of the king was hereditary and, normally, the eldest son of the king was nominated as the successor. However, sometimes, if the eldest was found incompetent, the successor was chosen from amongst the younger sons or the brothers of the king.

The king was assisted by ministers and other high officials of the state in administration who were given high titles, honours and lands as *Jagirs*. The Cholas had organized an efficient bureaucracy and their administration was successful.

10.2.3 Army and Warfare

The Cholas maintained powerful armies and navies. The infantry, the cavalry and the war elephants constituted the main parts of the army of the Cholas. It seems that the Cholas had seventy regiments. Probably, the army consisted of 1,50,000 soldiers and 60,000 war elephants. The Cholas spent huge amounts to maintain an efficient cavalry and imported the best horses from the Arab countries to equip their army. During peace time, the army remained in cantonments where proper arrangements were made for its training and discipline. The kings kept their personal bodyguards, called the *Veiaikkaras*, who were sworn to defend the person of the king at the cost of their lives. The soldiers and the officers, who distinguished themselves in war, were given titles like *Kshatriyasikhamani*. The credit of maintaining a strong navy, both for offensive and defensive purposes, went first to the Cholas among Indian rulers. The Cholas attacked and forced the kings of Ceylon and Srivijaya Empire to accept their suzerainty, defended their trade on high seas and became the masters of the Bay of Bengal. However, the Cholas did not observe the Hindu morality of warfare, i.e., *Dharma Yudha*. The Chola army caused much injury to the civil population, including women. The soldiers engaged themselves in loot, destruction, killing of civil population and dishonouring of woman during warfare.

10.2.4 Revenue System

The primary source of the income of the state was land revenue. Rajaraja I took one-third of the produce as land revenue from his subjects. The revenue was collected both in cash and kind. The land was divided into different categories on the basis of its productivity and it was measured and revenue was charged upon the actual produce. The revenue was charged directly from the cultivators but, in certain cases, from the entire village as one unit. The officers observed severity while collecting the revenue. However, the Cholas also tried their best to develop artificial means of irrigation. They built several dams on the river Kaveri and also made lakes for the purposes of irrigation. Besides land revenue, taxes on trade, various professions, forests, mines, irrigation, salt, etc., were other sources of the income of the state. The main items of expenditure of the state were the expenses of the king and his palace, the army, the civil services and public welfare works.

10.2.5 Administrative Divisions

The empire was divided into *Mandalas* for the convenience of administration. They were either seven or eight in number. The *Mandalas* were divided into *Nadus* and *Nadus* into *Kurrams* or *Kottams*. Every *Kurram* had several villages, which were the smallest units of administration.

10.2.6 Local Self-government

The arrangement of local self-government has been regarded as the basic feature of the administration of the Cholas. Probably, no other ruling dynasty of either the north or the south had such an extensive arrangement of local self-government at different units of the administration as the Cholas. The Mahasabha of the village played an important role in the administration of the village. Besides, there was a provision of representative bodies at the level of *Kurram*, *Nadu* and *Mandal* as well, which all helped in the administration. An assessment can be made of the nature of the local self-government by the rights and duties of the Mahasabha of the village.

For the formation of Mahasabha, first a village was divided into thirty wards. The people of each ward used to nominate a few people possessing the ownership of about an acre and a half of land, residence in a house built at one's own site, aged between thirty-five and seventy, possessing knowledge of one Veda and a Bhahsya. Moreover, he or any of his relations must not have committed any wrong or received punishment. Besides, those who had been on any of the committees for the past three years and those who had been on the committee, but had failed to submit the accounts, were excluded from being the nominees. From among the persons duly nominated, one was chosen from every ward to be the member of the Mahasabha. At this stage, the members were not chosen by election, but by the lot-system. Names of persons were written on palm-leaf tickets which were put into a pot and shuffled and a young boy was directed to take out the ticket.

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The same procedure was followed for the formation of the different committees of the Mahasabha. Thus, the Mahasabha of a village was constituted of educated and economically independent persons of the village and in all, had thirty members. There were also different committees of the Mahasabha to look after different things concerning the village like the judicial committee, the garden committee, the committee to look after tanks and irrigation etc.

The Mahasabha enjoyed wide powers. It possessed proprietary rights over community lands and controlled the private lands within its jurisdiction. The Central or the provincial government consulted the Mahasabha of the village concerning any change in the management of the land of the village. It helped the officials of the government in the assessment of production and revenue of the village. It collected revenue and, in cases of default, had the power to sell the land in question by public auction. It looked after the reclamation of waste land and forest which were within its jurisdiction. It imposed taxes and appointed paid officials to look after the administration of the village. The judicial committee of the Mahasabha, called the *Nyayattar*, settled cases of disputes, both civil and criminal. It looked after the roads, cleanliness, lighting of temples, tanks, rest-house and security of the village.

Thus, the Mahasabha looked after the civic, police judicial, revenue, and all other functions concerning the village. It was an autonomous body and functioned mostly independently. The central government interfered in its working only when it was felt absolutely necessary. Thus, the villages under the administration of the Cholas were practically 'little republics' which drew admiration from even British administrators. Dr K.A. Nilakanta Sastri maintains that it was an able bureaucracy which in various ways fostered a lively sense of citizenship. There was a high standard of administrative efficiency and purity. The highest ever attained by the Hindu state.

Check Your Progress

1. List some achievements of King Rajaraja.
2. Why was Chola dynasty famous for?
3. What are the main parts of the army of the Cholas?

10.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION

Social Condition

Society was based upon *Varnaashramdharma*, but different Varnas or castes lived peacefully with each other. Inter-caste marriages were permitted and it had led to the formation of different sub-castes. The position of women was good.

They were free from many restrictions which came to be imposed on them by the Hindu society later on. There was no *purdah* system and women participated freely in all social and religious functions. They inherited and owned property in their own right. There were stray cases of Sati but it was not a widely practiced system. Normally, monogamy was the prevalent rule but the kings, the Samantas and the rich people kept several wives. The Devadasi system was also in vogue and there were prostitutes in cities. The slave system was also prevalent.

Economic Condition

The Chola Empire enjoyed a widespread prosperity. The Cholas had arranged for proper means of irrigation which had helped in the reclamation of waste land and increased agricultural production which provided the base for the prosperity of both the rulers and the ruled. The Cholas maintained peace and security within their territory, constructed well-connected roads, provided safety to travellers and traders and, above all, kept a strong navy on high seas. In such conditions, trade, both internal and external, grew which resulted in increased prosperity of the state. The traders had brisk trade with China, Malaya, Western Gulf and the island south-east Asia. Industries also grew up under the protection of the Cholas. Cloth, ornaments, metals and their different products, production of salt and constructions of images and temples were a few important industries which grew and prospered under the protection of the Cholas.

Religious Condition

Chola kings were saivites and they worshiped Lord Siva. They built many Siva temples. Parantaka I, Rajaraja I, Rajendra King Gandraditya and his queen Sembiyan madevi contributed more for the development of Saivism and Bakthi literature. Parantaka I covered the Siva temple with gold at Chidambaram. King Rajaraja I Built Brahadeeswarar temple (big temple) at Tanjore. Rajendra-I Constructed Siva temple at Polonaaruva in Ceylon and Gangaikonda Cholapuram. Lands, Jewels and vessels were donated to these temples.

Chola Kings were tolerant towards other religions. Along with Lord Shiva, they also worship Lord Vishnu. Thiruvallangadu copper plates. Karanthai plates and Anbil plates talk about the religious conditions of the Chola period. Masimaham Mahamaham, Karthigai, Thaipusam Sivarathri, Chithiraivizha, Aipasivizha were important festivals celebrated during the Chola period. Tanjore, Kumbakonam, Avudaiyarkoil, Kalahasti Tirukadaiyur and Kanchipuram were important temple cities.

10.4 ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The Chola Empire is one of the most admired dynasties of South India. As stated above, they ruled over Tamil Nadu and over some parts of Karnataka. Their capital was Tanjore.

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Rajaraja I (985-1014 AD) was one of the greatest Chola rulers. He again won the territories that he had previously lost to the Rastrakuta. Rajendra Chola, the son of Rajaraja I (1012-44 AD), was also a good ruler.

Dravidian art and architecture flourished a lot during the period of the imperial Cholas. They used the wealth, which they earned through conquests, in building stone temples and bronze sculptures. Most of these temples and sculptures exist even today.

The Cholas kept following the temple building traditions of the Pallava dynasty and built a number of temples throughout the kingdom. Gradually, they took the Dravidian temple architecture to great heights. This development of architectural styles can be divided into three phases - the early phase, the middle phase and the final phase.

In addition to temples, many other buildings were also built by the Cholas such as palaces and public utility buildings. The mention of many such buildings is there in their inscriptions and contemporary accounts. Aditya Karikala also built a golden palace for his father Sundara Chola. But such buildings were built of perishable materials such as timber; therefore they could not survive the ravages of time.

Early Chola Period

Dravidian temple architecture is believed to have been started in the period of Pallavas and evolved in the period of Cholas.



Fig. 10.1 Vijayalaya Choleswaram

The early Cholas such as Aditya I and Parantaka I, built a number of temples. The temples built during the early Cholas were much smaller than the ones built by the later Cholas. Also, Early Cholas perhaps used bricks instead of stones in the construction of these temples.

One of the examples of early Chola building is Vijayala Choleswaram in Tamil Nadu. The circumambulatory corridor of the temple is square in shape

whereas the cell where the idol of the deity is placed is circular (see Figure 10.1). There are four storeys and each one of them is separated from the other by a cornice. The structure of the temple is surmounted by a dome and above it is a stone *kalasa* - a crest.

The Koranganatha Temple at Srinivasanallur was built during the period of Parantaka I. This temple is constructed on the banks of the river Kaveri. The temple is small in size and has beautiful sculptures on its entire surface. The base of the wall is decorated with the sculptures of mythical animals. Such sculptures were unique to Chola architecture.

A feudatory of Parantaka Chola II built Muvarkovil - Temple of three in the 2nd half of the 10th century. There are three main shrines in this temple which are constructed in a row. Two of these shrines as well as the remains of basement of the third shrine are in existence today. These shrines also depict the features of the architectural style used by the later Chola temples.

Middle Period

Rajaraja Chola and his son Rajendra Chola I also contributed a lot to the art of temple building. Many small shrines, such as Tiruvalisvaram temple, were built during the early phase of this period. Designs of creepers and foliage have been used to decorate the cornice of the temple tower. Uttara Kailasa Temple at Thanjavur and Vaidyanatha Temple at Tirumalavadi have also been constructed using the same architectural structure.



Fig. 10.2 Detail of the Main Gopura (Tower) of the Thanjavur Temple

Magnificent temples of Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram exhibit the grandeur to which the Chola architecture rose over a period of time. The beautiful Siva temple of Thanjavur (see Figure 10.2) clearly exhibits the material achievements of Rajaraja. It is the largest as well as the tallest Indian temple.

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This temple has two gopuras or towers which are oriented in the same direction. The vimana of the temple is 190 feet high. The towers have been mentioned in the inscription as Rajarajan tiruvasal and Keralantakan tiruvasal.

The inscriptions also reveal that Rajaraja started building this temple on his 19th regnal year and it took only 6 years to complete this temple.

This temple was given the name of Rajarajesvaram by Rajaraja. He named the deity Shiva in Linga form, Peruvudaiyar. Thus, the temple is also called Peruvudaiyarkovil. In later period, Maratha as well as Nayaks rulers added various shrines and *gopurams* in the temple (see Figure 10.3). Later, the temple was renamed Brihadesvaram and the deity was called Brihadesvara.



Fig. 10.3 Brihadeswara Temple, Tanjore

The administrative and financial procedures of the temple have been engraved on the walls of the temple. The inscriptions have all the details of the metallic images that have been placed in the temple. There are a total of sixty-six metallic images. The minutest details such as size, shape and composition of these images have been given in the inscriptions.

The figures of sacred bull called Nandis are there in the corners of the Shikharam. The *Kalasa*m in this temple is about 3.8 metres in height. A number of stucco figures have been used to decorate the *Vimana*. Historians believe that some of these figures were added during the reign of Maratha. The main deity lingam is quite big in size and has been placed in a two storeyed sanctum. The walls of the sanctum are full of murals and sculptures.

The interesting fact about this temple is that it is made of granite and there is no source of granite in the place where this temple is located.



Fig. 10.4 Gangaikonda Cholapuram c. 1030 AD

Rajendra Chola founded the city of Gangaikondacholapuram to commemorate his victorious march to the Ganges. The temple of Gangaikonda Cholapuram built by Rajendra Chola was clearly meant to outshine its precursor in every way. Completed around 1030 AD, only two decades after the Temple at Thanjavur and in the similar style, the embellishment in its appearance shows that Chola Empire was in prosperous state under Rajendra rule.

Though, structure of Gangaikonda Cholapuram (See Figure 10.4) is similar to the temple of Thanjavur but it does have its own unique features. The remains of the temple show that it had only one enclosure wall and a *gopura* whereas the Thanjavur temple has two gopuras and enclosures. It is bigger in plan though not as tall as Thanjavur temple. Its *vimana* is 100 feet square at the base and 186 feet in height. The number of tiers that are used to make its pyramidal body are only eight whereas Thanjavur temple has thirteen tiers. The most significant difference is the use of curves while making *vimana* in place of the strong straight lines that were used in Thanjavur temple.

Later Period

The Chola style kept prospering for another century. The Airavateswara temple at Darasuram that was built during the period of Rajaraja Chola II is a splendid structure representative of the stage of architectural development accomplished in the 12th century AD. There are many artistic stone pillars in this temple. The walls are decorated and show images with elongated limbs and polished features. The *mandapam* in the front of the temple is in the form of a huge chariot which is drawn by horses.

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Fig. 10.5 Spoked Chariot Wheel, Airavateswarar Temple, Darasuram c.1200 AD

Kampaharesvara temple at Tribhuvanam built by Kulothunga Chola III is called the finest example of this period. The architecture style used in his temple is similar to that of the temples at Tanjore, Gangaikondacholapuram and Darasuram.

Sculpture and Bronze

Airavateswara temple at Darasuram is a classic example of Chola art and architecture. It has heavily adorned pillars (see Figure 10.6) and richly sculpted walls.



Fig. 10.6 Ornamented Pillar of Airavateswara Temple at Darasuram

In addition to architecture, the Chola period is also considered remarkable for its sculptures and bronzes (see Figure 10.7). Many of the sculptures of Chola period can be found in various museums of the world and in the temples of South India. Some of the examples of its remarkable sculptures are figures of Siva in a variety of forms, Vishnu and his wife Lakshmi, and Siva saints. Though iconographic conventions were formed by the long tradition of the period but it is believed that the sculptors worked in great freedom in the 11th and the 12th centuries. Classic grace and grandeur were the features of sculptures and bronzes of this period. The best illustration of this sculpture can be seen in the image of Nataraja-the Divine Dancer.



Fig. 10.7 Chola Bronze Icon. Siva and Parvathi c. 1200 AD

Purpose of the Icons

Though the stone sculptures and the inner image placed in sanctum remained fixed, changing religious concepts, especially during the 10th century, insisted that the deities take part in public functions. Large detailed bronze images of deities were created to meet the demand of the people (see Figure 10.8). These were taken out of the temple during daily rituals, processions and festivals. The holes and round lugs which were found on the bases of these sculptures were perhaps made to carry the heavy images on the poles.



Fig. 10.8 Detail of a Statue of Rajaraja Chola I at the Brihadisvara Temple

A number of bronze images of the period show that bronze was considered an important metal in the Chola period. During worship, these images used to be covered in silk cloths, garlands as well as jewels. The tradition of decorating the bronze images is at least a thousand years old.

Lost Wax Technique

Lost wax technique was used to create bronzes in the Chola period. This technique is also known as *Cire Perdue* and *Madhu Uchchishta Vidhana*.

Beeswax and *kungilium* (a type of camphor) are mixed with oil and kneaded. The figure is sculpted from this mixture and all the minute details are

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added. The figure is then coated with clay made of termite hills. Then, the figure is dried and fired in an oven with the help of cow-dung cakes. As a result, the wax model melts, flows out or vapourises at the end.

The metal alloy of bronze, known as *Pancha Loham*, is melted and poured into the hollow mould. When the metal fills the mould completely, it gets hardened. After cooling, the mould is broken off. The bronze figure thus obtained is given finishing touches and is polished.

Elegant Style

The forms of Chola bronzes do not have intricate ornaments and designs but these forms are very expressive, graceful and elegant. The facial expressions and gestures are made so intricately that at the first sight, one can easily make out the surroundings of the figure, the instrument or weapon that the figure is holding and what he/she is either doing or is going to do.

In the Figure 10.9, Siva is standing in Rishabaandhika pose with one leg crossed over to the other side. We can make out that the way his arm is raised, it is resting on something and tilting of his body suggests that he is leaning on an object. In this scene, Siva is leaning on *Nandhi* and his arm is resting on Nandhi's shoulders.



Fig. 10.9 Bronze Chola Statue of Nataraja at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

The most famous bronze icon is of *Nataraja*. The representation presents Siva as lord of creation and destruction. He is active and at the same time aloof. Flames surrounding Siva represent fire of the universe in Shiva's left palm. His hand which is pointing in 'elephant trunk' position (*gaja hasta*) to his raised left foot represents liberation. His right foot tramples *Apasmara*, who represents ignorance. Siva's right front hand is raised in the 'fear-not' gesture of blessing. Many more details are there in the figure of *Nataraja*.

Chola Fresco

Chola Empire



Fig. 10.10 Chola Fresco of Dancing girls. Brihadisvara Temple c. 1100 CE

In 1931, Chola frescoes were found from the circumambulatory corridor of the Brihadisvara Temple (see Figures 10.10 and 10.11). The passageway of the corridor is very dark and its walls are covered with two layers of paintings from floor to ceiling.

Researchers have been able to discover the technique used in these frescoes. The stones are coated with a smooth batter of limestone mixture. The mixture takes two to three days to settle on the stone. Within that short span, paintings were made with the help of natural organic pigments.



Fig. 10.11 Another Fresco found in the Brihadisvara Temple Chola Fresco

Check Your Progress

4. What was the primary source of income of the state during Cholas rule?
5. List the functions of the judicial committee of Mahasabha.
6. Name the major industries which grew and prospered under the protection of Cholas.

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10.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Rajaraja was one of the greatest rulers of South India. He was a conqueror, an empire builder, a good administrator and a patron of art and literature. There are many achievements under his name like he laid the foundation of the greatness of the navy of the Cholas who, afterwards, became one of the foremost naval powers in South East Asia. He also laid the foundation of the local self-government in the administration of the Cholas. Being Saiva, Rajaraja constructed the saiva-temple of Rajmajeswari. He also patronized Buddhist *Viharas* and monasteries.
2. The Chola dynasty was one of the most important ruling dynasties in the ancient India. It maintained a well-organized administrative system. The dynasty is famous for its promotion of local self-government.
3. The Cholas maintained powerful armies and navies. The infantry, the cavalry and the war elephants constituted the main parts of the army of the Cholas.
4. The primary source of the income of the state was land revenue. Rajaraja I took one-third of the produce as land revenue from his subjects. The revenue was collected both in cash and kind.
5. The judicial committee of the Mahasabha, called the *Nyayattar*, settled cases of disputes, both civil and criminal. It looked after the roads, cleanliness, lighting of temples, tanks, rest-house and security of the village.
6. Cloth, ornaments, metals and their different products, production of salt and constructions of images and temples were a few important industries which grew and prospered under the protection of the Cholas.

10.6 SUMMARY

- The Chola dynasty was known as one of the longest-ruling dynasties in the history of South India. The Chola Empire ruled over Tamil Nadu as well as over some parts of Karnataka.
- The Kingdom of the Cholas included modern Madras, several other districts of Tamil Nadu and the greater part of the Mysore State.
- The founder of the Chola dynasty of Tanjore was Vijayalaya. He was a feudatory chief of the Pandyas. The independent kingdom of the Cholas was created by Aditya I, the son and successor of Vijayalaya.
- Parantaka I was an ambitious ruler and engaged himself in wars of conquest from the beginning of his reign. His main conquest was that of Madurai.
- The Rashtrakutas could not tolerate the new rising power of the Cholas in their neighbourhood. The Rashtrakuta king Krishna III attacked

Parantaka I and defeated the Cholas in a decisive battle at Takkolam in AD 949.

Chola Empire

- The credit for reviving the lost glory of the Cholas went to Rajaraja who proved himself as the great ruler of the Cholas. Rajaraja was one of the greatest rulers of South India. He was a conqueror, an empire builder, a good administrator and a patron of art and literature.
- Rajendra pursued the policy of conquest and annexation adopted by his father and raised the power and prestige of the Cholas to its highest. He was a great conqueror. He was the first Indian ruler who established the supremacy of Indian Navy in the Arabian Sea.
- The Chola dynasty was one of the most important ruling dynasties in the ancient India. It maintained a well-organized administrative system. It is famous for its promotion to local self-government.
- The Chola rulers started the practice of electing their successor or Yuvaraja and of associating him with administration during their life-time.
- The king was assisted by ministers and other high officials of the state in administration who were given high titles, honours and lands as *Jagirs*. The Cholas had organized an efficient bureaucracy and their administration was successful.
- The Cholas maintained powerful armies and navies. The infantry, the cavalry and the war elephants constituted the main parts of the army of the Cholas.
- The primary source of the income of the state was land revenue. The revenue was collected both in cash and kind.
- The empire was divided into *Mandalas* for the convenience of administration.
- The arrangement of local self-government has been regarded as the basic feature of the administration of the Cholas.
- The Mahasabha of the village played an important role in the administration of the village. A Mahasabha is formed by dividing a village into thirty wards.
- The Mahasabha looked after the civic, police judicial, revenue, and all other functions concerning the village.
- The Cholas maintained peace and security within their territory, constructed well-connected roads, provided safety to travellers and traders and, above all, kept a strong navy on high seas.
- Chola kings were saivites and they worshiped Lord Siva. They also worship Lord Vishnu.
- Dravidian art and architecture flourished a lot during the period of the imperial Cholas. The Cholas kept following the temple building traditions

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of the Pallava dynasty and built a number of temples throughout the kingdom.

- Magnificent temples of Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram exhibit the grandeur to which the Chola architecture rose over a period of time.
- Airavateswara temple at Darasuram is a classic example of Chola art and architecture. Many of the sculptures of Chola period can be found in various museums of the world and in the temples of South India.
- A number of bronze images of the period show that bronze was considered an important metal in the Chola period.

10.7 KEY WORDS

- **Suzerainty:** It refers to a position of control by a sovereign or state over another state that is internally autonomous.
- **Monogamy:** It refers to the state or custom of being married to only one person at a particular time.
- **Stucco:** It refers to a type of plaster used for covering walls and ceilings, especially one that can be formed into decorative patterns.

10.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the Chola kingdom.
2. How did Rajaraja extend his empire and influence till the far South?
3. Briefly mention the advancement of Dravidian art and architecture during the period of Cholas.
4. What is Lost Wax Technique in the Chola period?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the central and provincial administration of the Chola Empire.
2. Explain the process of Mahasabha formation in villages.
3. 'Local self-government has been regarded as the basic feature of the administration of the Cholas'. Explain the statement.
4. Describe the influence of art and architecture during the Chola period.

10.9 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 11 THE LATER PANDYANS

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Structure

- 11.0 Introduction
- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 Emergence of Later Pandyans
 - 11.2.1 Maravarman Sundara Pandyan I (1216-1238)
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 - 11.2.3 Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I (1251-1268)
 - 11.2.4 Maravarman Kulesekara Pandyan I
 - 11.2.5 Visit of Marco Polo
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 - 11.2.7 Art and Architecture
- 11.3 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
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- 11.5 Key Words
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- 11.7 Further Readings

11.0 INTRODUCTION

The Pandyan Regime which had its dusk during the rule of King Veerapandian who was killed by Adithya Cholan. After the Thirupurambiyam War, the Chola dynasty had its boom and ruled the territory between Thungabadra on the Northern side to Kanyakumari on the Southern Side, for over 200 years. When Kulothunga Cholan II died in 1218 AD the Pandyan's rule was under the control of the Chola Kingdom. It was during the time of Kulothunga Cholan III that the Chola Kingdom started losing its grip over Pandyans

11.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the background of later Pandyans
- Discuss the contribution of later Pandyans
- Analyse the impact that the later Pandyans had on successive generations

11.2 EMERGENCE OF LATER PANDYANS

The 13th century is the greatest period in the history of the Pandyan Empire. This period saw the rise of seven prime Lord Emperors (*Ellarkku Nayanar – Lord of All*) of Pandyan, who ruled the kingdom alongside Pandyan princes. Their power reached its zenith under Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan in the middle of the

13th century. The foundation for such a great empire was laid by Maravarman Sundara Pandyan early in the 13th century.

- Parakrama Pandyan II (king of Polonnaruwa) (1212–1215)
- Maravarman Sundara Pandyan (1216–1238)
- Sundaravarman Kulasekaran II (1238–1240)
- Maravarman Sundara Pandyan II (1238–1251)
- Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan (1251–1268)
- Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan I (1268–1310)
- Sundara Pandyan IV (1309–1327)
- Vira Pandyan IV (1309–1345)

The Later Pandyans (1216–1345) entered their golden age under Maravarman Sundara Pandyan (1216–1238) and Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan (1251), who expanded the empire into Telugu country, conquered Kalinga (Orissa) and invaded and conquered Ceylon. They also had extensive trade links with the Southeast Asian maritime empires of Srivijaya and their successors. The Pandyans excelled in both trade and literature. They controlled the pearl fisheries along the South Indian coast between Ceylon and India which produced some of the finest pearls in the known ancient world

11.2.1 Maravarman Sundara Pandyan I (1216-1238)

A king with a lot of capacity and at the same time as a greedy person, Maravarman Sundara Pandyan I invaded Chola Kingdom in 1219 and defeated Raja Rajan III. He became Territorial Chieftain under the Pandyan Kingdom.

As Hoysalas were stronger, the Cholas sought their help in expelling the Pandyan from their Country. They also created marriage relationships with Chalukyas.

In this process, the towns like Uraiyr and Tanjore were all burnt to ashes.

11.2.2 Maravarman Sundara Pandyan II (1239-1251)

During his regime, Chola country was being ruled by Rajendran III and has been attaining some victories, over a few Invasions on Pandyan Country. However, as the events would change, the Pandyans entered into an agreement with the Hoysala King, Veera Someswaran. Thus, the Cholas were expelled.

11.2.3 Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I (1251-1268)

Claimed as the Golden Age of Later Pandyan Empire is the one under Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I (also referred to as Jadaiya Varman).

1. Pandyan Kingdom reached its Zenith of fame and power during this period
2. Territories were expanded upto Nellore and Cuddappah on the Northern side.

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3. The Kingdom elevated itself as an Empire.
4. Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I subdued Rajendra Chola III in around 1258–1260.
5. He first vanquished the Kadava Pallavas under Kopperunchinga II, who had challenged the Hoysala army stationed in and around Kanchipuram and killed a few of their commanders.
6. An invasion on Ceylon and defeat of the King, brought in a lot of plunder wealth into the Pandyan Country.
7. Banas and Kongunadu were captured and annexed with the Pandyan Country.
8. Kanchi was captured and converted as the Second Capital of Pandyan Kingdom.

He patronized the Hindu Religion. He supported Chidambaram and Srirangam Temples by donations. The Ceilings of these temples were laid with gold plates by the King Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I. Hence, he got the title “pon veindha perumal”(one who laid golden ceiling).

11.2.4 Maravarman Kulesekara Pandyan I

The last Best King of the Pandyan dynasty ruled between 1268 and 1311. Considered as the best warrior, he captured Kollam after defeating the Chera King.

He invaded Ceylon and inflicted a heavy loss and damage to the country. Buddha’s many memorials were keenly observed by him and brought them to India.

11.2.5 Visit of Marco Polo

Marco Polo visited the Pandyan Country during the period of Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan-I. He recorded his Travel notes narrating the Economic, Social, Religious status of the Pandyan Empire. This visit was during the year 1271

Successive wars between Pandyan princes

Successive wars between Sundara Pandyan and Veera Pandyan sons of Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan marked the end of the Pandyan Empire. It is also recorded by Historian Wassap that the Succession War ended up with the killing of Kulasekara Pandyan by his own son Sundara Pandyan in the year 1310. VeeraPandyan was in conflict with Sundara Pandyan and they were engaged in a civil war. At this stage, Veerapandian approached Malik Kafoor of the Delhi Sultanate and Malik kafoor captured Madurai and torched Madurai and also the Sokkanathar Temple. He plundered the Wealth of Pandyan Kingdom and returned to Delhi with all the booty.

Check Your Progress

1. Mention the geographical area ruled over by the Chola kingdom.
2. Who is Jadaiya Varman?
3. Who is considered as the last best king of Pandyan dynasty?

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11.2.6 Socio-Economic and Religious Condition

Society: The Caste distinction retained the Brahmins as the Top Caste and Agriculturists and other artisan class remained as middle and lower in the strata of the society. However the social relationship or the strata was not looking healthy and the social upheavels due to casteism and violence on the Brahmins were marked with a social disorder due to establishing of the caste rights.

Economy: Agriculture and Commerce were predominant in the Later Pandyan Rule. Uncultivated lands were brought under cultivation and commercial crops such as sugarcane, plantain, ginger, turmeric, vegetables were preferred to paddy or pulses.

Trees were also grown. Irrigation system was reformed and new systems were introduced through small rivulets. Ponds were dug and lakes were created. Landless labourers remained to earn wages and work from the lowest strata.

Commerce: Inland and Foreign Trade were flourishing in this period. Various trade groups were formed and they were carrying out the export trade and commerce. Taxes were also levied through checkposts. Licences were given for Pearl Hunting, to Arabians.

Kayal, Pavitra Manicka Patinam, Srivallavapattinam were important Port Towns in the Pandyan Empire.

Money was named as “Panam” and the gold coins were of two varieties namely “kalanju” and “sebon”. The system of Money becoming a medium of exchange was established. Lands were purchased and sold. “panam” donations were made to the Temples in terms of “panam”.

Religion: People were following Saiva Cult, Vaishnava Cult and also the Jainism. Many temples were constructed during the Rule. Sankara Mutt at Kanchi was established. Many literatures were published in praise of Lord Siva.

Vaishnavism also flourished due to the arrival of hoysalas

As Maravarman Sundara Pandyan patronized Jainism also donations were given to establish institutions and Jain abodes.

Buddhism did not show any growth in this regime.

In general, the public opinion and involvement in the Religion and religious practices were observed to have enhanced compared to the earlier regimes. People

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were celebrating festivals at the temples. Rituals were carried out in public for public good to praise the God.

Thus, the Religious status remained in the Pandyan Country more devotion and more faiths for the Bhaktas to follow. Bhakti Movement was more active and was reaching its zenith until the Madurai City was invaded by Malik kafoor and the city was torched by the invaders.

Check Your Progress

4. List the important port towns of Pandyan empire.
5. Which religion did not flourish during Pandyan's rule?

11.2.7 Art and Architecture

Many temples were constructed in the Later Pandyan regime. These were marked by the Architecture and also the aesthetic values.

Pandyan temple constructions focused on the Compound walls and multiple pillars in addition to the Gopura construction (Temple tower)

Lot of sculptures were also forming a part of the Pandyan Temple Culture and architecture. These were attracting the attention of all the devotees.

Notably in Madurai Meenakshi temple, Sundareswarar sanctum, Gopuras (temple tower) were constructed during the later Pandyan regime. Many Mantaps were also constructed inside the temples belong to the Later Pandyan s era.

Conclusion: Thus, the Pandyan dynasty had its exit from Madurai, the power centre of Pandyans, after the Muslim invasion in 1311.

Madurai which saw the growth and expansion of the Pandyans once, turned into a dying city losing its lusture and aura on the invasion of Malik Kafoor. The glorious history of Madurai ended here and the glorious Golden Rule of Pandyans also ended here.

Madurai had to wait till Kumara kampana of the Vijayanagara Empire invaded Madurai to reinstate its glory.

Check Your Progress

6. Which temples were constructed during the Pandyan era?
7. Who invaded Madurai in 1311?

11.3 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Chola kingdom ruled the territory spanning between Thungabadra in the northern side and Kanyakumari in the southern side, for over 200 years.

2. Jadaiya Varman is just another name of Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I, who ruled between 1251-1268.
3. Maravarman Kulesekara Pandyan I is considered as the last best king of Pandyan dynasty as he captured Kollam after defeating the Chera King.
4. Kayal, Pavitra Manicka Patinam, and Srivallavapattinam were the important port towns of the Pandyan Empire.
5. Buddhism was the religion, which did not flourish during Pandyan's rule.
6. Notably, in Madurai, Meenakshi temple, Sundareswarar sanctum, and Gopuras (temple tower) were constructed during the Pandyan era.
7. Malik Kafoor invaded Madurai in 1311.

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11.4 SUMMARY

- The 13th century is the greatest period in the history of the Pandyan Empire. This period saw the rise of seven prime Lord Emperors of Pandyan dynasty.
- The later Pandyans (1216–1345) entered their golden age under Maravarman Sundara Pandyan (1216-1238) and Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan (1251), who expanded the empire into Telugu country, conquered Kalinga (Orissa) and Ceylon.
- Claimed as the Golden Age of Later Pandyan Empire is the one under Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I
- Successive wars between Sundara Pandyan and Veera Pandyan, sons of Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan, marked the end of the Pandyan Empire.

11.5 KEY WORDS

- **Gopura construction:** A Gopura or Gopuram construction includes a monumental entrance tower, usually ornate, at the entrance of a Hindu temple, in the Dravidian architecture of the states of Southern India.
- **Saiva cult:** It is one of the largest cults or sects that believe Shiva as the supreme god over all.

11.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. List all the kings of later Pandya era.
2. Write a short note on the successive wars fought among the Pandyan princes.
3. What were the features of Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I's rule?

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Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the architecture during the rule of later Pandyas.
2. Discuss the religious conditions prevalent during the rule of later Pandyas.
3. 'The 13th century is the greatest period in the history of the Pandyan Empire.' Evaluate the statement.

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BLOCK - IV
FORMATION OF SULTANATE AND
CULTURAL HERITAGES

Madurai Sultanate

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UNIT 12 MADURAI SULTANATE

Structure

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- 12.3 Economic and Cultural Conditions
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12.0 INTRODUCTION

The Madurai Sultanate was proclaimed in 1335 when the then viceroy of Madurai, Jalaluddin Ahsan Shah declared his independence from the Delhi Sultanate, ruled by Thuglaq Ahsan Shah and his descendants ruled Madurai and surrounding territories until 1378 when the last sultan, Ala-ud-Din Sikandar Shah fell in battle against the forces of the Vijayanagara Empire led by Kumara Kampana. In this short reign of 43 years, the Sultanate had 8 different rulers. By then, the Madurai Sultanate had caused enough damage to the Madurai citizens and also Madurai's pride; Hinduism was crushed and many were persecuted and executed as the rulers were found barbaric and unkind to their own subjects and their sentiments.

The Sultanate had 8 different rulers in 43 years, a few of them for a very short tenure of even 40 days and a few others for a longer tenure of over 4 years at the maximum. A common observation on these Sultans was that their only aim was to spread Islam and to destroy Hindus and Hinduism. The basic principles of hatred oppression, sadism and cruelty were found to be equally common with all these eight sultans.

- (a) Sultan Jalaluddin Ashan Shah (1335-1340)
- (b) Allauddin Udaji 1340
- (c) Giyasuddin Damagan Shah (1341-1342)
- (d) Sultan Naziruddin 1334

From 1335 to 1356, there was a break in the sultanate history details

- (e) Sultan Adil Shah (1356-1361)
- (f) Fakruddin Mubharak Shah (1361-1370)
- (g) Allauddin Sikkandar Shah (1370-1378)

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It was after the Vijayanagara Empire uprooted the evil Sultanate, that Madurai regained its pride and reinstated its lost paradise.

In this unit you will study about the Madurai Sultanate, its formation and also about the socio-economic and cultural conditions during the period of Madurai Sultanate.

12.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the details of sultanate history
- Describe the formation of Madurai Sultanate
- Analyse the socio-economic and cultural conditions during the Madurai Sultanate

12.2 FORMATION OF MADURAI SULTANATE

In the early 14th Century, South India was subjected to repeated invasions by armies of the Delhi Sultanate. There were three separate invasions within a period of fifteen years. The first invasion in 1311 AD was led by Malik Kafur, who ransacked Madurai. Following this there were two more expeditions from the Delhi Sultanate - the second in 1314 AD led by Khusrav Khan and the third in 1323 AD by Ulugh Khan. These invasions shattered the Pandyan Empire beyond revival. While the previous invasions were content with plunder, Ulugh Khan annexed the former Pandyan dominions to the Delhi Sultanate as a province of Ma'bar (Ma'bar in Persian denoted Madurai Sultanate). Most of South India came under the Delhi's rule and was divided into five provinces - Devagiri, Tiling, Kampili, Dorasamudra and Ma'bar (Madurai).

In 1325, Ulugh Khan acceded to the throne in Delhi as Muhammad bin Tughluq. His plans for invading Persia and Khorasan, bankrupted his treasury and led to the issuing of token currency. This led to counterfeiting and further worsened the sultanate's finances. He was unable to pay his huge army and the soldiers stationed in distant provinces revolted. The first province to rebel was Bengal and Ma'bar soon followed. The Governor of Ma'bar, Jalaluddin Ahsan Shah declared independence and set up the Madurai Sultanate. The exact year of founding of the Madurai Sultanate is not clear. Numismatic evidence points to 1335 CE as the founding year. The Persian historian Firishta however places the year of Ma'bar's revolt as 1340 CE.

This short lived Muslim dynasty at Madurai came into existence following the decline of the Second Pandyan Empire, and ruled Madurai, Trichinopoly and parts of South Arcot, for the next 48 years, first as feudatories of the Delhi Sultanate and later as independent monarchies lasting until 1378. The Madurai Sultanate was destroyed by the rise of Vijayanagar, later followed by the Madurai Nayaks.

Madurai Sultaniate: Sultans

1. Sultan Jalaluddin Ashan Shah (1335-1340): He ruled the Madurai Sultanate till 1340. He released coins in his name. He was killed by his own Minister Allauddin Udaji in 1340.
2. Allauddin Udaji 1340: He assumed power of the Sultanate after slaying Sultan Jalaluddin Ashan Shah. He was indoctrinated to take a war on the Hindus and Hinduism as a true Muslim. As he proceeded, he declared wars against Hindu kings or chieftains. He invaded Thiruvannamalai and declared a war against Veera Vallalan III, in 1340. Though Udaji won the war, at the end of the war he got killed by an accidental arrow that pierced into his head.
3. Qudbuddin: Ashan Shah's son-in-law Qudbuddin ruled only for 40 days and he released coins in his name. As he lost the confidence of the subjects, he was killed.
4. Giyasuddin Damagan Shah (1341-1342): Giyasuddin was no way lesser in hatred than Qudbuddin. He was very unkind towards the Hindus and treated them very badly. Ibin Baduta writes in his book that Hindus were killed mercilessly and were treated inhumanly. Children were killed by cutting their necks. Hindus cut heads were decorated as garlands and hung on the trishuls.

He declared Holy wars on Hindu Kings and as mandated by Holy Quran, he had waged a Holy war against all non-muslims. He invaded Hoysala Kings' Kannanur Koppa and the war turned out to be unfavourable to the Muslim forces as they could not withstand the war with the Hoysalas. King Ballala Devan III put a condition that he would allow the Muslim forces to go back if the fort was handed over to him. As Giyasuddin was not in favour of such a compromise talk, he secretly gathered 4000 soldiers and attacked the Hoysalas at their barracks. Defeated Veera Ballalan Devan III was brought as a prisoner to Madurai and he was killed mercilessly in the presence of Ibin Batuda. Hoysala king's skin was peeled off after being killed and the body was hung from the Madurai fortress, in the year 1342.

Giyasuddin lost his only son, wife and mother in the cholera attack. Soon after that he also died suddenly. He released coins in his name by minting the date as Hijira year 741.

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5. Sultan Naziruddin: Giyasuddin's brother's son Naziruddin assumed the powers and became the Sultan of Madurai Sultanate. He spent a lot of resources for the travel of Ibin Bathutha to China. He spent a lot of money and resources on the Ministers to assume the powers. He also released coins in commemoration of his rule in the year marked as Hijira 745 denoting 1334 AD. It is accepted by the historians that there is a break in the data of the Sultanate history between 1334 and 1356.
6. Sultan Adil Shah (1356-1361): It is inferred that Sultan Adil Shah ruled the Madurai Sultanate from 1356 to 1361.
7. Fakruddin Mubharak Shah (1361-1370): During the rule of Fakruddin Mubharak Shah, he had released coins that helped the Historians to assess the time bucket of his rule. It was during his rule that Kumara Kampana of Vijayanagara Empire invaded Madurai to restore the peace and reinstall the natural justice to restore Hinduism.

A reference is made to the status of the Hindus in Madurai Sultanate, by Ganga Devi who wrote her book called Madura Vijayam. She narrates that a Holy sword was handed at the hands of Kumara Kampana by a girl who appeared suddenly, to put an end to this barbaric and unjust rule at Madurai Sultanate and also to kill the universal enemy Sultan.

Kumara Kampana, son of Bukker I of Vijayanagara Empire, took this great mission and with determination to raze the muslim rule in Tamil Nadu, defeated Fakruddin Mubharak Shah in the year 1371 in the month of April. Mubharak Shah was killed and Madurai Sultanate was hammered with the last nail in the coffin.

Effects of Madurai Invasion: It was to take revenge on the misrule of the Sultans at Madurai that the Vijayanagar Empire decided to step in to release Madurai and its subjects from the fanatic muslim rulers' clutches, who not only destroyed, looted and killed Hindus and Hindu related temples and plundered the temple's wealth, ornaments and assets, but also carried an unjust rule, with hatred and enmity on the Hindu population.

8. Allauddin Sikkandar Shah (1370-1378): After the death of Mubharak Shah, Allauddin Sikkandar Shah was ruling a portion of the Madurai Sultanate till 1378. With him the Madurai Sultanate met its end. He was uprooted and the Madurai Sultanate came under the complete control of Vijayanagara Empire.

The Vijayanagara Empire under Bukka Raya I, made a series of efforts to conquer South India. There were a series of Vijayanagar invasions in the middle of the fourteenth century which succeeded in initially restricting and finally ending the Madurai Sultanate's rule over South India. Vijayanagar's armies were led by Bukka's son, Kumara Kampanna Udaiyar. Kampanna first subdued the Sambuvaraya dynasty in present-day Kanchipuram district,

then a vassal of Delhi Sultanate who refused to aid the Madurai conquest and then conquered Madurai. Kampanna's invasion has been chronicled in the Sanskrit epic poem Madura Vijayam ('The Conquest of Madurai') or Vira Kamparaya Charithram ('History of Kampanna'), written by Kampanna's wife Gangadevi.

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12.3 ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONDITIONS

Muslim Invasion did affect the pattern of economy and its growth at Madurai. But once the invasion happens, there used to be plunder and demolishing of Hindu temples and merciless killing of Hindus on iron spikes.

Segment wise when we analyse the changes in Madurai after it was declared as a Sultanate of Madurai in the year 1335 AD, we arrive at an overall picture of the net loss to the Madurai Empire and also the damages to the sentiments of the subjects of Madurai Sultanate, after the extinction of Pandyan Empire. The damage control commenced only after the invasion of Kumara Kampana of the Vijayanagara Empire.

- (1) Art and Architecture: There was a synergy in the mix of Hindu and Muslim Art and architectural methods and usage.
 - a. The new architectural solution was named as Sarasonic Construction method. In this, more of handwork and decorations were found eye catching and original.
 - b. Due to this mix of both arts the later temples of Hindu as well as the worship places of Muslims were different in appearance, quality and architectural values.
- (2) Language development: Muslims supported development of languages. During this period of time, Hindu as well as Islamic language developments took place and literature emerged on both the cultures.
 - a. Urdu, a language born due to the mix of Hindu and Muslim Culture, had its natural growth and development.
 - b. Persian Language also saw a lot of literature in autobiography, letters, history pieces etc.
 - c. Usage of paper brought in several innovative processes in imaging and printing.
- (3) Education: Muslim administrators patronized the educated and the learned. This in turn brought a status in the society for those who were educated.
 - a. Women were denied education
 - b. Educational institutions and libraries were established throughout the state

- c. Poets, writers and philosophers decorated the Administrators' courts
- d. Arabic language was made compulsory
- e. Religious education was made compulsory in the educational institutions

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- (4) Tamil Muslims as a community: A mixed culture of Muslims and Tamils emerged into a Tamil Muslims as a community.
- (5) Casteism and its negative effect on the other communities was prevalent before the Muslim rule. Gradually the caste differences got neutralized as Brahmins were deprived of their principal role and that temples lost their credibility and revenue.
- (6) Social purity got affected. As muslim men got into forcible marriages with Hindu girls, Hindus were very much disturbed. Besides, Hindu Religion suffered due to these compulsory conversions.
- (7) Islamic growth: Islam saw a geometrical progression in matters of religion. Compulsory conversions of the Hindus; opening up of more number of Masjids were threatening the Hindu Religion. Hence, the Hindu Religion resorted to the Bhakti Movement in a war footing.
- (8) Tamils' enhanced external contacts: Due to the arrival of Muslims, Tamils had the opportunity to get connected to the external world that gave a valid experience to the individuals. Tamils started learning the good and bad of outside world.
- (9) Atrocities on the Hindus: Muslim Rulers started imposing many restrictions on Hindus especially the Hindu women. They were compelled to wear the 'Parda'. Hindu temples were attacked very often. Hindus were indiscriminately killed and Hindu Gods were desecrated. Hindu community became oppressed.
- (10) Taxes on the Hindus: Muslim Rulers taxed the Hindus more. New taxes such as Jisia, Income tax, House tax, customs duty were levied.
- (11) Agriculture was neglected and even Coconut groves were converted as cemeteries as the Hindus were left to die on the spikes.
- (12) Muslim Sultans were spending more money for their extravaganzas, even in the King's Court.

Social conditions, lifestyle and economy revealed by the various compositions of literature give a bird's eye view of the micro level satisfaction, happiness and urge to achieve the freedom and also the life security with a purpose.

Literature as a magic mirror, for study of social welfare as well as the evils. Hence, the observed impressions and notings by two popular writers will provide us sufficient information and assessment as to the value of the rule and also the overall rating:

- (A) Gangadevi, wife of Kampanna, wrote in her Madurai Vijayam, 'Kampanna's victory is symbolised by the restoration of the Srirangam temple to its old

glory in 1371 AD. Vijayanagara formally declared Madurai to be its possession during Harihara II's rule in 1378 AD.'

Madurai Sultanate

(B) On the condition of Madurai under the Muslim rule, Gangadevi writes:

'I very much lament for what has happened to the groves in Madurai. The coconut trees have all been cut and in their place are to be seen rows of iron spikes with human skulls dangling at the points.'

'In the highways which were once charming with the sounds of anklets of beautiful women, are now heard ear-piercing noises of Brahmins being dragged, bound in iron fetters.'

'...The waters of Tambraparni which were once white with sandal paste rubbed away from the breasts of charming girls are now flowing red with the blood of cows slaughtered by the miscreants.' On the living conditions during the Sultanate Rule, traveller Ibn Battuta shares his experience as follows:

A. The Muslim Moroccan explorer known for his extensive travels through Africa and Asia, visited Ghiyas-ud-Din Muhammad Damghani's court, while on his way to China. He married Jalaluddin Ahsan Khan's daughter. His travel notes mentions Ghiyas-ud-Din Muhammad Damghani's atrocious behaviour towards the local population. His army under his personal orders had the habit of frequently rounding up the local villagers, indiscriminately impaling them on sharpened wooden spikes and left to die. These accounts of were published in the Rihla (lit. "Journey").

Ibn Batuta describes a plague afflicting Madurai:

'When I arrived at Madurai, there was a contagious disease prevalent there which killed people in a short time. Those who were attacked succumbed in two or three days. If their end was delayed, it was only until the fourth day. On leaving my dwelling, I saw people either sick or dead.'

B. Gangadevi agrees with the Ibn Battuta on the prevalence of unnatural death: The God of death takes his undue toll of what are left [of] lives if undestroyed by the Yavanas.

From contemporary historical accounts, the rulers of Madurai Sultanate establish and brand themselves only as tyrants and persecutors of Hindus. Both Ibn Batutta's and Gangadevi's accounts contain graphic descriptions of atrocities committed by the Muslim Sultans on the Hindu population.

Thus the Sultanate of Madurai formation and its existence not only deprived the Hinduism, their survival and growth, but also developed a sense of living in an alien country, though you remain in your own country. Subjects who underwent undue miseries have really sphere headed the revolt against such rule, silently. However, it took more than four decades to hammer the final nail on the Sultanate of Madurai.

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Check Your Progress

1. Name the five provinces of South India which came under the rule of Ulugh Khan after his assault.
2. When was Madurai Sultanate formed?
3. How was Giyasuddin Damagan Shah's behaviour towards Hindus?
4. Who was Kumara Kampana and why was he famous for?
5. What taxes were levied on Hindus by Muslim rulers?

12.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. When Ulugh Khan annexed the former Pandyan dominions to the Delhi Sultanate. Most of the South India came under the Delhi's rule and was divided into five provinces, namely Devagiri, Tiling, Kampili, Dorasamudra and Ma'bar (Madurai).
2. As per numismatic evidences, the Madurai Sultanate was proclaimed in 1335 when the viceroy of Madurai, Jalaluddin Ahsan Khan declared his independence from the Delhi Sultanate.
3. Giyasuddin Damagan was no way lesser in hatred than his predecessor Qudbuddin. He was very unkind towards the Hindus and treated them very badly. Ibin Baduta, a Muslim Moroccan scholar and explorer, writes in his book that Hindus were killed mercilessly and were treated inhumanly. Children were killed by cutting their necks. Hindus cut heads were decorated as garlands and hung on the trishuls.
4. *Kumara Kampana* was an army commander and the prince in the Vijayanagar Empire. He was the son of king Bukka I. As per Ganga Devi, who wrote her book called *Madura Vijayam*, a Holy sword was handed at the hands of Kumara Kampana by a girl who appeared suddenly, to put an end to the barbaric and unjust rule at Madurai Sultanate and also to kill the universal enemy Sultan.
5. The attitude of Muslim rulers towards the Hindus was very unjust. They taxed the Hindus more. New taxes such as Jisia, Income tax, House tax, customs duty were levied on the Hindus by the Muslim rulers.

12.5 SUMMARY

- The Madurai Sultanate was proclaimed in 1335 when the then viceroy of Madurai, Jalaluddin Ahsan Shah declared his independence from the Delhi Sultanate, ruled by Thuglaq.

- The Sultanate had 8 different rulers in 43 years, a few of them for a very short tenure of even 40 days and a few others for a longer tenure of over 4 years at the maximum.
- Sultan Jalaluddin Ashan Shah, Allauddin Udaji, Qudbuddin, Giyasuddin Damagan Shah, Sultan Naziruddin, Sultan Adil Shah, Fakruddin Mubharak Shah and Allauddin Sikkandar Shah were the eight rulers of Madurai Sultanate.
- In the early 14th Century, South India was subjected to repeated invasions by armies of the Delhi Sultanate. These invasions shattered the Pandyan Empire beyond revival. Most of South India came under the Delhi's rule and was divided into five provinces - Devagiri, Tiling, Kampili, Dorasamudra and Ma'bar (Madurai).
- The Madurai Sultanate was destroyed by the rise of Vijayanagar, later followed by the Madurai Nayaks.
- Muslim Invasion did affect the pattern of economy and its growth at Madurai. But once the invasion happens, there used to be plunder and demolishing of Hindu temples and merciless killing of Hindus on iron spikes.
- Muslims supported development of languages. During this period of time, Hindu as well as Islamic language developments took place and literature emerged on both the cultures.
- During the period, a mixed culture of Muslims and Tamils emerged into a Tamil Muslims as a community.
- Casteism and its negative effect on the other communities was prevalent before the Muslim rule.
- Muslim Rulers started imposing many restrictions on Hindus especially the Hindu women. They were compelled to wear the 'Parda'. They also taxed the Hindus more. New taxes such as Jisia, Income tax, House tax, customs duty were levied.
- The Sultanate of Madurai formation and its existence not only deprived the Hinduism, their survival and growth, but also developed a sense of living in an alien country.

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12.6 KEY WORDS

- **Sadism:** It refers to a type of behaviour in which a person obtains pleasure from hurting others.
- **Counterfeiting:** It refers to the activity of making illegal copies of things such as bank notes, official documents etc.
- **Feudatories:** It refers to the situation under the overlordship of another sovereign or state.

- **Indoctrinated:** It refers to the influence individuals to follow a particular set of beliefs, rather than being able to think independently.

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12.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Name the eight different rulers of Madurai Sultanate.
2. Write a short note on the formation of Madurai Sultanate.
3. What were the effects of Madurai invasion?
4. How was the Vijayanagara Empire established?
5. Name the new architectural solution which evolved during the Madurai Sultanate.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the economic and cultural conditions during Madurai Sultanate.
2. What was the status of Islamic growth during the Sultanate rule?
3. Discuss the status of art and architecture during the Sultanate reign.

12.8 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 13 CULTURAL HERITAGE

CENTRE I

NOTES

Structure

- 13.0 Introduction
- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram)
- 13.3 Kancheepuram (Kanchi)
- 13.4 Thanjavur (Tanjore)
- 13.5 Darasuram
- 13.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 13.7 Summary
- 13.8 Key Words
- 13.9 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 13.10 Further Readings

13.0 INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage is regarded as a manifestation of the kind of living developed by a group of living passed on from one generation to another which includes beliefs, ethics, customs and values. Cultural heritage can be distinguished in terms of buildings, rural landscape, agricultural heritage and artefacts. One of the significant aspects of cultural heritage is the monuments.

Monuments give us two types of the narrations:

- (a) Cultural and Economic background of the dynasty that gave life to stones
- (b) The speciality of the work that has been passed on to the next generations.

In this unit, you are going to discuss a few aspects of monuments left behind by the Pallava Kingdom.

- (i) Mamallapuram
- (ii) Kancheepuram
- (iii) Thanjavur
- (iv) Dharasuram

13.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Examine the cultural heritage of Tamil Nadu
- Analyse the contribution of Mamallapuram, Thanjavur and Dharasuram to Tamil culture

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13.2 MAMALLAPURAM (MAHABALIPURAM)

Mamallapuram became prominent during the Pallava-era reign of Simhavishnu during the late 6th century, a period of political competition with the Pandyas, the Cheras and the Cholas and spiritual ferment with the rise of 6th- to 8th-century Bhakti movement poet-scholars: the Vaishnava Alvars and the Shaiva Nayanars. Mamallapuram's architecture is linked to Simhavishnu's son, Mahendravarman I (600-630 CE), who was a patron of the arts. Mahendravarman's son, Narsimha Varman I, built on his father's efforts and most scholars attribute many of the monuments to him. After a brief hiatus, temple and monument construction continued during the reign of Rajasimha (or Narasimhavarman II; 690-728).

Mahabalipuram reminds of Coastal monuments brought to us by Narasimha Varman with all its quality and aesthetic values on their favour. One cannot dismiss them as mere stones or boulders as they seem to relate the stories to us.

Architecturally sound and artistically excellent, these monuments are real pieces of beauty which have been passed on to our generations through the ages.

These memorable group of monuments of the Pallava Dynasty at Mahabalipuram is a collection of 7th- and 8th-century CE religious monuments in the coastal resort town of Mamallapuram,. It is on the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal, about 60 kilometres away from Chennai by Road.

The site has 400 ancient monuments and Hindu temples, including one of the largest open-air rock reliefs in the world: the Descent of the Ganges or Arjuna's Penance. The group contains several categories of monuments: ratha temples with monolithic processional chariots, built between 630 and 668; mandapa viharas (cave temples) with narratives from the Mahabharata and Shaivic, Shakti and Vaishna inscriptions in a number of Indian languages and scripts; rock reliefs (particularly bas-reliefs); stone-cut temples built between 695 and 722, and archaeological excavations dated to the 6th century and earlier. The monuments were built during the Pallava dynasty. Known as the Seven Pagodas in many colonial-era publications, they are also called the Mamallapuram temples or Mahabalipuram temples in contemporary literature.

Narasimhavarman created the monument Mamallapuram and hence it is named after him as Mamallapuram. He carries a title called "maa mallan". In the modern times, Mamallapuram is renamed as Mahabalipuram.

What is the speciality? Mahabalipuram is a system of sea temple. The architecture followed in the construction of the Mahabalipuram is unique and is still considered as architectural wonder. Monolithic stones are used and they are converted into a piece of beautiful art with all the workmanship.

Mahabalipuram is intended to be an open air Art Gallery for those art lovers and tourists who come to the Mahabalipuram Beaches for a holiday or otherwise. The monuments are a fusion of religion, culture and legend relating to the Hindu religious

pantheon.[38][21] They are expressions through rock or inside boulders, on a grand scale, integrating nature and sculpture. The site has about forty monuments, in varying degrees of completion, categorized into five groups

- I. Rathas: chariot-shaped temples
 - II. Mandapas: Cave temples
 - III. Rock reliefs
 - IV. Structural temples
 - V. Excavations
1. Cave Temples :
 - a. Mahitasuramarthini dance mantapam
 - b. Varaha mantapam (hall)
 - c. Thrimurthi mantapam
 2. Pillars of these cave temples : artistic and rich with the sculpture work
 3. The sculpture on Mahisasuran being punished by the Goddess Durga is seen on her Vahan i.e., Simha (Lion). This fighting posture attracts all the Art lovers and also the artists through its simplicity and also completion with live art.
 4. Pallavas' Building skills are displayed by the Era of Narasimhan. He brought in a new technology by using One stone (monolith)
 5. Here, By carving out of the big boulders and ending up with monolith art work of 5 charriots representing the Pancha Pandavas of Mahabharath. These Five Rathas are first of its kind in the architectural display..
 6. Purana stories unveiled through sculptures giving a feeling that the sculptures are relating the stories to us directly.
 - a. Krishna Holding Govardhana Giri above His head and protecting the livestock from the pouring rains
 - b. Beautiful scene at the Banks of Ganges River
 - c. Some deer drinking water from the riverside
 - d. Orderly marching Swans gently
 - e. Sanyasins taking a pradakshina of the Vishnu Temple

All these sculptures give a near feeling of excellence and we tend to appreciate the Artistic skills of Narasimhavarman who has left behind him an indelible evidence of excellence in the form of Sculptures.

Check Your Progress

1. Who is linked with Mamallapuram 's architecture?
2. Why Mamallapuram is named as such?

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13.3 KANCHEEPURAM (KANCHI)

Kanchipuram is called Kanchi and the place has got high potentials with all round importance. Apart from Kanchi “pattu”(silk), Kanchi gets praised by Kavi Kalidas as “Nagareshu Kanchi” (Town means it is Kanchi). Kanchi Kamakshi and Kanchi Sankara Mutt are also additional memories of the current period.

Located on the banks of the Vegavathy river, Kanchipuram has been ruled by the Pallavas, the Medieval Cholas, the Later Cholas, the Later Pandyas, the Vijayanagara Empire, the Carnatic kingdom, and the British, who called the city “Conjeeveram”. The city’s historical monuments include the Kailasanathar Temple and the Vaikunta Perumal Temple. Historically, Kanchipuram was a centre of education and was known as the *ghatikasthanam*, or “place of learning”. The city was also a religious hub of advanced education for Jainism and Buddhism between the 1st and 5th centuries.

While it is widely accepted that Kanchipuram had served as an Early Chola capital, the claim has been contested by Indian historian P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar who wrote that the Tamil culture of the Sangam period did not spread through the Kanchipuram district, and cites the Sanskritic origins of its name in support of his claim. The earliest references to Kanchipuram are found in the books of the Sanskrit grammarian Patanjali, who lived between the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE. The city was regarded as the “Banaras of the South”

Kanchipuram grew in importance when the Pallavas of southern Andhra Pradesh, wary of constant invasions from the north, moved their capital south to the city in the 6th century. The Pallavas fortified the city with ramparts, wide moats, well-laid-out roads, and artistic temples. During the reign of the Pallava King Mahendravarman I, the Chalukya King Pulakesin II (610–642) invaded the Pallava kingdom as far as the Kaveri River. The Pallavas successfully defended Kanchipuram and foiled repeated attempts to capture the city. A second invasion ended disastrously for Pulakesin II, who was forced to retreat to his capital Vatapi which was besieged and Pulakesin II was killed by Narasimhavarman I (630–668), son of Mahendravarman I (600–630), at the Battle of Vatapi. Under the Pallavas, Kanchipuram flourished as a centre of Hindu and Buddhist learning. King Narasimhavarman II built the city’s important Hindu temples, the Kanchi Kailasanathar Temple, the Varadharaja Perumal Temple and the Iravatanesvara Temple. Xuanzang, a Chinese traveller who visited Kanchipuram in 640, recorded that the city was 6 miles (9.7 km) in circumference and that its people were renowned for their bravery, piety, love of justice, and veneration for learning.

The Medieval Chola king Aditya I conquered the Pallava kingdom, including Kanchipuram, after defeating the Pallava ruler Aparajitavarman (880–897) in about 890. Under the Cholas, the city was the headquarters of the northern viceroyalty.¹ The province was renamed “Jayamkonda Cholamandalam” during the reign of

King Raja Raja Chola I (985–1014), who constructed the Karchapeswarar Temple and renovated the Kamakshi Amman Temple. His son, Rajendra Chola I (1012–44) constructed the Yathothkari Perumal Temple. According to the *Siddhantasavalali* of Trilocana Sivacharya, Rajendra Chola I brought a band of Saivas with him on his return from the Chola expedition to North India and settled them in Kanchipuram.¹ In about 1218, the Pandya king Maravarman Sundara Pandyan (1216–1238) invaded the Chola country, making deep inroads into the kingdom which was saved by the intervention of the Hoysala king Vira Narasimha II (1220–1235), who fought on the side of the Chola king Kulothunga Chola III. Inscriptions indicate the presence of a powerful Hoysala garrison in Kanchipuram, which remained in the city until about 1230. Shortly afterwards, Kanchipuram was conquered by the Telugu Cholas, from whom Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I took the city in 1258. The city remained with the Pandyas until 1311 when the Sambuvarayars declared independence, taking advantage of the anarchy caused by Malik Kafur's invasion. After short spells of occupation by Ravivarman Kulasekhara of Venad (Quilon, Kerala) in and the Kakatiya ruler Prataparudra II,

In Vaishnavism Hindu theology, Kanchipuram is one of the seven Tirtha (pilgrimage) sites, for spiritual release. The city houses Varadharaja Perumal Temple, Ekambareswarar Temple, Kamakshi Amman Temple, and Kumarakottam Temple which are some of major Hindu temples in the state. Of the 108 holy temples of the Hindu god Vishnu, 14 are located in Kanchipuram. The city is particularly important to Sri Vaishnavism, but is also a holy pilgrimage site in Shaivism. The city is well known for its hand woven silk sarees and most of the city's workforce is involved in the weaving industry. Kanchi had almost over 100 Buddhist Institutions. Similarly, Jains too had been running Religious Educational Institutions.

Check Your Progress

3. List the rulers of Kanchipuram.
4. Which religion considers Kanchipuram as one of the pilgrimage sites?

13.4 THANJAVUR (TANJORE)

Thanjavur, formerly Tanjore, is a city in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Thanjavur is an important center of South Indian religion, art, and architecture. Most of the Great Living Chola Temples, which are UNESCO World Heritage Monuments, are located in and around Thanjavur. The foremost among these, the Brihadeeswara Temple, is located in the centre of the city. Thanjavur is also home to Tanjore painting, a painting style unique to the region.

There are no references to Thanjavur in any of the Sangam period (third century BC to fourth century AD) Tamil records, though some scholars believe that the city has existed since that time. Kovil Venni, situated 15 miles (24 km) to

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the east of the city, was the site of the Battle of Venni between the Chola king Karikala and a confederacy of the Cheras and the Pandyas.^[4] The Cholas seemed to have faced an invasion of the Kalabhras in the third century AD after which the kingdom faded into obscurity. The region around present day Thanjavur was conquered by the Mutharayars during the sixth century, who ruled it up to 849.

The Cholas came to prominence once more through the rise of the Medieval Chola monarch Vijayalaya (841–878) in about 850.^[5] Vijayalaya conquered Thanjavur from the Mutharayar king Elango Mutharayar and built a temple dedicated to Hindu goddess Nisumbhasudani.^[6] His son Aditya I (871–901) consolidated the hold over the city.^[5] The Rashtrakuta king Krishna II (878–914), a contemporary of the Chola king Parantaka I (907–950), claims to have conquered Thanjavur, but there are no records to support the claim.^[7] Gradually, Thanjavur became the most important city in the Chola Empire and remained its capital till the emergence of Gangaikonda Cholapuram in about 1025.^{[8][9]} During the first decade of the eleventh century, the Chola king Raja Raja Chola I (985–1014) constructed the Brihadeeswarar Temple at Thanjavur. The temple is considered to be one of the best specimens of Tamil architecture.^{[10][11][12][13]}

When the Chola Empire began to decline in the 13th century, the Pandyas from the south invaded and captured Thanjavur twice, first during 1218–19 and then during 1230. During the second invasion, the Chola king Rajaraja III (1216–56) was exiled and he sought the help of the Hoysala king Vira Narasimha II (1220–35) to regain Thanjavur.^[14] Thanjavur was eventually annexed along with the rest of the Chola kingdom by the Pandya king Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan I (1268–1308) in 1279 and the Chola kings were forced to accept the suzerainty of the Pandyas.^[15] The Pandyas ruled Thanjavur from 1279 to 1311 when their kingdom was raided and annexed by the forces of Malik Kafur (1296–1306) and Delhi Sultanate.^[16] The Sultanate extended its authority directly over the conquered regions from 1311 to 1335 and then through the semi-independent Ma'bar Sultanate from 1335 to 1378. Starting from the 1350s, the Ma'bar Sultanate was steadily absorbed into the rising Vijayanagar Empire.

Thajavur in 1869

Thanjavur is believed to have been conquered by Kampanna Udayar during his invasion of Srirangam between 1365 and 1371. Deva Raya's inscription dated 1443, Thirumala's inscription dated 1455 and Achuta Deva's land grants dated 1532 and 1539 attest Vijayanagar's dominance over Thanjavur.^{[8][16]} Sevappa Nayak (1532–80), the Vijayanagar viceroy of Arcot, established himself as an independent monarch in 1532 (1549, according to some sources) and founded the Thanjavur Nayak kingdom.^[17] Achuthappa Nayak (1560–1614), Raghunatha Nayak (1600–34) and Vijaya Raghava Nayak (1634–73) are some of the important rulers of the Nayak dynasty who ruled Thanjavur.^{[11][18]} Thanjavur

Nayaks were notable for their patronage of literature and arts.^[19] The rule of the dynasty came to an end when Thanjavur fell to the Madurai Nayak king Chokkanatha Nayak (1662–82) in 1673.^[11] Vijaya Raghunatha Nayak, the son of Chokkanatha, was killed in a battle and Chokkanatha's brother Alagiri Nayak (1673–75) was crowned as the ruler of the empire.^[20]

Thanjavur was successfully conquered in 1674 by Ekoji I (1675–84), the Maratha feudatory of the sultan of Bijapur and half-brother of Shivaji (1627/30–80) of the Bhonsle dynasty. Ekoji founded the Thanjavur Maratha kingdom which ruled Thanjavur till 1855.^{[8][11]} The Marathas exercised their sovereignty over Thanjavur throughout the last quarter of the 17th and the whole of the 18th century. The Maratha rulers patronized Carnatic music. In 1787, Amar Singh, the regent of Thanjavur, deposed the minor Raja, his nephew Serfoji II (1787–93) and captured the throne. Serfoji II was restored in 1799 with the assistance of the British, who induced him to relinquish the administration of the kingdom and left him in charge of Thanjavur fort and surrounding areas. The kingdom was eventually absorbed into British India in 1855 by the Doctrine of Lapse when Shivaji II (1832–55), the last Thanjavur Maratha ruler, died without a legitimate male heir. The British referred to the city as Tanjore in their records.^[8] Five years after its annexation, the British replaced Negapatam (modern-day Nagapattinam) with Thanjavur as the seat of the district administration. Under the British, Thanjavur emerged as an important regional centre. The 1871 India census recorded a population of 52,171, making Thanjavur the third largest city in the Madras Presidency. After India's independence, Thanjavur continued as the district headquarters.

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Check Your Progress

5. Why Thanjavur is important for Tamil Nadu?
6. How long the Pandyas ruled Thanjavur?

13.5 DARASURAM

The town is known for the Airavateswara temple constructed by the Rajaraja Chola II in the 12th century AD. The temple is a recognised UNESCO World Heritage monument.

This temple is a storehouse of art and architecture. The *vimana* is 85 feet high. The front mandapam itself is in the form of a huge chariot drawn by horses. The temple has some exquisite stone carvings.

The main deity's consort Periya Nayaki Amman temple is situated adjacent to Airavateswarar temple. As originally Airavata worshipped the Lingam, the Lingam is named after him as Airavateswara. The Goddess in this temple is known as Deva Nayaki. Whatever remains of the sculptural part of the temple is on the

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inside wall of the outer prakaram(outer courtyard), about a foot from floor level. ‘The carvings contain different poses of gymnastic feats seen in the modern circus, shown by females keeping their head at the centre and legs interwoven in such a skillful way as to form the circumference of a circle. It may be a depiction of the present-day gypsy tribe entertaining villagers with gymnastic shows and dancing poses. Such gypsies are still to be seen visiting the interior villages of the country. Very many styles of physical feats shown by both men and women have been carved in the stone.

The main mantapa is called Raja Gambira as the elephant draws the chariot. The wheels were put back by the ASI at a later date. The ceiling has a beautiful carving of Shiva and Parvathi inside an open lotus. All the dancing poses of Bharatanatyam are carved in the stone. They are referred to as the Sodasa Upasaras. There is a carving showing the village womenfolk helping in the delivery of another female, who has both her hands on the shoulders of the two ladies, who are pressing their hands and the abdomen of the lady to help her deliver. ‘These are very skillful and artistic works of superb style. This may give a glimpse into the social conditions of the past. The stone image of Ravana carrying Kailas is a fine specimen of workmanship. One finds sculptures of Buddha, Bhikshatana, Saraswathi without her Venna, and a sculpture of Ardhanarishvara, Brahma and Surya.

It was during this time that Shaivism took a very drastic step and lord Sarabheshwara would seem to have come into existence. Many reasons have been cited for this incarnation of Lord Shiva. Sarabha has the face of a lion and the body of a bird and has placed on his lap the mighty Lord Narasimha. A mantapa has been specially built for lord Sarabha, and thereafter has been installed in temples.

The paintings on the walls have been repainted during the Nayak periods.

At the very entrance to the temple two Dwarapalakas, Sankhanidhi and Padmanidhi, are imposing figures, giving vivid anatomical expressions of the exuberance of youth. In front of the temple, there is a small mandapa, which can be reached by three steps in the form of a ladder. The steps are stones, which give different musical sounds when tapped. All the seven swaras can be had at different points. It is feared that if proper care is not taken soon, village children will damage the stones. Now these stone steps have been completely covered with metal grills to save them from deterioration. Meanwhile Archeology department has taken many steps to prevent this monument from public viewers and local villagers.

Check Your Progress

7. Which temple is recognised by UNESCO as World Heritage monument?
8. Which statues welcome visitors at the entrance of the Airavateswara temple?

13.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Mamallapuram's architecture is linked to Simhavishnu's son, Mahendravarman I (600-630 CE), who was a patron of the arts.
2. Narasimhavarman, who carries a title called 'maa mallan' built the monument Mamallapuram and hence it is named after him as Mamallapuram.
3. Kanchipuram had been ruled by the Pallavas, the Medieval Cholas, the Later Cholas, the Later Pandyas, the Vijayanagara Empire, the Carnatic kingdom, and the British, who named the city 'Conjeeveram'.
4. In Vaishnavism Hindu theology, Kanchipuram is considered as one of the seven pilgrimage sites for spiritual release.
5. Thanjavur is important for Tamil Nadu as most of the great living Chola temples, which are considered as World Heritage Monuments by UNESCO, are located in and around Thanjavur.
6. Airavateswara temple constructed by the Rajaraja Chola II in the 12th century AD, is recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Monument.
7. At the entrance of the Airavateswara temple, there are two Dwarapalakas, Sankhanidhi and Padmanidhi stand as imposing figures, giving vivid anatomical expressions of the exuberance of youth.

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13.7 SUMMARY

- Cultural heritage of our own state always makes us swell with pride.
- Monuments makes us proud in that it discloses the cultural and economic background of the dynasty.
- Monuments gives the historians information regarding the development of architecture across different generations.
- Through all the sculptures at Mamallapuram, we can appreciate the artistic skills of Narasimhavarman who has left behind him an indelible evidence of remarkable history.
- Kanchipuram's importance grew when the Pallavas of southern Andhra Pradesh, wary of constant invasions from the north, moved their capital south to the city in the 6th century.
- Most of the great living Chola temples, which are considered as World Heritage Monuments by UNESCO, are located in and around Thanjavur.
- Darasuram is mainly known for the Airavateswara temple constructed by the Rajaraja Chola II in the 12th century AD.

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13.8 KEY WORDS

- **Cultural heritage:** It is an expression of the lifestyle of a certain community, which is passed on from generation to generation, including customs, objects, artistic expressions, and values.
- **Bhakti movement:** This movement emphasised intense devotion towards God.
- **Patron:** It refers to a person who supports an artist, writer, museum, cause, charity, or institution with money, gifts, efforts, or endorsement.

13.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. State the period during which Mamallapuram became prominent?
2. What was the contribution of Cholas to Thanjavur?
3. State the different ways in which Kanchipuram was succeeded by different rulers after Pallavas.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the architecture of Mahabalipuram.
2. Explain the state of Thanjavur during 1869.
3. Discuss the different sculptures decorating the Airavateswara temple.

13.10 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 14 CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTRES II

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Structure

- 14.0 Introduction
- 14.1 Objectives
- 14.2 Gangaikonda Cholapuram
 - 14.2.1 Architecture
- 14.3 Sittannavasal
- 14.4 Pillayarpatti
- 14.5 Kudimiyamalai
- 14.6 Madurai
- 14.7 Rameswaram
- 14.8 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 14.8 Summary
- 14.10 Key Words
- 14.11 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 14.12 Further Readings

14.0 INTRODUCTION

Cultural Heritage Centres are the living evidences of the Archaeological Expertise and also the Artistic expressions that are left behind by the various dynasties that were ruling Tamil Nadu. When you visit and see these monumental evidences you will certainly get a feeling of revisiting the history and glory/agonny of those ages when these monuments were erected.

These monuments are also the showcases of the early kingdoms and their priorities, their aesthetic preferences, their messages to the world, their show of valour, economic strength and display of their territorial command and the social developments of their own economy.

Apart from displaying the various historical facts before us, these monuments also act as benchmarks to the present age of professionals to import the quality and technological factors into their present or future ventures in any area of art and painting, sculpture, architecture, drama, music, dance, warfare, literature, systems in the society, social ethics, values and so on.

In the previous unit, you studied the cultural heritage of Mahabalipuram, Kancheepuram, Thanjavur and Dharasuram Heritage Centres.

In this unit, you will study the cultural heritage of Gangaikondacholapuram, Sittannavasal, Pillayarpatti, Kudimiyamalai, Madurai and Rameswaram.

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14.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Prepare an overview of the cultural heritage of Tamil Nadu
- Discuss the heritage in terms of different clans and locations
- Understand the contribution of each clan to the Tamil culture

14.2 GANGAIKONDA CHOLAPURAM

For about 250 years, Chola clan ruled over a large part of South India. In those times, the Chola dynasty was at its zenith and conquered many a parts of the northern territory. The plundered wealth was brimming due to the outcome of their booming war operations. On one of the expeditions, Rajendra Chola brought Ganga water in a golden pot and consecrated the reservoir 'Ponneri or Cholaganga'. Consequently, Rajendra was titled as 'Gangaikondan' (the one who brought the Ganges). Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple is an architectural work of genius. The voluptuous temple stands next to the famous Brihadisvara temple at Tanjore. The king wanted to erect a 'larger than life' temple replicating the Brihadeeswara Temple.

Located at Thanjavur (Tanjore) in Tamil Nadu, Gangaikondacholapuram, was built in the early 11th century, by Rajendra Chola, who was the son and successor of Rajaraja Chola. As King Rajendran returned victoriously in 1025 AD from the Northern part of India, he started the construction of "Gangai Konda Cholecharam" The construction is with walls like a fortress in a large area. The temple is renowned for having the biggest Shivalingam in the Southern part of India.

Gangaikondacholisvarar and a lake Chola Ganga in commemoration of his victory. The place, the temple and the lake (Chola Ganga) are the living embodiments of the heroism of the Tamils who unfurled the Chola's Tiger flag on the banks of the River Ganges. He also shifted his capital from Thanjavur to this newly built town. From his period to the end of the Chola family rule in A.D. 1279 this city was the capital for the Chola Empire for a period of 256 years. The gigantic stone temple which he built in this place is rich repository of beautiful sculptures of middle Chola period. This city is praised in the literature of Muvar ula (Procession of the Three) of Ottakuttar and Kalingattuparani of Jayankondar.

The sanctum sanctorum embraces the four meter high lingam of Lord Shiva. To provide a private worship area for the royal family, the sanctum is encircled with two walls. The stately entrance of the sanctum is adorned by the beautiful image of Goddess Saraswati. The influence of Chalukyas is also reflected from

the icons of 'Suryapita' (Sun worship) and 'Navagrahs' (Nine planets). The length of the temple wall is 600ft approximately and the breadth is 450ft. The entire walls were made of stones.

The meticulous accounts of the Cholas are inscribed on the copper plates and temple walls. Preferred place of crowned heads, the exotic structure took approximately nine years to complete. Gangaikondacholapuram has been plundered for several times, but the architectural and sculptural wealth remained intact. The temple was erected to extol the accomplishments of a combatant king. Gangaikondacholapuram is a tribute to the architects and artisans, who created this spectacular testament.

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14.2.1 Architecture

The superb architecture of the temple boasts of a 9 storey vimanam that extends to the height of 185 feet. Facing the east direction, Gangai Konda Cholapuram embraces incredible sculptures and carvings. Not less than 54.86m in height, the temple structure follows the style of Brihadisvara Temple. The whole temple is thrived with rich and intricate carvings that are exclusive to Chola style of artistry. Known to comprise a little northern style, the structure embraces intricate carvings in the Vimanams.

The architecture is a portrayal of complex carvings on the hard granite stones, irrespective of the simple style of Cholas. Mind-blowing sculptures adorn the walls and ceilings of Gangaikondacholapuram. The creativity of sculptors is reflected in the figures of dancing Nataraja and peaceful Saraswati. However, the sculptures erected here are as artistic as found in any other temples of Cholas. The most interesting are of Shiva-Parvati, Ardhanareeshwar (the man-woman manifestation of Lord Shiva) and Ganesha. The colossal shrine also addresses several significant bronzes of the Chola age.

This temple is a living history of the Cholas in stone from the period of Rajendra-I and a beautiful gallery of Chola art and architecture. Many sculptures brought from Andhra, Karnataka and Bengal as war trophies are also preserved in the temple and in the nearby villages. Chandesura Anugraha Murthy and Sarasvathy are the most beautiful sculptures of the temple.

This Temple is said to have attained a special status amongst the Chola Temples, in respect of the beauty and also the lively sculptures.

Check Your Progress

1. Why was King, Rajendra Chola given the name 'Gangaikondan'?
2. When and by whom was built the Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple built?

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14.3 SITTANNAVASAL

Sittanavasal is a rock-cut cave, situated on the western side of central part of a hill, which runs in a north-south direction. The hill measures approximately 70 metres (230 ft) in height, and sits above the surrounding plain which has some archaeological monuments. The Jain natural caverns, called Ezhadippattam are approached from the foothills. The cave is approached by climbing a few 100 steps.

The architectural features of the Sittanavasal Cave include the painting and sculptures found within its precincts. While the Sittanavasal village is dated from 1st century BC to 10th century AD when Jainism flourished here, the Temple-cave was initially dated to Pallava King Mahendravarman I (580–630 AD) prior to his conversion from Jainism to Hinduism as a Shaivite. However, an inscription attributes its renovation to a Pandyan king probably Maran Sendan (654–670 AD) or Arikesari Maravarman (670–700 AD). The Jain beds on the hill top is attributed to the Jain era pilgrimage centre which lasted till the 9th century AD. However, in the Pudukkottai region, where the monuments are located, there are many archaeological finds of the megalithic burial sites from much earlier times.

The painting depict beautiful lotus pond with lotus flowers, people collecting lotuses from the pond, two dancing figures, lilies, fish, geese, buffaloes and elephants. In addition, inscriptions of the 9th and 10th century are also seen. The ceiling of the Ardhmandapam is decorated with murals from the 7th century. The cave temple has simple pillars and sculptures of Jain Tirthankaras. However, most of the frescoes which were covered fully in plaster have been severely defaced or not clearly visible due to inadequate security and maintenance resulting in vandalism in the past five or six decades. The paintings are with theme of Jain Samavasarana, the “most attractive heavenly pavilion” (it means the attainment of nirvana), and Khatika bhumi.

The layout of the west facing cave is the same as adopted in other rock-cut cave temples in the country during the 7th Century. As originally built, it had only a garbha-griha (sanctum sanctorum) and an ardhmandapam (semi hall). However, the mukha-mandapa (front hall) was an addition made in the frontage built during the Pandya Rule, which collapsed. Subsequently, a pillared veranda with a facade was added in front of the cave during the 20th century; the Maharaja of Pudukkottai added this part of structure at the suggestion of Tottenham, the British administrator. It has two pillars and two pilasters and a square base entrance to a hexagonal portico, which were brought from the ruins of mantapas at Kudimiyanmalai.

14.4 PILLAYARPATTI

Pillaiyarpatti Pillaiyar Temple is an ancient rock-cut cave shrine dedicated to Lord Ganesha, located at Pillaiyarpatti in Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu.

The presiding deity of the temple is Karpaka Vinayakar. In the cave temple, there are rock cut images of Siva and other gods as well as several shrines. The Âgama texts found on stone inscriptions in the temple help to date the temple between the years 1091 and 1238 b.c.

Pillaiyarpatti Karpaga Vinayagar temple was built by early Pandyas. Karpaga Vinayagar is carved out in a cave of Pillaiyarpatti Hillocks. Lord Thiruveesar (Siva) is also carved in the rock of this cave. The age of the cave temple may be 2500 years or more. There are 14 stone Sculptures in the cave (dated from 500 BC to 1284 AD). These stone sculptures state the ancient names of Pillaiyarpatti such as Ekkattoor, Thiruveenkaikkudi, Maruthangudi, and Rajanarayanapuram.

The image of Pillaiyarpatti Pillaiyar and that of a Siva Lingam were carved out of a stone by a sculptor named Ekkattur Koon Peruparanan who put his signature on a stone inscription, in Tamil Language used between the 2nd and 5th century, found even today in the sanctum. It is believed that the icon of Pillaiyarpatti Pillaiyar must have been carved around the 4th century AD.

The Vinayagar sannidhi (Sanctom Sanctorum) is a cave where the 6 feet of Karpaga Vinayagar has been carved inside that faces north direction. As this is a cave formation, there is no provision to go around for the pradakshina. Vinayagar's trunk is curved at the right side (Valampuri Vinayagar) which is unique feature. There are other deities in this temple such as goddess Karthiyayini (who arrange marriages), Nagalingam (who gifts offspring), Pasupatheeswarar (who showers all wealth).

Check Your Progress

3. Why was the pillared veranda with a facade added to the west facing cave?
4. Where exactly is Pillaiyarpatti Pillaiyar Temple located?

14.5 KUDIMIYANMALAI

Kudumiyannmalai Rock cut cave Temple is located in Pudukkottai district, Tamilnadu. The presiding deity of the temple here is Sikhagiriswarar. This cave temple is called Melakkoil or Tirumerrali. The lingam was hewn out of the same rock, as the temple took shape, resulting in one big monolith of temple and deity.

The temple complex at Kudumiyannmalai comprises a rock-cut temple and a structural edifice (Sikanatha temple) built during circa 10th century. The rock-cut shrine (known as Tirumulattanam) along with a mandapa was excavated around 8th century.

The temple is also noted for the rock-cut panel depicting sixty-three nayanmar (saints) worshipping Siva and Parvati. Jain vestiges in the form of Tamil-Brahmi

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inscription found on the south-western slope of the hill proves the timeline of the temple to many centuries back.

The famous musical inscription describing notations for the seven-stringed musical instrument 'Parivadini' is engraved to the right of the cave temple. The mahamandapa attached with the structural temple has exquisite pillars and portrait sculptures of Nayaka period.

14.6 MADURAI

Mythology cites Madurai as a forest called Kadambavanam. Once a merchant passing through the forest saw Indran, the King of Gods worshipping a Swayambhulingam under a Kadamba tree. This was immediately reported to King Kulsekarer Pandayan. The king cleared the forest and built a splendid temple, known as the Sri Meenakshi Sundareswarer Temple, around the holy Lingam and later built a beautiful lotus-shaped city surrounding the temple.

Presently Madurai is a District Head quarters, and considered as one of the ancient cities of South India with a glorious history backed by Religious and Celestial sentiments. Madurai and Tamil Language are inseparable as the language and literature developed through the Muchchangam (Tamil Sangam of the Sangam Age) It is famous for its world acclaimed Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple. The city of Madurai has been constructed in the form of a lotus and is built around the temple. It is situated on the banks of the river Vaigai. Owing to its rich cultural heritage and architectural splendor, the city is often referred to as the 'Athens of the East'. The origin of Madurai dates back to the Sangam period, the golden period of Tamilagam and Tamil Literature.

Lord Siva appeared on the naming ceremony of the city and blessed it. The divine nectar (madhu) from the tangled locks of Siva fell on the blessed city and so, the city came to be known as "Madhurapuri". It is also said that centuries ago Lord Siva himself performed sixty-four wonders, called "Thiruvilaiyadals", in Madurai. The holy city of Madurai finds mention in the great Indian epics - Ramayana, Kautilyas Arthasastra. Madurai also served as the capital of Pandayan Kings. Besides, the scene of Silappadigaram epic written by Elango Adigal is based as Madurai and Madurai Pandiyan King.

In 302 BC, Megasthanes visited Madurai and was followed by Marcopolo and Ibin Batuta, all of whom mentioned about their visit in their travelogues. There were many others travelers, from countries like Rome and Greece, who visited the city and established trade with the Pandya Kings. Madurai was captured by the Cholas in the 10th century AD and was ruled till the end of the 13th century. In 1223 AD, Pandyas came to power again and patronized the Tamil language. The city became prosperous during the reign of the Pandya Kings.

Many master-pieces or "Silapathikaram" were created during that time. The great Tamil epic was also written during this time. It is based on the story of

Kannagi, who burnt Madurai in lieu of injustice caused to her husband Kovalan. In April 1311, Malik Kafur, the general of Alauddin Khilji, the then ruler of Delhi, raided and robbed Madurai for precious stones, jewels, and other rare treasures. This was followed by subsequent raids by other Muslim Sultans. Finally, in 1323, the Pandya kingdom came under the Delhi Empire ruled by the Tughlaks. In this time period, Madurai Sultanate was formed by the provincial Governor Jalaluddin Asansha(1335-1340) declaring Independence from the Delhi Sultanate of Thuglag. Madurai Sultanate lasted for 46 years until its defeat was pre determined by Delhi Sultanate, through Kumara Kampana of Vijayanagara Empire.

The year 1371 saw the downfall of the Tughlaks and Madurai came under the reign of the Vijayanagar dynasty of Hampi. Kings of this dynasty left the captured land to governors called Nayaks, for the efficient management of their empire. After the death of Krishna Deva Raya (King of Vijayanagar Empire) in 1530 AD, the Nayaks became independent and started ruling the territories autonomously. Among Nayaks, Thirumalai Nayak (1623-1659) was the most popular one.

He is remembered by the people of Madurai even today, for his immense contribution to the city. He created many magnificent structures in and around Madurai. The Raja Gopuram of the Meenakshi Amman Temple, the Pudu Mandapam and the Thirumalai Nayakar's Palace are living examples of his passion for art. Later, Madurai slipped into the hands of the British's East India Company. In 1781, British appointed George Procter to look after the city. He was the first collector of Madurai.

After independence, Madurai became one of the major commercial districts of Tamil Nadu. It is surrounded by several hills, mainly Annamalai, Pasmalai and Nagamalai, named after their resemblance to an Elephant, a Cow and a Snake respectively. The city is a major exporter of Jasmine flowers. Due to its historical background, the temple city of Madurai attracts thousands of pilgrims and visitors every year from India and abroad.

Madurai is one of the major cities in the Indian State of Tamil Nadu. It is the administrative headquarters of Madurai District, the third largest city in Tamil Nadu and 25th most populated city in India. Located on the banks of River Vaigai, Madurai has been a major settlement for two millennia.

Madurai is closely associated with the Tamil language, and the third Tamil Sangam, a major congregation of Tamil scholars said to have been held in the city. The recorded history of the city goes back to the 3rd century BCE, being mentioned by Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to the Maurya empire, and Kautilya, a minister of the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta Maurya. Signs of human settlements and Roman trade links dating back to 300BC are evident from excavations by Archeological Survey of India in Manalur. The city is believed to be of significant antiquity and has been ruled, at different times, by the Pandyas, Cholas, Madurai Sultanate, Vijayanagar Empire, Madurai Nayaks, Carnatic kingdom, and the British East India Company British Raj.

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The city has a number of historical monuments, with the Meenakshi Amman Temple and Tirumalai Nayak Palace being the most prominent. Madurai is an important industrial and educational hub in South Tamil Nadu. The city is home to various automobile, rubber, chemical and granite manufacturing industries.

Madurai is also considered as an important centre in respect of Trade, Agriculture and Medical Tourism also.

Madurai is one major city that carries a number of Historical evidences on the spiritual incidents for the Religious devotees. At the same time Madurai displays valour by conducting Jallikattu sports during the Pongal Celebrations as a Tamils festivals. Madurai is one city that boasts off its link with the Tamil Language and development.

Check Your Progress

5. What is the Kudumiyanmalai Rock Cut Cave Temple especially known for?
6. When did the Vijayanagar dynasty take control of Madurai?

14.7 RAMESWARAM

Rameswaram, is on Pamban Island separated from mainland India by the Pamban channel and is about 40 kilometres from Mannar Island, Sri Lanka. It is considered to be one of the holiest places in India for the Hindus, and part of the Char Dham pilgrimage.

Rameswaram is significant for many Hindus as a pilgrimage to Varanasi is considered to be incomplete without a pilgrimage to Rameswaram. The town along with the Ramanathaswamy temple is one of the holiest Hindu Char Dham (four divine sites) sites comprising Badrinath, Puri and Dwarka. Though the origins are not clearly known, the Advaita school of Hinduism established by Sankaracharya, attributes the origin of Char Dham to the seer. The four monasteries are located across the four corners of India and their attendant temples are Badrinath Temple at Badrinath in the North, Jagannath Temple at Puri in the East, Dwarakadheesh Temple at Dwarka in the West and Ramanathaswamy Temple at Rameswaram in the South. Though ideologically the temples are divided between the sects of Hinduism, namely Saivism and Vaishnavism, the Char Dham pilgrimage is an all Hindu affair. The journey across the four cardinal points in India is considered sacred by Hindus who aspire to visit these temples once in their lifetime. Traditionally, the trip starts at the eastern end from Puri, proceeding in clockwise direction in a manner typically followed for circumambulation in Hindu temples. The temple is one of the famous pilgrimage sites historically – the Maratha kings who ruled Thanjavur established chatrams or rest houses all through

Mayiladuthurai and Rameswaram between 1745 and 1837 CE and donated them to the temple.

There are sixty-four Tirthas or Theerthams (holy water bodies) in and around Rameswaram. According to the Skanda Purana, twenty-four of them are important. Of the Twenty four, 14 are in the form of tanks and wells within the precincts of the temple. Bathing in these tanks is a major aspect of the pilgrimage to Rameswaram and is considered equivalent to penance. Twenty-two of the tanks are within the Ramanathaswamy Temple. The foremost one is called Agni Theertham, the sea (Bay of Bengal). Jatayu, King of the Birds, who fought in vain with the demon-king Ravana to save Sita, is said to have fallen down at Jadayu Theertham as his wings were severed. Villoondi Theertham literally translates to 'buried bow', is located around 7 kilometres from the main temple on the way to Pamban. It is believed to be the place where Rama quenched the thirst of Sita by dipping the bow into the sea water. Other major holy bodies are Hanuman Theertham, Sugreeva Theertham and Lakshmana Theertham.

The Ramanathaswamy Temple is the most notable historic landmark of the town. Located in the centre of town, Ramanathaswamy Temple is a famous Hindu temple dedicated to Shiva. The temple is one of the 12 Jyotirlinga shrines, where Shiva is worshipped in the form of a Jyotirlinga meaning "pillar of light".

It is also one of the 275 Paadal Petra Sthalam (is quoted in spiritual hymns) temples and is glorified in hymns by the three of the most revered Nayanar saints (7th century Saivite saints), Appar, Sundarar and Tirugnana Sambandar.

The temple in its current structure was built during the 12th century by Pandya Dynasty. The temple has the longest corridor among all Hindu temples in India. The breadth of these columned corridors varies from 17 to 21 feet with a height of 25 feet. Each pillar is sculpted in Nayak style as in Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple.

The contribution of the kings of the Sethupathy dynasty (17th century) to the temple was considerable. Large amount of money was spent during the tenure of Pradani Muthirulappa Pillai towards the restoration of the pagodas which were falling into ruins – the Chockattan Mantapam or the cloistered precincts of the temple was reconstructed by him.

The rulers of Sri Lanka contributed to the temple – Parakrama Bahu (1153–1186 AD) was involved in the construction of the sanctum sanctorum of the temple. The eastern tower and shrine of Nataraja were built by Dalavai Sethupathy in 1649 AD. The second enclosure is ascribed to Chinna Udayar Sethupathy and his son Ragunatha Thirumalai (1500–1540 AD). The third enclosure was constructed by Muthu Ramalinga Sethupathy (1725–1771 AD) – his statue is located in the entrance of the corridor.

It is in the Gulf of Mannar, at the tip of the Indian peninsula Pamban Island, also known as Rameswaram Island, is connected to mainland India by the Pamban

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Bridge. Together with Varanasi, It is said the Hindu god Rama built a bridge from here across the sea to Lanka to rescue his wife Sita from her abductor Ravana. The Ramanathaswamy Temple, dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva, is at the centre of the town and is closely associated with Rama. The temple and the town are considered a holy pilgrimage site for Shaivas and Vaishnavas.

Rameswaram is the closest point from which to reach Sri Lanka from India, and geological evidence suggests that the Rama Sethu was a former land connection between India and Sri Lanka. Majority of the workforce depend upon Tourism and fishery as their avocation, in Rameswaram.

Check Your Progress

7. What is the significance of the Rameswaram temple for the Hindus?
8. Who was Parakrama Bahu and why is he important to Rameswaram?

14.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Rajendra Chola brought Ganga water in a golden pot and consecrated the reservoir 'Ponneri or Cholaganga'. Hence, he was given the name, 'Gangaikondan'.
2. Gangaikonda Cholaपुरam was built in the early 11th century, by Rajendra Chola, who was the son and successor of Rajaraja Chola.
3. The pillared veranda with a facade was added to the west facing cave by the Maharaja of Pudukkottai at the suggestion of Tottenham, the British administrator.
4. The Pillaiyarpatti Pillaiyar Temple is located at Pillaiyarpatti in Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu.
5. The Kudumiyanmalai Rock Cave Temple is especially known for the rock-cut panel depicting sixty-three nayanmar (saints) worshipping Siva and Parvati.
6. After the downfall of the Tughlaks in the year 1371, the Vijayanagar dynasty of Hampi took control of Madurai.
7. Rameswaram is significant for many Hindus as the pilgrimage to Varanasi is considered to be incomplete without the pilgrimage to Rameswaram. The town along with the Ramanathaswamy temple is one of the holiest Hindu Char Dham (four divine sites) sites, comprising Badrinath, Puri and Dwarka.
8. Parakrama Bahu (1153–1186 AD) was one of the rulers of Sri Lanka, who was involved in the construction of the sanctum sanctorum of the Rameswaram temple.

14.9 SUMMARY

- Cultural Heritage Centres are the living evidence of the artistic expressions that are left behind by the various dynasties that were ruling Tamil Nadu.
- The evidence in the form of monuments exhibits the early kingdoms and their priorities: their aesthetic preferences, their messages to the world, their show of valour, economic strength, territorial command, and the social developments of their own economy.
- Gangaikonda Cholapuram is a tribute to the architects and artisans, who created this spectacular testament.
- Pillaiyarpatti Pillaiyar Temple is an ancient rock-cut cave shrine dedicated to Lord Ganesha, located at Pillaiyarpatti in Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu.
- Madurai is one of the major cities that carries a number of historical evidences of the spiritual incidents for the religious devotees.
- Rameswaram, is on Pamban Island separated from mainland India by the Pamban channel and is about 40 kilometres from Mannar Island, Sri Lanka.

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14.10 KEY WORDS

- **Dynasty:** It refers to succession of people from the same family who play a prominent role in business, politics, or another field.
- **Sanctum:** It is a sacred place, especially a shrine within a temple.

14.11 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. How the Gangaikonda Cholapuram came to be built?
2. Briefly comment on the architecture of Pillaiyarpatti Pillaiyar Temple.
3. List the rulers of Sri Lanka who contributed in the construction of the Rameswaram temple.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the architectural features of Sittanvasal temple-cave.
2. Comment on the importance of the city of Madurai.
3. Describe Kudumiyanmalai Rock cut cave Temple.

14.12 FURTHER READINGS

NOTES

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