

**From the late Chola to early Vijayanagara Empire:
Aspects of Kingship and Administration**

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Preface

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I started my doctoral research in 2015. In order to be able to judge the documents I had to study for my thesis, I took courses in a number of Indian languages (Sanskrit, Kannada and Tamil), as well as German. During the process of completing my thesis, I encountered many difficulties during the Covid-19 pandemic and returned to Vietnam before the thesis was completed. With the continued encouragement and dedicated help of my supervisors, I was able to finally complete my thesis.

Abbreviations

ARE: Annual Report on Epigraphy; Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy; Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy (Those three are all mentioned as ARE in text).

ARMAD: Annual Report of the Mysore Archaeological Department.

B and VC: Butterworth and Chetti (1905) A collection of the inscriptions on copper-plates and stones in Nellore district.

CII: Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.

EC: Epigraphica Carnatica.

EI: Epigraphica Indica.

EIM: Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica.

IA: Indian Antiquary.

IVR: Inscriptions of Vijayanagara Rulers.

SII: South Indian Inscriptions.

TTDI: Epigraphy Glossary on Tirumalai Tirupati Devasthanam Inscriptions.

VI: Vijayanagara Inscriptions.

VR: V. Rangacharya (1919), A Topographical List of the Inscriptions of the Madras Presidency.

Explanatory note

In this thesis, diacritical marks in words from Indian languages are deliberately avoided in order to make the text more legible for non-Indologists. The diacritical marks are retained, though, in the case of original quotations.

The English plural marker “s” has been avoided throughout in the name of dynasties (e.g. the ‘Chola’ and not the ‘Cholas’; the ‘Pandya’ and not the ‘Pandyas’, etc.).

1. Introduction:

Historical background

The history of South India has received increasing attention during recent decades, finally asserting its place in the historical mainstream of the subcontinent as a whole. This land not only has interactions with other regions of India, but also has its own unique features in terms of history, cultures, languages, etc. Through many different historical periods, two notable political entities emerged: the medieval Chola kingdom (848-1279) and the Vijayanagara kingdom (1336-1646). Over the centuries, these two kingdoms have succeedingly created their political hegemony in South India and brought many cultural and artistic values, making important contributions to the common treasure of Indian culture.

The medieval Chola kingdom was founded around the middle of the ninth century and became a hegemonic state in South India from the end of the tenth century onwards, starting from the reign of King Rajaraja I (985-1014). Its territory at its peak spread across South India, including lands in the states of Tamil Nadu, part of Andhra Pradesh, part of the southern Deccan Plateau, and beyond, encompassing parts of present-day Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The Chola kings carried out military campaigns to the north of India as far as to the river Ganges. They waged naval warfare in Southeast Asia against the Sri Vijaya kingdom on the island of Sumatra, sent envoys to the Chinese court during the Song Dynasty, and created conditions for Chola merchants to trade over the Indian Ocean to Southeast Asian regions. By the early thirteenth century, Chola hegemony declined and the kingdom came to an end in 1279 through emerging local powers, the strongest of which was the Pandya kingdom.

In the following decades, different kingdoms competed for power over South India and were all destroyed by the invasion of the Delhi Sultanate in the early thirteenth century. Muslim rule was established over most of India. In such a context, Hindu warriors led by the five Sangama brothers, emerged, establishing the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagara on the Deccan plateau, with the capital in Hampi, present-day Karnataka state. The new kingdom gradually expanded its territory to most of Southern India, waging a long war against Muslim forces. They have endured for centuries and have contributed significantly to the preservation of traditional Hindu values.

The transition of South Indian history from Chola hegemony to Vijayanagara hegemony was not smooth, with the intrusion and domination of Muslim forces from

the North in between. On the other hand, two hegemonic kingdoms in South India dominated the history of South India for many centuries, forming state models with distinctive features.

The main purpose of my thesis is the clarification of the transition process from Chola hegemony to Vijayanagara hegemony, providing an overall picture of the movement of medieval South Indian history before and after the invasion of Muslim forces from the North. Furthermore, the nature of the Chola and Vijayanagara states has also been an issue that has long attracted discussions between historians and scholars in related fields.

Historiography

One of the pioneer and most influential scholars in researching and presenting Chola history is Nilakanta Sastri, whose two outstanding books are *The Cholas* (1955 – second edition) and *A History of South India from Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijayanagar* (revised edition in 1958). On the basis of inscriptional, archaeological and literary sources, he presents Chola history comprehensively throughout its course. James Heitzman's work *Gifts of Power: Lordship in an Early Indian State* (1997) presents the state formation, religious organizations and economy of the Chola kingdom, in which he analyzes the relationship between ritual and administration, state structure and the relationship between the central government and intermediate levels. In the field of administration and local government, we can mention the research work of Y. Subbarayalu with the work *Political Geography of the Chola country* (1973), in which he surveyed the administrative structure of the Chola. Subbarayalu's collection of writings on the Chola can be found in *South India under the Cholas* (2014). M.S. Govindasamy in *The role of feudatories in later Chola history* (1979) focuses on the rise of local vassals in the late Chola period.

Robert Sewell's *A forgotten empire: Vijayanagara* (1900) is perhaps the most prominent and pioneering work in the early study of Vijayanagara history. Burton Stein's *Vijayanagara* (1989) is a very notable work on Vijayanagara history, in which he applies the perspective of a decentralized state model on Vijayanagara history. Regarding the form of administration of Vijayanagara, we can mention the work *Local government in the Vijayanagara empire* (1972) by A.V. Venkata Ratnam. George Michell's and John Fritz's *Vijayanagara Research Project* carried out in the last

decades of the twentieth century (from the 1980s onwards) comprises a comprehensive survey of archaeology, epigraphy, literature, architecture, art and sculpture, as well as religion of the Vijayanagara kingdom. Many new documents in the forms of inscriptions, literary works, and archaeological remains were discovered. The result of the project are many published works, including reports, research articles and books in the monograph series¹.

One of the important controversial issues is the nature of the state model in Chola, Vijayanagara and in South India in general. In particular, the role of the central government in the power structure of the kingdom, its relationship with local authorities and the autonomy of localities are issues that have been discussed. Besides, the transition from the Chola hegemonic state model to the Vijayanagara hegemony in South India also attracted attention.

My impression is nevertheless, that, on the one hand, the historical role of South India in the flow of Indian history has not received enough attention yet, and that, on the other hand, the shift from Chola to Vijayanagara, with all the kingdoms intervening chronologically, still deserves a more detailed survey and depiction in chronological order.

My research goal is thus to present a comparative overview of the changing role and importance of the king, and of the changes in the political and administrative structure of South India during the two periods mentioned. Based on the analysis of documents, mainly inscriptions, I will sequence historical events, presenting them in a flow from the prosperous period of the Chola to the peak of Vijayanagara.

Sources

My main sources are inscriptions, literary works, including reports of early travellers, and archaeological remains. Among these diverse and rich documentary sources, the most important are inscriptions. They are published in notable volumes, such as the *Archaeological Reports* and the *Inscriptions of South India*, the publication of which started as early as in the late nineteenth century. In the second half of the twentieth

¹ *Vijayanagara Research Project Monography Series*, published by Manohar, American Institute of Indian Studies, New Delhi.

century, the Vijayanagara research program conducted for many decades surveyed and supplemented many new documents, making important contributions that shed light on many aspects of Vijayanagara history.

The structure of my thesis

The thesis comprises five chapters, as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

The introduction gives a broad overview of the background and the base of this thesis. It provides the motivation and justification for the formulation of my research goal.

Chapter 2: Historical progress

In this chapter, I present the historical process of South India from the time the Chola kingdom became hegemonic until the period when Muslim forces invaded and changed the power structure of the country and thus led to the emergence of the Vijayanagara kingdom.

Chapter 3: Kingship

In this chapter, I focus on analyzing the royal structure of the two kingdoms Chola and Vijayanagara. I try to depict the components of the respective central courts, mainly the king and his family. This chapter is one of the core components of my thesis in which I try to analyze and compare the situations of the centres of power in the two states I am focusing on.

Chapter 4: Administrative system

This chapter is the most important chapter of my thesis. I here analyze on the base of inscriptional materials the changing structures of administrations of the vast empires of the Chola and Vijayanagara. One major aspect is the relationship between the central government and local administrative units.

Chapter five: Conclusion

In this chapter I provide a condensed overview of the main topics of the thesis and I present my findings in discussion with the works of my predecessors.

2. Historical development

2.1. Cholas

2.1.1. The Pre-Medieval Chola Dynasty

It is the so-called Sangam age of classical Tamil literature which furnishes us the very first insights into the history of South India. The earliest poems of Sangam literature² date from approximately the third or second century BC. Sangam literature is divided into two literary genres: love poetry (*akam*, lit. “inside”) and poetry of state affairs and war (*puram*, lit. “outside”). Among these, only *puram* contains historical materials, like the names of cities and kings. From Sangam literature, we also come to know about “three kingdoms” or “three dynasties”, namely the Chola (in the North and East), the Chera (in the West) and the Pandya (in the South). They are commonly called as the Early Chola, Chera and Pandya, in order to distinguish them from the later, medieval powers. Besides these three great kings there were numerous vassals, also called petty kings which were controlled by the one or the other of the three great rulers and were tributaries to them. This political type of arrangement remained in South India for centuries even after the great power of the early Chola, Chera, and Pandya had declined. From *puram* poems we hear about 18 Chera kings, 12 Chola kings, and 12 Pandya kings, and approximately 48 vassal kings or chieftains.

The earliest Tamil inscriptions found so far date from the very first centuries AD – which correspond to middle and late Sangam times. In these inscriptions we find several kings and cities which also occur in some of the Sangam poems, a fact that underlines the historicity of *puram* poetry. Archaeological researches have brought to light some of the physical remains of the three great kingdoms and of several minor chiefdoms, as e.g. Arikamedu (near Pondicherry), Kaveripumpattinam (Tanjore district), Uraiyyur, Alagarai, Tirukkampuliyur and Karur (Tiruchirappalli district), Adichanallur and Korkai (Tirunelveli district), Kanchi (Kanchipuram district), Kunnathur (Tiruppur district), Perur (Coimbatore district), Sengamedu (Putukkottai district) and

² Sangam means academy and there is a legend that consecutively three so-called Sangams have taken place. The first two are completely in the realm of legend but the third Sangam which is said to have taken place in the city of Madurai might have some historical base. The body of Sangam literature composed under the control of this third academy comprises two collections: one hyper-anthology consisting of eight anthologies (*ettu-tokai*) of shorter poems and a collection of ten long songs (*pattu-paattu*). Besides, *Tolkappiyam* (a grammar book) also originates from this time and might even be the very first Tamil book handed down to us.

Nattamedu (Tiruvallur district). The evidence found consists in remains of buildings, ornaments, pottery, etc. Especially in Arikamedu even Roman coins and artefacts were found which clearly hint to trade relations between these two ancient cultures.³ The first of the early Chola kings whose name is revealed to us, is Karikala Chola. Even the medieval Chola claimed themselves as his descendants, so that Karikala can with some right be called the first ancestor even of the medieval Chola empire.⁴ Other early Chola kings that are mentioned in epigraphical sources are Kokkilli and Koccenganan.

2.1.2. The Medieval Chola Empire and the Mode of Authority

Historical researches⁵ used to employ the terms “Empire” and “Supremacy” with reference to the medieval Chola power. However, the size and the management of authority – whether centralized or not – of that power are still to be determined. These questions would be examined in the following chapters.

Subrahmanian⁶ states that during the early period of the Imperial Chola (from Vijayalaya Chola to Rajendra Chola I, 850-1044) the center of Chola power was Tanjore. Later (from Kulottunga Chola I on, who ruled from 1071 to 1122) the royal line changed to the so-called Chalukya-Chola (they will be mentioned and explained in detail later in this thesis). They consolidated political relations between Gangaikondacholapuram (this place-name denotes ‘the town of the Chola who reached the Ganga river’) and Vengi.⁷

³ Since 2013 onwards archaeologists from the Archaeological Survey of India and the Tamil Nadu Archaeology Department have been conducting an important excavation at Kiladi (Shivaganga district), today a tiny hamlet located 12 km southeast of the historic city of Madurai. The site is dated between the 5th and the 3rd century BC in the Sangam age. Various structures and artefacts have been found, such as brick walls, subsurface-water-pipes made from bricks, roof tiles, pottery, bone tools, etc. The result of the excavation so far proves that an urban civilization existed in the early history of Tamil Nadu, named the Vaigai Valley Civilization.

⁴ There are copper plates which mention the genealogy of Parantaka Chola I (907-950) the 3rd king of the medieval Chola: “*In his race, which was resplendent with the fame of Kōkkilli, Chōla and Karikāla, (and) which was the birthplace of Kōchchaṅkaṅ and other noble kings, was born the glorious (and) victorious Vijayālaya, whose foot-stool was worshipped by the best of kings*” SII, Vol. III, Part III: No. 76. It mentions the first king Vijayalaya of the medieval Chola who was born from the race of Karikala.

⁵ Sastri (1955: pp. 157-191) mentions two empires namely Chola and Chalukya from ca. 850 to 1200. Karashima (2014: pp. 124) states that “[w]e follow here Sastri’s nomenclature in describing a political history characterized by the confrontation of two powers”. Kulke (2004: pp. 257) also mentions “Imperial Cholas” and “the Chola empire”. In contrast, Stein (1980: pp. 256f.) characterizes the Chola state as “segmentary” which infers that the state was not governed by a centralized power.

⁶ Subrahmanian (1972: pp. 164).

⁷ Subrahmanian (1972: pp. 208).

Sastri⁸ claimed three periods of Chola power, namely the early, the medieval and the late Chola, of which the “early Chola” refers to the Sangam Age, the “medieval Chola” to the Chola of 850 to 1178, and the ‘late Chola’ to the last three kings, viz. Kulottunga Chola III, Rajendra Chola III, and Rajaraja Chola III (1178-1279). This division has since been widely accepted and is used by scholars who concern themselves with Chola history.

Nevertheless, Heitzman splits the history of the Chola into four periods mainly referring to the size of the Chola military power. According to him, the first period (849-985) saw the rise of the Chola military power within the central area of the Tamil region. The second period (985-1070) was the peak of Chola power, during which the empire extended its influence up to North India up to the Ganga river, to Southeast Asia, and to Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The third period (1070-1178) saw the slow decline of the Chola military power and eventually led to the collapse of the empire in the final and fourth period (1178-1279).⁹

We can say that so far, the measure of power of the Chola empire has been determined by the amount of military power and the size of territory. Further the relations between the central seat of power and the local authorities form another important criterion in the examination of the strength of the imperial power. The main sources of information on these points are inscriptional data. The inscriptions, however, have their own system of describing the power of the Chola.

Kings, courts and royal families are regarded as standing in the highest position of the political system. They carry many meritorious titles which, however, do not always reflect the real position of the rulers. To understand the overseas political power of the Chola (in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia), epigraphical and archaeological evidences are helpful. There are for instance eight inscriptions in Tamil language found in Southeast Asia and Southern China. They are related to the activities of merchant associations which were of course, not representatives of the Chola power but could reflect the Chola policy on trade relations with foreign countries and thus somehow, could show the dimension of the Chola power overseas.¹⁰ The content of these inscriptions suggest that the Chola did not exert political power in Southeast Asia but rather concentrated on trade relations.

⁸ Sastri (1958: pp. 105, 157, 192).

⁹ Heitzman (2004: pp. 165f.).

¹⁰ Christie (1998: pp. 219-268).

In the extreme South of India have existed, in principle, for one and a half millennia, although with some interruptions, three dynasties, viz.: the Pandya in the southern Tamil region, the Chola in the central and northern Tamil region and the Chera in the western Tamil region and in today's Kerala. They all are first mentioned in the inscriptions of the Maurya emperor Ashoka.¹¹ It can be seen that according to some Tamil chronicles,¹² the Chola kings were very often considered as the heirs of Karikala,¹³ a Chola king who allegedly ruled during the Sangam Age, and who was mentioned in some later inscriptions.¹⁴

However, there is no certain evidence for the time between the ancient Chola and the medieval Chola, a period which remains somewhat in the dark. Not only in ancient India it was the rule that in periods of new power formation, a struggle between rivals ensues in a certain area. In South India for instance, two main competitors were the Chola and the Pandya. Moreover, the political and economic situation was not bipolar as also other dynasties interfered in the power struggle on one or the other side – thus reflecting the theory described in the Kautilya-Arthashastra. The extent and resources of the finally victorious Chola empire also increased the power and prestige of its sovereigns.

The history of the so-called medieval or Imperial Chola begins in the 9th century AD. At approximately 1000 AD the Chola empire was reorganized. The many small natural agricultural districts called *nadu*, were joined in large administrative regions called *valanadu* (great *nadu*). The highest units above the *valanadu* were the nine 'circles' (*mandala*) of the realm.¹⁵

The rise of the Imperial Chola began with the accession of their king Parantaka I in the year 907 AD who continued the expansion started by his father Aditya I (871-907)¹⁶ and invaded the Pandya kingdom in 910 AD. Parantaka Chola I captured the Pandyan capital Madurai and assumed the title *Madurai konda Chola* (The Chola who conquered Madurai). The Pandyan ruler Maravarman Rajasinha III sought the help of Kassapa V (929-939), the king of Lanka, who sent an army to his aid. Parantaka Chola

¹¹ Hultzsch (1925: pp. 3).

¹² Sewell (1932: pp. 340); Karashima (2014: pp. 49).

¹³ Karikala means the man with the charred leg to perpetuate the memory of a fire-accident in the early years of the prince's life. In later times, it was explained as Death (*kala*) to Kali or "Death to (enemies) elephants": Sastri (1955: pp. 31-2).

¹⁴ See above, chapter 2.1.1.

¹⁵ Scharfe (1989: pp. 238).

¹⁶ He freed his country from the overlordship of the Pallava: Karashima (2014: pp. 124).

I defeated the combined army at the battle of Vellore (915).¹⁷ The Pandya king fled into exile to Lanka and Parantaka Chola I completed his conquest of the entire Pandya country.

Parantaka Chola I spent many years in the newly conquered country completely subjugating it, and when he felt he had at last achieved his aim, he wanted to celebrate his victory by a coronation in Madurai in which he was to invest himself with the insignia of the Pandyan monarchy.¹⁸ However, this attempt failed. The Pandyan king carried the insignia away and left them in the safe custody of the Lankan king. Towards the end of his reign, Parantaka Chola I tried to retrieve them by invading Lanka. The Ceylonese chronicle *Mahavamsa* (chapter LIII) records¹⁹ that the Lankan king Udaya II (952-955) took the Pandya crown and the jewels and hid himself in the Rohana hills. Parantaka Chola I's forces had to return without success. After his exploits in the Pandya country and in Lanka, Parantaka Chola I took the title of *Maduraiyum Ilamum Konda Parakesarivarman* (Parakesarivarman who conquered Madurai and Eelam [= Lanka]).

At the height of his success, Parantaka Chola I's dominions comprised almost the whole of the Tamil country right up to Nellore in Andhra. It is obvious that Parantaka Chola I was a great military leader. He is known to have defeated the kings of the Deccan realms by 912 AD and completed at least temporarily the conquests started by his father Aditya. Parantaka Chola I died ca. 947 AD.

His successor, Rajaditya, was defeated and killed in the famous Battle of Takkolam by the Ganga ruler Butuga, vassal of the Rashtrakuta king Krishna III, mentioned in the Atakur inscription of 949 AD.²⁰ Thus around 950 AD the Chola kingdom had shrunk to the size of a small principality. Its vassals in the South had proclaimed their independence.²¹ It seems that the Pandya ruler Vira Pandya defeated the Chola king Gandaraditya (949-957) and claimed independence. The Chola ruler Parantaka II (957-973) responded by defeating Vira Pandya in two battles. It is recorded that a Chola prince called Aditya II (circa 965-969) killed Vira Pandya, but there are also

¹⁷ Sastri (1955: pp. 123).

¹⁸ Sewell (1932: pp. 41).

¹⁹ Geiger (1930: pp. 171-7).

²⁰ EI, Vol. II: pp. 167-174).

²¹ Sastri (1958: pp. 170-2).

contradictory reports.²² The Pandya were again supported by the Lanka forces of king Mahinda IV (952-968).

The height of the Imperial Chola begins with emperor Rajaraja I (985-1014), also called the real founder of the Chola empire.²³ He is known to have attacked the Pandya.²⁴ The political situation after the collapse or weakening of neighboring kingdoms was favorable to him. He fought against an alliance of the Pandya, Chera and Lanka kings, and defeated the Chera and “deprived” the Pandya of their ancient capital Madurai.²⁵ Emperor Rajendra Chola I (1018-1044), the son of Rajaraja Chola I, continued to occupy the Pandya kingdom, and even appointed a series of Chola viceroys with the title “Chola Pandya” to rule from Madurai over the Pandya and Western Chera (in today’s Kerala) countries. In 1025 AD, the king sent a mighty oversea expedition against Srivijaya in Southeast Asia, interpreted as expansion politics to remove hindrances.²⁶ In 1033 AD, Rajendra Chola I dispatched an envoy to China in order to strengthen trade connections between the two countries. Among the presents for the Chinese emperor was a Chola banner and a seal showing a tiger.²⁷ The vast territorial power of the Chola had also been imprinted on gold coins issued by them: one kind of coin had a seated tiger facing right, a Chera bow behind the tiger, two vertical Pandyan fishes to the right of the tiger, and the central design flanked by small temple lamps.²⁸

The very beginning of the Chola emperor Kulottunga I’s rule (from 1070 AD onwards) was marked by the loss of Lanka and by a rebellion in the Pandya country. These developments of conquests and losses within half a century shows clearly that becoming a supreme power could be at every time challenged and turned into the contrary. Even the Chola empire which had conquered not only much of Lanka but also for some time had held control over parts of the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra and kept at least close mercantile connections to Guangzhou (Canton) in southern China,²⁹ encountered from time to time severe setbacks. A Chinese inscription of 1079 AD found in a temple at Guangzhou refers to attempts of a certain Dihujialuo from

²² EI, Vol. IX, No. 10.

²³ Sastri (1955: pp. 245).

²⁴ Thapar (2003: pp. 230).

²⁵ Karashima (2014: pp. 122-4).

²⁶ For this naval expedition see Kulke (2009: pp. 1-19).

²⁷ Sastri (1955: pp. 20).

²⁸ The vertical fish symbolizes the dead fish, meaning the vanquished Pandya kingdom: Kulke, Kesavapany, and Sakhuja (2009: pp. 84).

²⁹ Takakusu (1928: pp. 466 ff).

Sanfoqi (Devakula from Srivijaya) to establish a trading presence in China. Many scholars identified him with the Chola king Kulottunga I (1070-1120).³⁰

After this short glimpse into the history of the Imperial Chola, it seems opportune to consider the structure of the state systems. Nilakanta Sastri held the opinion that the Chola kingdom was a centralized empire, and Pillai³¹ considered the South Indian kingdoms as “feudal”. By a first view it seems that the Chola kingdom at its apogee had destroyed all its enemies, controlling the conquered states by an effective central bureaucracy. But on the other side, this concept of a centralized state was rather an ideal which was never or only for a short time kept up. During long periods of Indian history, especially the history of South India, the existence of vassal states which from time to time could turn the tide by gaining the overlordship, thereby replacing the former superpower. As a superpower had many vassals, the description of the relationship as “feudatory” seems acceptable. It is derived from the European Middle Age, but in Europe this relationship was normally much more stable, since such radical changes never happened here, for instance the German Holy Roman Empire has never experienced an “overthrow” by a member state like e.g. Saxony. Stein³² presented the concept of a “segmentary state”. A segmentary political form of the Chola age means that here political authority was shared between great kings and local landed lordships. Kings claimed rights to a major share of material and human resources within their realms as *kshatra* (possession by lordship). Chola kings enjoyed this in the Kaveri basin – the core of their realm – and less in other regions; they claimed the same lordly possession in the Pandya country, but never achieved a sustained mastery there. The Chola state and other medieval countries of the South existed through the recognition by dispersed locally based lordships of the ritual sovereignty of their anointed king.³³ Therefore, it is no surprise that during the reign of the Chola king Rajaraja II (1146-1173) the segmentary Pandya realm acted nearly independent. The Pandyan king Parakrama Pandya I, ruling from the Pandyan capital in Madurai, was besieged in the Pandyan succession war (1169-1177) by his contemporary rival and throne claimant Kulasekhara Pandya in 1169, a vassal of the Chola Dynasty (see Mahavamsa LXXXVI). Parakrama Pandya I sought assistance

³⁰ Karashima, Appendix 5 in Kulke, Kesavapany, and Sakhuja (2009: pp. 305-306).

³¹ Pillai (1964: pp. ii).

³² Stein (1977: pp. 16; 1980: pp. 256-257).

³³ Stein (1989: pp. 61).

from the Ceylonese king Parakramabahu I (1153-1186) of Polonnaruwa but was subsequently executed. Kulasekhara Pandya ascended to the Madurai throne, but was eventually forced to seek refuge in the Chola country in 1171. Parakrama Pandya's son Vira Pandya III ascended on the Pandyan throne before he was defeated by Chola forces.³⁴

2.1.3. The Decline of the Chola Empire in the 12th and 13th Centuries

Although we can observe the rising of several local powers in South India, the Chola certainly gained supremacy at least at the reign of Kulottunga Chola III (1178-1216). One inscription found in Kanchipuram – the so-called Ekambaranatha inscription dating from 1205³⁵ – proves that a certain Bhavanandin's patron was a vassal of Kulottunga Chola III. During his reign, Kulottunga Chola III could conduct some campaigns to control his vast territory and punish feudatories who had raised resistance. His campaigns against the Pandya in the South in the years 1182, 1188-1189, and 1205, can be considered as a good example for the scale of Kulottunga Chola III's power over the South. In some of his inscriptions,³⁶ he claimed himself confidently to be the "head of the Pandya empire", which indicates that the Chola empire by this time stretched from the Deccan until the southernmost point of India.³⁷ Kulottunga Chola III, moreover had a peace treaty with the Hoysala kingdom which was rising in West Deccan and the northwest Kaveri basin after some conflicts between 1187 and 1215.

Nevertheless, there are clear signs of a beginning decline of the Chola empire during the last years of Kulottunga Chola III's reign. In the early 13th century, the connection between South India and Southeast Asia which had been established in the 11th century by Rajaraja Chola I and Rajendra Chola I, weakened. Although there are some inscriptions in Tamil language in South East Asia in the 13th century, their contents, still involving Indian merchants, do not refer anymore to any Chola influence.³⁸

Clear signs of the decline of the Chola empire are found during the reign of Rajaraja Chola III (1216-1246). One inscription³⁹ found in the Devanayaka Perumal temple in

³⁴ Sastri (1958: pp. 187-190).

³⁵ EI, Vol. VI: No. 27.

³⁶ E.g. SII, Vol. III: No. 87, No. 88.

³⁷ Sastri and Srinivasachari (1971: pp. 299-301).

³⁸ Rajukumar (1974: pp. 29-35).

³⁹ EI, Vol. VII: No. 23.

Tiruvandipuram village (Cuddalore district), dated to the year 1231, mentions that the emperor Rajaraja Chola III was defeated by the Pallava chief Kopperunjinga of Senthamangalam (1229-1278) in ca. 1231. The Chola emperor was then imprisoned and carried to Senthamangalam, which lies northwest of Tanjore. The Hoysala king Narasimha II (1220-1234), who had marital connection with the Chola, carried out a rescuing campaign for the emperor. Narasimha II's ambition was to "destroy the country of Kopperunjinga and liberate the Chola emperor."⁴⁰ From further inscriptions⁴¹ we come to know, that he succeeded, and the Chola emperor went back to his imperial capital Tanjore. Kopperunjinga became again a feudatory of the Chola, but in 1243 AD he declared his independence, and in 1252/53 he defeated the Hoysala. One inscription⁴² at Vallam, near Tanjore, shows how the old Chola kingdom was broken up in 1256: it mentions the sovereign Perunjinga Pallava II who gave to Rajendra Chola III full royal titles. However, his power was again reduced to vassalage by the Pandya ruler Jatavarman Sundara I in the year 1255.

As a side-remark (the subject will be taken up in detail later) I would like to point out here, that the inscriptions mention three levels of political power in South India and related titles. The highest is "the emperor" as lord of the entire empire, the second is 'the king' with his kingdom, and the third and lowest is the "chieftain" or "vassal" who rules the chieftdom or the feud. This hierarchical division of power is first mentioned in inscriptions of the early 13th century.

The weakening of the imperial power of the Chola is clearly shown by the fact that Rajaraja Chola III was imprisoned by one of his vassals and later got freed with the help of one of his relatives who was, in fact, a king of the Hoysala. Till that time the Hoysala, though not an imperial power, used to be rivals of the Chola. The neighbors that have been affected by Rajendra Chola's reign, viz. the Hoysala in the East and Northwest and the Pandya in the South and Southeast, began to exert strong pressure on the Chola empire. The Chola territory shrank to the region just around Tanjore and Gangaikondacholapuram, and the conflicts with the neighboring powers exhausted the Chola kingdom so that they could barely keep control even of their core territory. The last chapter of Chola history developed between the years 1178 and 1279.

⁴⁰ Idem.

⁴¹ EI, Vol. X: No. 24; EI, Vol. XI: No. 11.

⁴² SII, Vol. II: No. 72.

Karashima⁴³ claims that Kulottunga Chola III was the very last “great king” who actually kept control of the imperial territory and was able to face the threat of the rising power of the Pandya and the Hoysala.⁴⁴ The Hoysala had, in the 12th century, once defeated the Chola. From one inscription⁴⁵ we know, that the Hoysala king Vishnuvardhana built a temple for Vijayanarayana in Belur (mentioned as Velapur in inscriptions) in the year 1117 AD in commemoration of his victory against the Chola viceroy of Talakadu.

The last Chola king was Rajendra III (1246-1279 AD). There are three records⁴⁶ in Nellore which mention the beginning of his reign as 1244 and show that he had first ruled in association with his father Rajaraja Chola III as joint rulers. Rajaraja Chola III continued to co-rule until 1256.⁴⁷

Rajendra Chola III, who had already been installed as the crown prince (*yuvaraja*) in 1246, appeared to have been a much abler ruler than his father Rajaraja Chola III. He undertook strenuous efforts to revive the Chola power and could have succeeded, but for the Hoysala ruler Someshvara’s interference. Rajendra Chola III attacked the Pandya and defeated two Pandyan princes, one of whom was Maravarman Sundara Pandya II (1238-1251), the name of the second one remains unknown. Someshvara Hoysala (1234-1263) now took the side of the Pandya to prevent the complete restoration of the Chola authority, after he was defeated by Rajendra Chola III mentioned in an inscription⁴⁸ of the Ranganatha temple at Srirangam, dated Wednesday, 25th December 1252 and then made peace with him. He continued to work in alliance with Rajendra Chola III supporting him against enemies common to both of them, and thus helping to consolidate Chola power to some extent.

The alliance between Rajendra Chola III and Someshvara became closer after the accession to the Pandya throne of the celebrated Jatavarman Sundara Pandya in 1251, one of the most famous warriors and conquerors of South India, under whom Pandya power attained its greatest splendor. In the first years of his reign, Jatavarman Sundara Pandya fought many wars and rapidly extended his control North up to Nellore and beyond, and South to Sri Lanka, confining the Hoysala to the Mysore plateau. Kanchipuram became a secondary Pandya capital, and Sri Lanka and Kerala

⁴³ Karashima (2014: pp. 127).

⁴⁴ More details about Kulottunga Chola III are given in appendix A: inscriptions referring to Kulottunga Chola III.

⁴⁵ EC, Vol. V, Belur: No. 58, cf. also No. 71.

⁴⁶ B and VC, Part I, Gudur Taluk: No. 39, No. 85, No. 88.

⁴⁷ Sastri (1958: pp. 206).

⁴⁸ EI, Vol. VII: No. 24.

were for a time part of the Pandya empire. In his wars, Sundara Pandya commanded the active co-operation of other princes of the royal family, Jatavarman Pandya (1253) being most prominent among them. Even the rule of the Pandya kingdom was shared among several princes of the royal family.

Such an arrangement appears to have been a longstanding tradition in the region of South India. Already Kulottunga Chola I is said to have subjugated five Pandya princes in a single stroke. Jatavarman Kulasekhara Pandya pressed war on the Hoysala Ramanatha, who had allied himself closely with Rajendra Chola III, and defeated both in 1279. That is the last information we get about Rajendra Chola III and the Chola altogether. Jatavarman Kulasekhara Pandya (1268-1310) became unquestionably the master of both, the Chola country and the Tamil regions ruled by the Hoysala empire over which Ramanatha Hoysala had ruled until 1293 AD in the southern part of the Hoysala Empire.

Kulasekhara Pandya also fought in Kerala (today's Travancore region) where he subdued a local uprising. At another point in time he took advantage of a famine in Sri Lanka to send his minister Aryacakravarti to invade the island where he "laid waste the country on every side", entered the fortress of Subhagiri, and carried away to the Pandya country "the venerable Tooth Relic and all the solid wealth that was there".⁴⁹ This was at the close of the reign of Bhuvanaikabahu I of Sri Lanka (1271-1283), and there followed a period of some twenty years during which the island formed part of the Pandya empire.⁵⁰

One inscription⁵¹ at Srirangam states that Rajendra Chola III defeated the Hoysala Someshvara (1234-1263) and presumably drove him out of Kannanur, which is close to Srirangam and where Someshvara had made his residence, and Rajendra's capital was now at Gangaikondacholapuram.

One record dated to January 29th, 1256, indicates that Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I was reigning in Chingleput.⁵² In the Chittoor district (Andhra Pradesh), an inscription of the local Kalahasti chief Nalla Siddhi of Kanchi, mentioned also his overlord Vijayagandagopala of the Telugu Choda family in the latter's 7th year.⁵³ In this year

⁴⁹ Sastri (1929: pp. 184f).

⁵⁰ Sastri (1955: pp. 207-209).

⁵¹ EI, VII: No. 24.

⁵² ARE: No. 209 of 1923.

⁵³ ARE: No. 202 of 1903.

Rajendra Chola III was still ruling in Tanjore which was mentioned in an inscription at Kovilur.⁵⁴

2.1.4. The end of the Imperial Chola (1216-1279)

Just in order to complete the picture we will give here a very brief overview of the further development and decline of the Chola dynasty.

After Rajendra Chola I, the next Chola king worth mentioning was Rajaraja Chola III who ruled from 1216/1218 till 1246 AD (he lived on till at least 1260).

He was followed by Rajendra Chola III, who ruled from 1246-1279 AD. In 1272 AD the Hoysala Narasimha III, reigning in Mysore, was given the title “Establisher of the Chola kingdom”, alluding to the episode according to which Rajendra Chola III had been helped to the throne by Narasimha’s father Hoysala Someshvara.⁵⁵

A record from Coimbatore District, dated to 1280 AD, mentions the 15th year of a chief with the Pandya name “Vira Pandya”, and the Chola title “Rajakeshari”. He may have belonged to the Kongu-Chola line of rulers, and may have assumed a Pandya name since the Chola title had lost its old significance with the fall of the Chola kingdom. His rule must have begun in 1266/67 AD. A number of records of his time are noted in the Coimbatore District.⁵⁶

It is recorded that in 1292 AD one Ganesh, Chola Maharaja of Nidugal, was ruling locally in Central Mysore. A pedigree of his family is given in *Epigraphia Carnatica*.⁵⁷

This is the last document which clearly refers to the Chola imperial dynasty.

Just to provide a clearer overview, I here attach a list of the so-called imperial Chola rulers of medieval and later times.

Medieval Chola (ca. 848/850-1070 AD)

ca. 850 ⁵⁸ -871 AD	Vijayalaya
870/871-907 AD	Aditya I
907-955 AD	Parantaka I
947-949 AD	Rajaditya I

⁵⁴ ARE: No. 208 of 1908. – There are four inscriptions at the Mantrapurishvara temple at Kovilur respectively, dated Monday, September 11th, 1252, Sunday, May 21st, 1262, Friday, October 27th, 1262, and probably Monday, February 14th, 1267. – Further details from inscriptions referring to Rajendra Chola III are found in appendix B.

⁵⁵ Sewell (1932: pp. 160).

⁵⁶ Sewell (1932: pp. 163).

⁵⁷ EC, Vol. XII, Pavugada: No. 53.

⁵⁸ Perhaps earlier, Sastri (1955: pp. 112).

949-957 AD	Gandandaraditya
956-957 AD	Arinjaya
956-969 AD	Aditya II (Karikala)
957-973 AD	Parantaka II (Sundara)
970-985 AD	Madhurantaka Uttama
985-1014/1016 AD	Rajaraja I ⁵⁹
1012-1044 AD	Rajendra I
1018-1054 AD	Rajadhiraja I
1052-1063 AD	Rajendra II
1063-1069 AD	Virarajendra
1067/1068-1070 AD	Adhirajendra

The later Chola Empire (1070-1216 AD)

1070-1120/1122 AD	Kulottunga I
1118-1135 AD	Vikrama
1133-1150 AD	Kulottunga II ⁶⁰
1146-1173 AD	Rajaraja II
1163-1179 AD	Rajadhiraja II
1178-1216 AD	Kulottunga III

2.1.5. The Northern Chola

During the reign of the last great Chola kings, there was a contemporary presence of Chola (also called Nellore Choda) chiefs ruling the Nellore area (1223-1316). Rulers known from inscriptions are Tikka I (1223-1250),⁶¹ Manma Siddha II (1250-1290)⁶² and Manma Siddha III (1290/1291-1316).⁶³ The last one is sometimes called Vira Gandagopala⁶⁴ but Sewell⁶⁵ identified him as Manma Siddha III. The history of the

⁵⁹ The real founder of the Chola Empire: Sastri (1955: pp. 245).

⁶⁰ No record of any warfare: Sastri (1955: pp. 349).

⁶¹ ARE: No. 659 of 1904; No. 534 of 1912 and No. 357, 416, 446 of 1919; B and VC, Part III, Rapur Taluk: No. 20.

⁶² B and VC, Part II, Kandukur Taluk: No. 26, 60, 61, 62, 63, 66; ARE: No. 27, 35, 36 of 1890; No. 202 of 1903; No. 272, 389 of 1905; No. 598 of 1907; No. 222 of 1910; No. 538 of 1919; No. 222 of 1910, No. 3, 4, 6, 417, 437 of 1911; No. 117, 243 of 1912; No. 343, 393, 405, 428, 429, 492, 500, 501, 503, 537, 538, 568, 571, 637 of 1919; No. 110, 211, 230 of 1923.

⁶³ ARE: No. 213 of 1892; No. 194 of 1894; No. 603 of 1919; EI, Vol. VII, No. 128; B and VC, Part II, Nellore taluk: No.73.

⁶⁴ Raman (1975: pp. 21); Sarojini Devi (1993: pp. 360).

⁶⁵ Sewell (1932: pp. 148, 172).

Telugu Chola family and its connections with other chieftains or even royal families in South India from the 12th to the 14th century becomes clear from inscriptional data. Thus, we understand, that the Telugu Chola Branch (or Nellore Chola Branch) was a local power that functioned like a local vassal under the Chola empire⁶⁶ and later under the Kakatiya kingdom for a long time. They had never commanded enough power to be independent, even though they carried some glorious titles. In fact, their authority had never spread beyond Nellore. Chola Bijjana (1156-1168) was the first important chief in the Nellore Chola clan. As a feudatory of Someshvara I of Western Chalukya, he took part in the wars of the Chalukya and Later Chola. In recognition of the loyalty and services of his descendants to the Chalukya of Kalyani, Vikramaditya II appointed them as rulers of Pakanadu in southern Andhra.

Later Tikka I (1223-1250), the father of the famous Manma Siddha II (1250-1290), extended his kingdom to as far South as the river Kaveri. He owed nominal allegiance to the already crippled Later Chola. Along with the Hoysala Vira Narasimha, he helped the Later Chola ruler Rajaraja Chola III in restoring him back to his throne by repulsing the attacks of Aniyanka Bhima, Kopperunjinga II and the Pandya.

Subsequently, when the Hoysala Vira Narasimha's successor Someshvara, desirous of making the Later Chola ruler a puppet in his hands, joined hands with the Pandya and attacked Rajendra Chola III, Chola Tikka came to the rescue of the Chola emperor. He defeated both the Hoysala and the Pandya forces and got thereby the Tondaimandalam region for himself. He even assumed the honorable title *Cholathpancharya*.⁶⁷ During the reign of Chola Tikka's son and successor Manma Siddha II (1250-1290), the power of the Nellore Chola was declining. With the death of Manma Siddha III⁶⁸ the Nellore kingdom lost its independence and became a battle ground between the Kakatiya and the Pandya. In the reign of Kakatiya Prataparudra II, the Nellore region became part and parcel of the Kakatiya empire and lost its political significance.

⁶⁶ One inscription in 1232 AD (17th year of Rajaraja Chola III's ruling) shows that Tikka Chola I (1223-1248) at that time was a vassal of the Chola empire in Tanjore (ARE: No. 416 of 1919).

⁶⁷ Sastri (1955: pp. 434).

⁶⁸ His last inscription is dated in 1316: B and VC, Part II, Kavali Taluk: No. 7.

Minor and Local Kingship: The Chola Family's Relations to the Superpowers and their Role in South India before the Islamic Invasion

As our main purpose of this thesis is not a history of the Chola dynasty, but we rather intend to focus on the rise and development of the Vijayanagara kingdom in comparison to earlier great powers in South India, we will refrain from further detailed expositions. Nevertheless, we think it necessary to complete the picture of the development, decline and diversity of the Chola dynasty. Therefore, we attach here a chronological overview of information on the different branches of the diversified Chola family and their fates, provided by inscriptional data, elucidating the historical development.

At the end of the Sangam Age, a branch of the Chola family evidently left for the North, beyond Aruvavatalainadu, which was traditionally the north-eastern limit of cultural Tamilakam, and set itself up as the Telugu Chola. They, nevertheless, did not forget in later times to derive themselves dynastically from Karikala Chola of hoary memory with pride and gratitude.⁶⁹

1214 AD: A gift was made in Kavali taluk, Nellore District, "for the religious merit" of the Telugu Chola chief Manma Siddha I,⁷⁰ son of Rajendra Telugu Chola (another name of Erra-Siddha), of the race of Karikala, Lord of Oraiyur.⁷¹ Another inscription at Atmakur in the same district mentions Nalla Siddha as ruling chief.⁷²

1225 AD: In Chingleput District, "Tikka I" Gandagopala, a Telugu Chola chief, is mentioned as being at that time in his 3rd year of rulership, in an inscription of the ruling Kalahasti Rajasraya Saskula Chalukki Vira Narasimha Yadava Raya.⁷³

1227 AD: In Guntur District, a grant of villages was made by the Telugu Chola chief Malli Deva "of the family of Karikala".⁷⁴

1228 AD: In Nellore District, the local ruler was "Tirukala Chola" i.e. the Telugu Chola chief Tikka I.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Subrahmanian (1962: pp. 164).

⁷⁰ Sewell mentions him as the Telugu Chola chief Manma Siddha I (1189-1214): Sewell (1932: pp. 133, 396) and Raman agrees that this is Manma Siddha I (spelt as Manmu Siddha): Raman (1975: pp. 19). But Yashoda Devi mentions him as Manma Siddha II (1189-1210) and suggest that the date of the inscription is 1204, not 1214, Yashoda Devi (1993: pp. 449)).

⁷¹ VR, Vol. II: Nellore 415; B and VC, Part II, Kavali Taluk: No.12.

⁷² B and VC, Part I, Atmakur Taluk: No. 23.

⁷³ ARE: No. 659 of 1904.

⁷⁴ VR, Vol. II: Guntur 339; B and VC, Part II, Ongole Taluk: No. 20.

⁷⁵ VR, Vol. II: Nellore 440; B and VC, Part II, Kavali Taluk: No. 38.

1230 AD: In Conjeevaram (Kanchipuram), according to a record dated June 2, 1230, the local ruler was Gandagopala. The record does not mention any other titles for the Chief, i.e. the Telugu Chola chief Tikka I.⁷⁶

1231 AD: There are records of this year, mentioning the Telugu Chola chief Madhurantaka Pottapi Gandagopala, i.e. Tikka, or Tirukalatti I.⁷⁷ He is stated to have “taken Kanchi” – a mere boast (see below 1232 AD).

1232 AD: An inscription of November 10, 1232, records a gift by an official of the Telugu Chola chief Madhurantaka Pottapi Chola Tirukalatti I, who bears the title “Ganda Gopala”. It proves that he was a vassal of the Chola king, as the record is dated in the 17th year of Rajaraja Chola III.⁷⁸

1235 AD: A gift was made to a temple at Kanchipuram by the minister of the Telugu Chola chief Tikka I, during the reign of Rajaraja Chola III.⁷⁹

1237 AD: Kakatiya Ganapati was reigning on the Godavari river at Draksharama, where the Velanandu chief Rajendra Chola Gonka ruled locally.⁸⁰

1240 AD: The Hoysala Someshvara attacked the Telugu Chola chief Tikka, or Tirukalatti I, Gandagopala. His general was Singana. An inscription in Kadur District, Mysore, states that while Hoysala Someshvara was on the march, he heard that a son had been born to him.⁸¹

1243 AD: An inscription in the Nellore District mentions the Telugu Chola chief Madhurantaka Pottapi Chola Tilaka Narayana Manuma Siddha, alias Manma Siddha II (1250-1290), son of Tikka I, afterwards Vijaya Gandagopala. This record was inscribed during his father’s life time and rule.⁸²

1244 AD: In Nellore taluk, a record shows that the local ruler was the Telugu Chola chief “Allun Tirukalatti”, i.e. Tikka I⁸³ Another of the same year alludes to a gift made ‘for the merit’ of the same chief.⁸⁴

1245 AD: At the hill-fortress of Udayagiri in the Nellore District, the Telugu Chola chief Tikka I ruled.⁸⁵

⁷⁶ ARE: No. 446 of 1919.

⁷⁷ VR, Vol. I: Chingleput 907; ARE: No. 534 of 1912; ARE: No. 446 of 1919.

⁷⁸ ARE: No. 416 of 1919.

⁷⁹ VR, Vol. I: Chingleput 316; ARE: No. 34 of 1893.

⁸⁰ VR, Vol. II: Godaw 317; ARE: No. 411 of 1893.

⁸¹ EC, Vol. VI: Kadur 100.

⁸² B and VC, 1258; VR, Vol. II: Nellore 686.

⁸³ B and VC, Part II, Kavali Taluk: No. 25; VR, Vol. II: Nellore 427.

⁸⁴ VR, Vol. II: Nellore 729; B and VC, Part III, Udagiri Taluk: No. 3.

⁸⁵ VR, Vol. II: Nellore 740; B. and VC, Part III, Udagiri Taluk: No. 14.

1246 AD: The Telugu Chola chief Tirukalatti, or Tikka I, is said in an inscription in the Nellore District at Annamasamudram, to have “ruled” in Kanchi (Kanchipuram), where he consecrated a temple. (The “ruling” may be an exaggeration).⁸⁶

1248 AD: The Telugu Chola chief Tikka I, here called “Tikkarasa Gangayya”, made a grant in Cuddapah District.⁸⁷ In this year, he was also ruling in Nellore District. His younger brother Vijayaditya is also mentioned.⁸⁸

1249 AD: The Telugu Chola prince Manma Siddha II, who succeeded his father Tikka Chola I in the following year, made a gift of gratitude for his recovery from illness.⁸⁹

1250 AD: Between August 13 and September 3, 1250, as far as can be gathered from inscriptions, the Telugu Chola chief Manma Siddha II succeeded his father. He had the family title “Madhurantaka Pottapi Chola” and called himself “Vijaya Gandagopala” and “Lord of Kanchi”.⁹⁰

1251 AD: In North-Arcot, on September 25th, 1251,⁹¹ Vijaya Gandagopala (Manma Siddha II) was ruling in his 3rd year. A Vaidumba chief with the title Rajendra Chola Mummudi was his vassal.⁹²

1254 AD: At Kanchipuram, there is an inscription of September 14, 1254, mentioning Vijaya Gandagopala as the local ruler.⁹³ It was his 5th year in power and it shows that the last possible day for his accession was September 14, 1250.

1256 AD: In Chittor District, an inscription of the local Kalahasti chief Nalla Siddhi “of Kanchi”, mentioning as his overlord Vijaya Gandagopala of the Telugu Chola family in the latter’s 7th year.⁹⁴

1257 AD: An inscription of the years 1257-1258 in Cheyyar taluk, North Arcot, registers a gift of land in the 8th year of Vijaya Gandagopala of the Telugu Chola by “Pillaiyar” Rajaraja Sambuvaraiyan. (In some records this chief is called “Alappirandan”,

⁸⁶ VR, Vol. II: Nellore 7; B and VC, Part I, Atmakur Taluk: No. 7.

⁸⁷ VR, Vol. I: Cuddapah 931.

⁸⁸ B and VC, Part III, Rapur Taluk: No. 19; VR, Vol. II: Nellore 667.

⁸⁹ VR, Vol. I: Cuddapah 812; ARE: No. 598 of 1907. – Noted by Sewell (1932: pp. 148): “It would seem, if the Kakatiya king had captured Conjeeveram, as seems likely from the last noted record, that the Telugu-Choda chief must by now have accepted Ganapati as his overlord.”

⁹⁰ Noted by Sewell (1932, p. 148): “He seems to have become practically, if not actually, independent; but in some sort was subservient to the Kakatiya king, who had now succeeded in making himself master of Conjeeveram and had crushed out Chola domination over that region. While Perunjinga’s power to the south was weakening that of Manma-Siddha increased.”

⁹¹ ARE: No. 264 of 1921. – Noted by Sewell (1932: pp. 149): “The date seems open to doubt”.

⁹² VR, Vol. II: Nellore 633.

⁹³ ARE: No. 538 of 1919.

⁹⁴ VR, Vol. I: Chittor 141; ARE: No. 202 of 1903.

“Avaniyalappiranda”, and “Pallavandar”).⁹⁵ – Vijaya Gandagopala is described as ruling in Kanchipuram, where there are three records of him of this year whose dates correspond to January 29, September 19, and November 18 (or perhaps December 16), 1257.⁹⁶

1258 AD: Manma Siddha II Vijaya Gandagopala was reigning in Chingleput District on April 16th, 1258,⁹⁷ at Pottapi in Cuddapah District during the years 1258-59,⁹⁸ and in Nellore District, where there were local disturbances and a revolt, which was put down by him.⁹⁹ Manma Siddha II was also known as Nalla Siddha. In Kanchipuram Manma Siddha II was reigning on December 28th, 1258.¹⁰⁰

1259 AD: In Nellore, the reigning king was the Telugu Chola chief Vijaya Gandagopala (Manma Siddha II).¹⁰¹ An inscription in Chingleput District records on September 13th, 1259, in his 10th year of reign, a gift by Perumal Nachchi, senior queen of Panchanadivanan Nilangaraiyar.¹⁰²

1260 AD: The Telugu Chola chief “Manma Bhupati”, i.e. Manma Siddha II, ruled at Gudivada, North of the Krishna River.¹⁰³ He was also called “Gandagopala Vijayaditya”. A local chief, who was descended from “Mukkant Kaduvetti”, i.e. of Pallava descent, is mentioned as having been in power in Nellore District, during Manma Siddha II’s reign.¹⁰⁴

1263 AD: Vijaya Gandagopala (Manma Siddha II), chief of the Telugu Chola, was ruling in Chingleput on March 27, 1263, and during the same year in Nellore District,¹⁰⁵ and in Kurnool District.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁵ VR, Vol. I: North-Arcot 230; ARE: No. 302 of 1912. – “*The name ‘Pillaiyar’ may apparently be taken to mean a favourite, or a son, of a king. Nilangaraiyar is also called a ‘Pillaiyar’ of Vijaya-Ganda-Gopala alias Manma-Kshama-Vallabha, and the Government Epigraphist in 1913 expressed the opinion that both Rajaraja Sambuvaraiyan and Nilangaraiyar were sons of Vijaya-Ganda-Gopala. The matter must be left over for settlement. All I can say at present is that the brotherhood of these two chiefs does not seem to me to be proved by sufficiently conclusive evidence. That these Sambuvaraiyans were vassals of the Telugu-Chodas is shown by records in A.D. 1252, 1273*”: Sewell (1932: pp. 152).

⁹⁶ ARE: No. 343, 393, 571 of 1919.

⁹⁷ ARE: No. 211 of 1923.

⁹⁸ VR, Vol. I, Cuddalore: No. 857; ARE: 437 of 1911.

⁹⁹ VR, Vol. II, Nellore: No. 297, No. 332; B and VC, Part II, Kandukur: No. 26, No. 59.

¹⁰⁰ ARE: No. 428 of 1919.

¹⁰¹ B and VC, Kandukur: No. 61.

¹⁰² ARE: No. 117 of 1912.

¹⁰³ VR, Vol. II: Kistna 239-243.

¹⁰⁴ B and VC, Part II, Kandukur: No. 62.

¹⁰⁵ B and VC, Part II, Kaval: No. 40.

¹⁰⁶ ARE: No. 272 of 1905.

1265 AD: The Telugu Chola Vijay Gandagopala is represented in three inscriptions at Kanchipuram.¹⁰⁷

1267 AD: The Telugu Chola chief Manma Siddha Vijaya Gandagopala was ruling at Kanchipuram on May 20, 1267,¹⁰⁸ and also on August 7.¹⁰⁹ In Markapur taluk, Kurnool District, his son, whom he had begotten with Damala Devi, and who was called Nalla Siddha, gave a grant.¹¹⁰ He ruled in Nellore District, where an inscription gives him the title “Vijayaditya” shortened into “Bijji”.¹¹¹

1268 AD: Vijaya Gandagopala of the Telugu Chola family rules in North-Arcot at Kaverippakkam. A gift has been made by a “Salukki” chief, perhaps one of the Kalahasti Rajas.¹¹²

1270 AD: Vijaya Gandagopala of the Telugu Chola family rules in Kanchipuram on January 27, February 10 and November 25, 1270.¹¹³

1271 AD: Vijaya Gandagopala of the Telugu Chola ruled in Chingleput District on August 12, 1271,¹¹⁴ and at Kanchipuram, in the same district, on January 25, February 13, and May 31.¹¹⁵

1274 AD: In Chingleput District, at Tenneri near Kanchipuram, an inscription of September 3, 1274, mentions that the Telugu Chola Vijay Gandagopala ruled there in his 25th year. The record shows that the latest possible date for his accession was September 3, 1250.¹¹⁶

1275 AD: In Chingleput District, near Madras, Vijay Gandagopala ruled in his 26th year. A gift was made by a chief Lanakesvara, whose name was prefixed by “Panchanadivanan”.¹¹⁷

1277 AD: In Chingleput District, the Telugu Chola Manma Siddha Vijaya Gandagopala was reigning on October 31, 1277.¹¹⁸

¹⁰⁷ EI, Vol. VII: No. 128

¹⁰⁸ ARE: No. 568 of 1919

¹⁰⁹ ARE: No. 537 of 1919

¹¹⁰ ARE: No. 27, 35, 36 of 1890.

¹¹¹ B and VC, Part II, Kandukur: No. 64.

¹¹² ARE: No. 389 of 1905.

¹¹³ ARE: No. 429, 501 of 1919; No. 547 of 1912, No. 637 of 1919.

¹¹⁴ ARE: No. 243 of 1912.

¹¹⁵ ARE: No. 660 of 1920.

¹¹⁶ ARE: No. 229 of 1922.

¹¹⁷ ARE: No. 1 of 1911, No. 536 of 1912.

¹¹⁸ ARE: No. 110 of 1923.

1278 AD: The Telugu Chola Manma Siddha Vijaya Gandagopala was reigning in Cuddapah District in his 29th year.¹¹⁹

1279 AD: Vijaya Gandagopala was reigning in Chingleput District in his 30th year. A gift was made by Panchanadivanan Nilangaraiyan (see above, 1259 AD and 1275 AD).¹²⁰

1280 AD: An inscription in Nellore District, early in 1280, refers to the Telugu Chola chief Tirukalatti Deva, to whom is given the epithet “Irumudi” (= “Immadi”). He was the son of Manma Siddha Vijaya Gandagopala.¹²¹

1281 AD: The Telugu Chola Vijaya Gandagopala ruled in Kanchipuram on September 18, 1281, in his 31st year.¹²² (The regnal year was probably wrongly calculated, as the latest date for expiry of his 31st year was September 3, 1281 AD).¹²³

1282 AD: In Chingleput District, the Telugu Chola Manma Siddha II, Vijaya Gandagopala, was ruling in his 33rd year.¹²⁴

1285 AD: Early in 1285 the Telugu Chola Manma Siddha Gandagopala is said to have been ruling in Nellore District in his 3rd year. This may be Manma Siddha III governing as a Viceroy under his grandfather of the same name; otherwise, the regnal year may be wrong, and the ruler referred to may have been his grandfather Manma Vijaya Gandagopala in his 36th year.¹²⁵

1291 AD: Kakatiya “Pratapa Rudra”, *i.e.* Rudramma, reigns in Guntur District. She seems to have died in this year. Mention is made of Manma Gandagopala. This may be Manma Siddha II, whose reign came to an end in this year, or it may be his grandson Manma Siddha III, son of Nalla Siddha. Manma Siddha III succeeded his grandfather.¹²⁶ Vijaya Gandagopala (Manma Siddha II)¹²⁷ is represented by an inscription¹²⁸ of this year at Kanchipuram. Rudramma’s daughter’s son ‘Kumara’

¹¹⁹ ARE: No. 417 of 1911.

¹²⁰ ARE: No. 3, 4, 6 of 1911, No. 662 of 1904.

¹²¹ B and VC, Part I, Gudur: No. 45.

¹²² ARE: No. 500 of 1919.

¹²³ Sewell (1932: pp. 164).

¹²⁴ VR, Vol. I: Chingleput 836; ARE: No. 222 of 1910.

¹²⁵ VR, Vol. II: Nellore 25, 505; B and VC, Part I, Atmakur: No. 25; Part II, Nellore: No. 31.

¹²⁶ VR, Vol. III: Guntur 275; ARE: No. 204 of 1899.

¹²⁷ “The full name of the king must have been Vijaya Gandagopala, as is clear from the Tamil signature... Various other kings are known to have had the surname Gandagopala; e.g. Erasiddhi, Tikka I., Manma Siddha and even Epilissiddhi of another line of the Telugu Chola” (EI, Vol. XIII: pp. 195). – “The inscription is dated Śaka 1207 and it styles Vijaya Gandagopala ‘Lord of Kañci’” (EI, Vol. XIII: pp. 196).

¹²⁸ The inscription is in verse, and the language is Sanskrit. The character is Grantha throughout, excepting the signature of the donor, which is in Tamil (The last line 23: The glorious Vijaya Gandagopala Deva) (EI, Vol. XIII, No. 16: pp. 194, 198).

Pratapa Rudra was ruling in Palnad taluk, Guntur District, in this year.¹²⁹ – The inscription of Vijaya Gandagopala shows that he had the title “glorious Vijaya Gandagopala Deva”. Konow and Thomas¹³⁰ stated that “the donor is the chieftain Gandagopala Chola or Vijaya Gandagopala Deva”, (and he signed himself as “Deva”, the title we normally see from the “King” or “Emperor” but he did not call himself a “Raja”). Later on, though, Konow and Thomas call him a “King”. So, the titles “King” and “Chieftain” were used at the same time for the same donor here.¹³¹

1294 AD: In the early year of 1294 Kakatiya Pratapa Rudra II ruled in Guntur District¹³² and also in Kurnool district.¹³³ Here, he claims to have defeated (‘cut off the head of’) Manma Gandagopala, the Telugu Chola chief.¹³⁴ Pratapa Rudra II was also ruling in Nellore. – There is one inscription in Kanchipuram (with unsure dating, may be from February 13, 1294), which was recorded in the 3rd year of the Telugu Chola chief Manma Siddha III, Vira Gandagopala.¹³⁵

1296 AD: On December 26, 1296, a gift is mentioned in Nellore as having been made by the Telugu Chola chief Ranganatha alias Raja Gandagopala in the 6th year of Vijaya Gandagopala.¹³⁶

1297 AD: In this year the Telugu Chola Manma Siddha III took possession of Kanchipuram as a vassal of the Kakatiya king Pratapa Rudra II. He was ruling in Guntur District.¹³⁷

1299 AD: In Nellore District, Raja Gandagopala was ruling. This was the Telugu Chola chief Manma Siddha III, who bore that title.¹³⁸

¹²⁹ VR, Vol. II: Kurnool 266; ARE: No. 173 of 1905.

¹³⁰ EI, Vol. XIII, No. 16: pp. 198.

¹³¹ EI, Vol. XIII, No. 16.

¹³² VR, Vol. II: Guntur 307.

¹³³ VR, Vol. II: Kurnool 272; ARE: No. 179 of 1905.

¹³⁴ “*This is confusing; but it is noticeable that the Kayastha chief Ambadeva in 1291-2 claimed to have ‘established’ this same Manma, and it may be that there was some disturbance at the time – Manma being defeated by Pratapa Rudra and afterwards assisted to regain his authority by Ambadeva*”: Sewell (1932: pp. 170).

¹³⁵ ARE: No. 603 of 1919.

¹³⁶ VR, Vol. II: Nellore 543; B and VC, Part II, Nellore: No. 71; ARE: No 194 of 1894. – Noted by Sewell (1932: pp. 172): “*The inscription should be further examined. This Ranganatha seems to be the same as Manma-Siddha III.-Raja-Gandagopala. His grandfather Vijaya-Gandagopala had ceased to reign in 1290-91, the reign having begun in 1250. It seems possible that as mistake has been made in the reading of the record, and that it may refer to the 6th year of Manma-Siddha III.*”

¹³⁷ EI, Vol. VII, No. 17; VR, Vol. II: Guntur 308; ARE: No. 213 of 1892.

¹³⁸ B and VC, Part I, Gudur: No. 115, Nellore: No. 62; VR, Vol. II, Nellore: No. 266, No. 534.

1302 AD: The Telugu Chola chief “Ranganatha Raja Gandagopala” i.e. Manma Siddha III, ruled in Nellore District on January 10, 1302. The inscription belongs to his 12th regnal year.¹³⁹

1308 AD: Maravarman Kulasekhara was reigning in North-Arcot, Chingleput and Tanjore districts in his 40th year, which makes clear, that he had completely gained power over the great chiefs who had been ruling in the two former districts for several years since the downfall of the Chola dynasty and kingdom, viz. the families of the Telugu Chola, the Sengeni, and that of the Pallava Perunjinga. The dates are respectively January 18, February 24, and March 18, 1308.¹⁴⁰

1312 AD: The Kerala king of the West Coast, Ravivarman Kulasekhara Samgramadhira, seized his opportunity and marched eastward, keen on conquest. He seized Madurai and prevented Vira Pandya from return. Thus, he became temporarily lord of the Pandya kingdom. Proceeding further, Ravivarman invaded the Chola country and seized Kanchipuram, ejecting the Telugu Chola prince Manma Siddha III, Raya Gandagopala.¹⁴¹

1316 AD: In Nellore District, an inscription, dated to March 4, 1316, is of the 27th regnal year of Ranganatha Rajagopala, i. e, Manma Siddha III¹⁴² In this year, Kakatiya Pratapa Rudra II rules in Palnad, Guntur District¹⁴³ and in Nellore District.¹⁴⁴

The above dates and inscriptions are mostly taken from Sewell (1932), *The Historical inscriptions of Southern India*, published a long time after his famous book “A forgotten empire: Vijayanagar” (Published in 1900). Because of the development of research on Indian epigraphy, many new evidences have in the meantime come to light and should be added. Nevertheless, the chronological information given here from inscriptions, throws some light on the history of the Telugu Choda family¹⁴⁵ and its connections with

¹³⁹ VR, Vol. II, Nellore: No. 532; B and VC, Part II, Nellore: No. 60.

¹⁴⁰ ARE: No. 134 of 1896; ARE: No. 551 of 1904; ARE: No. 476 of 1920; VR, Vol. I: Chingleput 503; VR, Vol. II: Tanjore 930; EI, Vol. VIII: No. 27.

¹⁴¹ ARE: No. 34 of 1890; EI, Vol. IV: No. 145, Vol. VIII: No. 8; VR, Vol. I: Chingleput 349.

¹⁴² VR, Vol. II: Nellore 546; B and VC, Part II, Nellore: No. 73.

¹⁴³ VR, Vol. II: Guntur 521; ARE: No. 551 of 1909.

¹⁴⁴ VR, Vol. II: Nellore 552. – Noted by Sewell (1932: pp. 179-180): “*The Kakatiya king of Warangal, Pratapa Rudra II, now with greatly diminished wealth in consequence of Malik Kafur’s raid, strengthened himself sufficiently to attack his neighbours. He evidently objected strongly to the Kerala king’s seizure of Conjeeveram, and to that city he marched early in 1316. The details of the war that ensued are unknown but Pratapa Rudra succeeded in driving out Ravivarman and his following, and in seizing the place on some day between march 25 and June 11, 1316. This success was due to the Kakatiya general Muppidi-Nayaka.*”

¹⁴⁵ The Telugu Chola, in fact, called themselves as Choda. In what follows, we will use this form of the name.

other chieftains and royal families in South India during the time period of the 12th-14th centuries AD.

The Telugu Choda family (also known as Nellore Choda family) was for a long time a mere local power or local vassal under the Chola Empire and later under the Kakatiya Kingdom. They had never had enough power to be independent during those conflicting times, even though they already carried “glorious titles”. Their authority had actually never spread beyond Nellore. During the decline and fall of the Chola Empire, the Choda family had no influence on the royal family in Tanjore.

2.2. Intermediate stages (rise of Islam in South India)

2.2.1. The Advent of Islam in South India

There are indications for the presence of Arab traders in South India as early as the 8th century AD. Obviously, Muslim (Arab) communities had formed in the South long before the Paramount Muslim power of North India was established at the end of the 12th century and mainly in the 13th century. Even from the 8th century onwards Islamic conversions are recorded to have taken place in South India.¹⁴⁶ The Muslim traders played a very important role in trading on the Indian Ocean, connecting to Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Intense trade went on between South India and the Middle East; the Arabic traders, for instance, brought horses to South India. At that period there was no conflict between the South Indian population and governance and these Muslim communities, a situation that totally changed in the late 13th century when the Delhi Sultanate conducted invasion campaigns to the South.

Until the 14th century, South India remained largely untouched by the North. At the end of the 13th century the Turkish Delhi Sultanate started its expeditions to the South, invading as first country the kingdom of the Yadava with its capital Devagiri in 1296 AD. In the year 1290 Gamal ud-Din Firuz Halgi had assumed power in Delhi, replacing the Mamluk dynasty. His ambitious nephew Ala ud-Din Halgi led an unauthorized campaign against the Yadava kingdom with the capital Devagiri in Northern Deccan, ruled by king Ramachandra (ca. 1271-1311). The Yadava rose to prominence, they seem to have acquired not only the whole of the present Bellari district, but also

¹⁴⁶ Wink (1990: pp. 65f.) – Until today, descendants of these early South Indian Muslims claim to be better, or more original Muslims than the later converts under the Delhi Sultanate and the Mogul rule.

Davanagere taluk of Chitaldrug. Venkataramanayya states that the Hoysala power in the Bellari district became practically extinct after the death of Narasimha II (1220-1238) and that the Yadava firmly established themselves in the place of their rivals. The Yadava rule lasted in this region until probably the death of Ramachandra in 1311 AD. The power then passed into the hands of the newly carved Kingdom of Kampili ruled gloriously for a period of 17 years until the ruling came to an end in 1327. Actually, Kampili was only a local power during a very short time. The Posaleshvara temple (up to the basement *adharashila*) at Kannanur (Lalgudi taluk, Tiruchirappalli District) in the Hoysala capital of Tamil Nadu had been converted into a mosque by the Muslims and was re-consecrated by the local chief Kampana.¹⁴⁷ Vijayanagara's princes, who had become viceroys, used the titles of Odeya or Odeyar in Tamil which they had originally carried as Hoysala feudatories.¹⁴⁸

After the looting of Devagiri, Ala ud-Din Halgi went back to the North for getting pardon from his uncle. In July 1296, Halgi treacherously had his uncle murdered, and consequently became Sultan of Delhi (1296-1316) himself. He restored the Yadava kingdom to Ramachandra in return for his promise of payment of a high ransom and an annual tribute. In the years 1298 and 1299 he sent armies to Gujarat and Orissa. While he conquered Gujarat, his campaign did not bring about any great effect in Orissa.

In the meantime, Ramachandra refused to pay the tribute. In 1307, Ala ud-Din Halgi had sent an army commanded by Malik Kafur, accompanied by Hwaga Hajji, to Devagiri. The Muslim governors of Malwa and Gujarat were ordered to help Malik Kafur. Their huge army conquered the weakened and defeated forces of Devagiri almost without a battle. Ramachandra was taken to Delhi. Ala ud-Din Halgi reinstated him as governor in return for a promise to help him subdue the Hindu kingdoms in South India. In January 1310, Malik Kafur mounted an assault on the Kakatiya kingdom starting from Devagiri. In February 1310 he laid siege on Orungallu, the capital of the Hindu kingdom of the Kakatiya.¹⁴⁹

Mentioning the role of the Kakatiya dynasty during that time, P. V. Parabrahma Sastry Murty¹⁵⁰ states that the Kakatiya started initially their political power by serving the

¹⁴⁷ ARE: No. 322 of 1927.

¹⁴⁸ Patil (1999: pp. 54).

¹⁴⁹ Sewell (1932: pp. 175f).

¹⁵⁰ Sastry (1978: pp. 2).

Rashtrakuta and the Western Chalukya as generals and feudatories successively in Telangana, the northwestern half of Andhra. They became independent in 1161 AD under Rudra Deva. The Kakatiya power, at its peak, extended from the South of the Godavari to the North of the Kaveri from the east coast, in the East to Bidar in the North-West, Raichur in the West, and Kolar in the South-West.

The 1163 Anumakonda inscription¹⁵¹ of Prataparudra I is the earliest known record that, according to Parabrahma Sastry, describes the Kakatiya as a sovereign power.¹⁵² According to him, Prataparudra I reigned 1158–1195, while Sircar gives the dates as 1163–1195.¹⁵³ It was during Prataparudra's reign, in 1163, that the Kakatiya declared an end to their status as feudatory chiefs of the Chalukya. It is notable that inscriptions were henceforth written using the Kakatiya chiefs' vernacular Telugu language, rather than the Kannada language that had prevailed until that point.¹⁵⁴ Mahadeva succeeded Prataparudra I as king, reigning probably from 1195 to 1199.

Just as the dynasties of the Yadava and the Hoysala took control of linguistically related areas during the 13th century, so did the Kakatiya also under the rule of Ganapati (1199-1262 according to Parabrahma Sastry, and 1199-1260 according to Sircar).¹⁵⁵ He significantly expanded the Kakatiya's land during the 1230s when he launched a series of attacks beyond the Telangana region and thus brought under Kakatiya control the Telugu-speaking lowland delta areas around the Godavari and Krishna rivers. According to Eaton, the outcome in the case of all three dynasties was that they "catalysed processes of supralocal identity formation and community building."¹⁵⁶

The Kakatiya capital at Orungallu, established in 1195, was not forgotten, while Ganapati expanded his territory. He organized the building of a massive granite wall around the city, complete with ramps designed for ease of access to its ramparts from within. A moat and numerous bastions were also constructed.¹⁵⁷ Ganapati was followed by Rudramadevi who reigned around 1262–1289 AD (alternative dates:

¹⁵¹ EI, Vol. IX: pp. 256 (January 20th, 1163), reports of the coronation of Prataparudra on January 1st, 1163. See also Sewell (1932: pp. 113f).

¹⁵² Sastry (1978: pp. 2).

¹⁵³ Sircar (1979: pp. 130).

¹⁵⁴ Eaton (2005: pp. 13).

¹⁵⁵ Sastry (1978: pp. 36); Sircar (1979: pp. 130).

¹⁵⁶ Eaton (2005: pp. 13).

¹⁵⁷ Eaton (2005: pp. 17).

1261-1295 AD).¹⁵⁸ Sources disagree regarding whether she was the widow of Ganapati or his daughter.¹⁵⁹

A fragmentary inscription¹⁶⁰ in Kannada language sheds light on the competitive wars between the states of South India and the Deccan. It states that the Kakatiya general Bhairava defeated the Yadava army probably in or after 1263 AD. Rudramadevi was married to Virabhadra, an Eastern Chalukyan prince of Nidadavolu who had been selected for that purpose by her father.¹⁶¹ Having no son as an heir, Rudramadevi abdicated in favor of her grandson Prataparudra II, when it became apparent that the expansionist Sultan Ala ud-Din Halgi was encroaching on the Deccan and might in due course attack the Kakatiya.

After Malik Kafur had arrived at the capital of the Kakatiya, Prataparudra II had taken necessary steps to defend his kingdom, but he failed and was forced to open peace negotiations. He sent his own image in gold with a golden chain around the neck to symbolize his surrender, and a treaty was concluded. He gave 100 elephants and 7,000 horses and all his accumulated treasures and promised to pay an annual tribute. Among the jewels delivered was one “unparalleled in the whole world”,¹⁶² as the poet and scholar Amir Khusrav (1253-1325 AD) calls it, and this was possibly the famous diamond Kuh-i Nur. On March 20th, 1310, Malik Kafur set out on his return journey, with treasures too heavy for thousand camels to bear, and on June 11th, he reached Delhi.¹⁶³

At Orungallu (Warangal) Malik Kafur had heard of the wealth of the kingdom of the Far South. On November 19th, 1310, he set out with a large army towards the Hoysala kingdom. On February 4th, 1311, he reached Devagiri, where he once more was supported by Ramachandra who rendered him all possible help to guide the Halgi forces to Dvarasamudra, the capital of the Hoysala empire. Moreover, Ramachandra was in competition with the Hoysala king Ballala III (1292-1342) who had repeatedly encroached upon the Yadava territory.

Before the Muslim incursions, the Hoysala kingdom was one of the mightiest powers of South India. In the 13th century, when Someshvara Hoysala became king in the year

¹⁵⁸ Sewell (1932: pp. 155f.).

¹⁵⁹ Rubiés (2000: pp. 73).

¹⁶⁰ Unfortunately, secondary literature is not explicit about identity and source.

¹⁶¹ Suryanarayana (1986: pp. 163).

¹⁶² Majumdar (1967: pp. 34).

¹⁶³ Sewell (1932: pp. 176).

of 1235, he succeeded to the most prosperous and prestigious throne in South India. But when he died in 1256, he left behind a kingdom the days of which were numbered. That was the beginning of the end of the Hoysala. The Hoysala politics in Tamil Nadu, which worked in their favor for about a quarter century (1220-1245), took a turn against them even while Someshvara was gloating over the Hoysala's glory. This was due to the vastness of their acquisitions and the complications which arose in the process of managing them. Until the first quarter of the 13th century, they had invaded different parts of South India either to vindicate their power and gain prestige or to obtain material gains; but when Narasimha II carved out a stretch of territory along the river Kaveri (abutting on the land which had been traditionally shared by age-old imperial families of Tamil Nadu) and established the second capital at Kannanur under Someshvara, a fresh chapter was opened in the history of the South.

Soon after the death of Vira Narasimha, his son Someshvara faced the problem of choosing either Kannanur (where he was quite at home) or Dvarasamudra (where the Hoysala roots lay deeper) for his residence. Sticking to either of these two centers, he could not have controlled the entire kingdom efficiently; nor could he have made his presence felt throughout by shuttling between these two centers. After experimenting with such alternatives for some time, Someshvara stuck to Kannanur, allowing events to take their own course in and around Dvarasamudra.¹⁶⁴

When Malik Kafur reached the Hoysala border, he was informed that Ballala III had invaded the Pandya Empire where a struggle for the throne had broken out between the brothers Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya. Malik Kafur used the opportunity to make a rapid march with 10,000 horsemen, appearing within twelve days before Dvarasamudra (February 26th, 1311). On hearing of Malik Kafur's invasion, Ballala III hurried back to his capital, but then sued for peace. He agreed to pay an annual tribute and delivered all his wealth. Malik Kafur did not remain long in Dvarasamudra, but left on March 11th, 1311, for the Pandya kingdom, reaching it after a strenuous march of five days. His campaign was not completely successful, but both Pandya brothers were caused to flee. Although Malik Kafur had plundered and destroyed many temples and cities, he failed to secure the submission of the Pandya. However, the victorious general returned to Delhi after a campaign of more than five months on October 19th,

¹⁶⁴ Settar (1992: pp. 30).

1311. He was accompanied by the son of his new ally, the Hoysala king Ballala III, whom Ala ud-Din Halgi sent back to his father.

Meanwhile, in 1311, at Devagiri the loyal Ramachandra had died and was succeeded by his son Simhana III who challenged the supremacy of Ala ud-Din Halgi, who sent Malik Kafur to recapture Devagiri in 1313. Simhana III was killed in the ensuing battle¹⁶⁵ and Ala ud-Din Halgi's army occupied Devagiri. The kingdom was annexed by the Halgi sultanate, but Malik Kafur could not subjugate the entire Yadava kingdom. Its southern part formed the kingdom of Kampili which the great general tried to conquer but remained unsuccessful.

Both, Ala ud-Din Halgi and Malik Kafur, died in 1316 AD – the first by illness and the latter through murder. Mubarak Shah followed his father on the throne of Delhi where he ruled from 1316 to 1320 AD. In 1320 AD the Halgi dynasty was replaced by the Tuglaq, whose first ruler was Giyat ud-Din (1320-1325).

2.2.2. The Tuglaq Restoration of Authority in South India and the Foundation of the Vijayanagara Empire

Giyat ud-Din sent his son Ulug Han in 1321 against the Kakatiya of Orungallu whose ruler Prataparudra II had taken advantage of the disorders in Delhi after the regime change. Ulug Han's army was riven with internal dissension due to different factions in the Halgi and Tuglaq camps. This caused the siege to last much longer – six months, rather than the few weeks that had previously been the case. The attackers were initially repulsed and the Tuglaq forces retreated to regroup in Devagiri. Prataparudra II celebrated the apparent victory by opening up his grain stores for public feasting, but Ulug Han returned in 1323 with his revitalized and reinforced army and, with few supplies left, Prataparudra was forced into submission after a five-month siege. The unprepared and battle-weary army of Orungallu was finally defeated, and Orungallu was renamed as Sultanpur. Probably, as given in various contemporary and near-contemporary accounts, Prataparudra committed suicide near to the Narmada river while being taken as a prisoner to Delhi.¹⁶⁶

It seems, that Ulug Han after the annexation of the Kakatiya kingdom led an expedition to the eastern coast of South India. The Muslim historian Ziya ud-Din Barani (1285-

¹⁶⁵ Eaton (2005: pp. 17f.).

¹⁶⁶ Eaton (2005, pp. 20f.); Talbot (2001: pp. 176).

ca. 1358) simply says that he marched towards Jainagar and captured forty elephants.¹⁶⁷ An inscription in a mosque in Rajahmundry (Andhra) records that it was built in the Hijra year 724 (1324 AD), during the reign of Ulug Han.¹⁶⁸ It is unclear, whether in the following he marched towards Orissa, but it is sure that he was triumphantly received in Delhi at the latter part of the year 1324. Giyat ud-Din himself had undertaken a military expedition to Bengal and returning back to the capital he was informed about alarming news of the conduct of his son Ulug Han, who plotted against his father. Giyat ud-Din was killed in February or March 1325 and Ulug Han assumed power and is further known as Muhammad bin Tuglaq, who ruled from 1325 to 1351 the sultanate of Delhi.

Muhammad bin Tuglaq changed his politics towards South India radically. In 1327 he shifted his capital from Delhi to Devagiri, the former capital of the Yadava, subsequently renamed Daulatabad. His next target was the kingdom of Kampili. Sree Rama Sarma¹⁶⁹ states that the kingdom of Kampili in the Tungabhadra basin rose on the ashes of the Yadava. However, it is remarkable to mention that Kampili was only local and had never become a kingdom with a vast territory, as Yadava was.

Madhao P. Patil states¹⁷⁰ that King Kampili Deva of Kampili (a former feudatory of the Yadava) asserted his independence after the fall of the Devagiri fortress (1313) and carved out an independent kingdom of Kampili (comprising Dharwar, Bellary, Raichur, and parts of Anantapur, Chitradurga and Shimoga¹⁷¹ of Karnataka). Fritz and Michell mention that King Kampili Deva built a mountain citadel at Kumata and he was ruling over the Tungabhadra valley until 1327 when he was killed by the Tuglaq invaders.¹⁷² His dominions were annexed to the sultanate.¹⁷³ For the role of Kampili Deva in South Indian history during that time, it is remarkable that, although he was only a local power, the great empire of Vijayanagara was founded on his original territory. Nowadays the complex of shrines built by him is still standing on the Hemakuta hill at the heart of Vijayanagara.

In the year 1335 the Tuglaq Empire was shaken by a series of rebellions, among them Ahsan Shah who declared Madurai, the former capital of the Pandya kingdom as an

¹⁶⁷ Husain (1876: pp. 69).

¹⁶⁸ EIM, 1923: pp. 13.

¹⁶⁹ Sarma (1992: pp. 12).

¹⁷⁰ Patil (1999: pp. 1).

¹⁷¹ Its official name is Shivamogga.

¹⁷² Fritz and Michell (2009: pp. 10).

¹⁷³ Venkataramanayya (1990: pp. 8).

independent sultanate of Ma'bar.¹⁷⁴ He expanded toward North, defeating the Hoysala king Ballala III in 1340 AD, who, after having been dispossessed of his northern territories, had chosen Tiruvannamalai as his capital.¹⁷⁵

2.3. Vijayanagara

2.3.1. The Foundation of Vijayanagara

Rajasekhara¹⁷⁶ has stated that Hampi and the neighboring villages once constituted the capital of the Vijayanagara empire. For 220 years, i. e. from 1346 to 1565 AD, the three ruling families – the Sangama, Saluva and Tuluva in this order – ruled from the city of Vijayanagara till it was destroyed by the victorious confederate armies of the Sultans of the Deccan. The effort to revive the glories of the capital after the disastrous battle of 1565 AD were in vain, and the city passed into oblivion.

The name of the city and the kingdom is generally considered an important issue. Kulke¹⁷⁷ stated that:

“the name of the capital, Vijayanagara, appears for the first time in an inscription of Bukka I., dated Tuesday 31st October, 1357 (Filliozat 1988, p. 187)¹⁷⁸, which probably indicates his renovation of the city (Hosapattana) or the construction of a new royal centre.”

Actually, two other inscriptions, one of Harihara I¹⁷⁹ from 1357 AD and one of Bukka I,¹⁸⁰ dated Friday, 7th July 1357 do not mention the name Vijayanagara but the name of the area, Hosapattana.¹⁸¹ Many scholars (e. g. Sewell, Nilakanta Sastri, Venkataramanayya) state that the name of the capital is also the name of the kingdom, but some others (namely Heras, Saletore, Kulke, Dikshit, Filliozat) argue, on account of epigraphical evidence, that the capital must have had a different name before 1357

¹⁷⁴ Husaim (1976: pp. 463).

¹⁷⁵ Thomas (1985: pp. 11).

¹⁷⁶ Rajasekhara (1985: pp. 101). After the shifting of power center to present Tamil Nadu the name of the empire remained Karnataka, a name which was also used during the Mogul rule. Even the battles fought between British, French and regional rulers on the territory of present Tamil Nadu, were called “Carnatic Wars” (1746-1763).

¹⁷⁷ Kulke (1985: pp. 126).

¹⁷⁸ The inscription was published in: Annual Report of the Mysore Archaeological Department (ARMAD) 1924: Hassan Taluk 33, and Vasundhara Filliozat, *L'Épigraphie de Vijayanagar du debut à 1377*, Paris 1973: pp. 39.

¹⁷⁹ Filliozat (1973, No. 47: pp. 37f.).

¹⁸⁰ Filliozat (1973, No. 48: pp. 38f.).

¹⁸¹ IVR, Vol. I, part I: No. 37, No. 38.

like Virupakshapattana, Hosapattana or Vijayavirupakshapura.¹⁸² Many of these cities have numerous temples built during the Vijayanagara time, such as Malapanagudi and Ananthashayanagudi. Hence, the question arises, whether the name of the kingdom was 'Vijayanagara' or 'Karnataka'. The term *Karnataka-bala* (force of Karnataka) appeared for the first time in a copper plate found in the village of Alas in the Kurundanvad region, Maharashtra), dated June 16th, 769 AD:

“With a handful of followers he suddenly vanquished the countless forces of Karṇāṭaka, which were invincible to others, (and) which had proved their efficacy by inflicting crushing defeats on the lord of Kāñcī, the king of Keraḷa, the Chōḷa, the Pāṇḍya, Śrīharṣa and Vajraṭa.”¹⁸³

It was pointed out above that for the clarification of the origin of the Vijayanagara empire it is necessary to distinguish sharply between contemporary sources and those which were fabricated in later times. The adherents of spurious sources maintained that the five brothers, belonging to the Sangama family, who were responsible for the foundation of the Vijayanagar empire, hailed from the Telugu-speaking area. But all these “sources” are based on spurious inscription (mainly written on copper plates) and so-called “prophecies” (*Kalajnana*). The Telugu version does regard Vijayanagara as a completely new foundation which rose from the ashes of former Hindu kingdoms which had been destroyed by several invasions of the Delhi Sultanate. According to Venkataramanayya¹⁸⁴ two outsiders, Harihara and Bukka of the Sangama family, first sought service under the Kakatiya monarchs. Furthermore, he argues, the form of military land tenure is called *nayankara* system and the form of paid village servants is called *ayagar* system and they were the principal features of the administrative system of the Kakatiya kingdom. Later when the founders of the Vijayanagara empire became masters of a kingdom, they adopted the main features of the administrative system with which they were fully conversant. Venkataramanayya argued also that the boar emblem of the Vijayanagara kings was borrowed by the founders from the Kakatiya and not from the Chalukya of ancient times,¹⁸⁵ but it should be taken into

¹⁸² The Virupaksha temple is known to have existed at the latest since the early 13th century: Filliozat (1973: pp. XXVI).

¹⁸³ EI, Vol. VI: No. 18. In this Sanskrit inscription, the imperial armies are the earliest to be hailed as *Karnataka-bala* of the Rashtrakuta empire under the king Yuvaraja Govinda II., mentions that this grant was made by Govindaraja II, son of Krishnaraja I (vv. 7, 8) of the Rashtrakuta family (v. 3), surnamed Shubhatunga (v. 9), Akalavarsa (v. 10) and Shriprithivivallabha (l. 20/44)

¹⁸⁴ Venkataramanayya (1933: pp. 100-102).

¹⁸⁵ Sarma (1992: pp. ii).

account, that this emblem is known since the Pallava. There is also a tradition that Harihara and Bukka were *bhandaris*¹⁸⁶ or finance officers under the Kakatiya of Warangal.

The alleged fate of the two brothers continued as follows: When Muhammad bin Tuglaq conquered the Kakatiya kingdom in 1323, they fled to Kampili, but after the fall of that small principality in 1327, they were taken as prisoners to Delhi and converted to Islam. When, after a few years, during the widespread uprising in Central India and in the Deccan (1335), the Sultan of Delhi sent Harihara and Bukka to the South to put down the revolt and there, they were reconverted from Islam by the sage Vidyanaraya and established their new capital under the latter's advice near Hampi and gave it the name Vijayanagara or Vidyanagara. According to two copper plate inscriptions this event happened on April 18th, 1336. It is necessary, here to make a sharp break, in order to clarify and explain this legend. As Sewell¹⁸⁷ pointed out in a footnote both inscriptions came from the Andhra region (Nellore and Kolar districts), thereby contradicting all contemporaneous sources, mainly temple inscriptions which reveal the copper plate sources as spurious and the so-called 'prophecies' as fabrications of the 16th century.

Before discussing that question, we have to speak again about the origin of Vijayanagara, distinguishing between the origin of the city and the foundation of the kingdom. On the origin of the city, Krishnaswami Aiyangar and some scholars (e. g. Heras, Stein) state that the city was founded by the Hoysala king Ballala III in the early 14th century. According to Venkataramanayya,¹⁸⁸ Krishnaswami Aiyangar says:

"The fortification of the city that afterwards became Vijayanagara must, however, be regarded as the deliberate act of the great Hoysala ruler Vira Ballala III. It was founded soon after the destruction of Kampili by the army of Muhammad bin Tuġluq, and immediately following the invasion of the Hoysala capital Dvarasamudra." Heras¹⁸⁹ declares that the city was founded "by a king who had been imprisoned by Delhi Mussalmans, taken as a prisoner to their northern capital, and then sent back to his country in the South", and he believes, that this

¹⁸⁶ *Bhandari* (Sanskrit) means treasurer or keeper of a storehouse.

¹⁸⁷ Sewell (1932: pp. 185).

¹⁸⁸ Venkataramanayya (1990: pp. 3).

¹⁸⁹ Heras (1929: pp. 41-43).

would be Ballala III, because it is known that he “*was taken prisoner to Delhi, and afterwards was released by the Sultan*”.

Stein¹⁹⁰ suggests that the Kampili succeeded the Hoysala. What speaks against this view are the facts, that both the capitals were too far from each other and that, moreover, the Kampili rose and fell, while the Hoysala still existed after 1327.

According to Dikshit¹⁹¹, the Sangama must have accepted service under the Hoysala, the only independent power in the South (after the Muslim invasion). This, one may infer, from the title of Harihara, viz. *Mahamandaleshvara* found in his inscriptions.¹⁹² Actually, Bukka I, too, was mentioned with that title. There was a continuity between the Hoysala dynasty under their last kings Ballala III and Ballala IV and their feudatory chiefs, Harihara and Bukka, who had already been in their service in order to defeat the northern frontier. A valuable discussion of the historical debate about the beginnings of the first Vijayanagara dynasty and about their possible origin either from Karnataka or from Andhra is found in Kulke.¹⁹³ He gives an outline of different theories mentioned in Dikshit.¹⁹⁴ The Sangama brothers have stated in an inscription, dated Monday, 18th December, 1363, that their origin was from the neighborhood of Hampi.¹⁹⁵ Hence, they must have been Kannadiga which, according to Dikshit, can be taken as a fact.

Until the year 1346 the Sangama brothers did not appear as independent rulers, but as feudatories (*mahamandalesvara*) as can be seen in an inscription, dated Thursday, 11th March, 1339.¹⁹⁶ Even after the death of king Ballala IV in 1346 AD the brothers celebrated after a pilgrim’s journey to Sringeri, a holy place at the Western Ghats, a “festival of victory” (*vijayotsava*) together with Kikkayutai, the queen dowager of Ballala III. The inscription referring to this event, dated 23rd February 1346, begins with a salutation to Vidyatirtha, the pontiff of this holy place (*matha*) and a donation to Bharatitirtha and his followers and disciples. It is remarkable that Vidyaranya is not mentioned at all. And it is also true that Vidyaranya again is not mentioned in another Sringeri inscription, dated Tuesday, 2nd February, 1356, which commemorates

¹⁹⁰ Stein (1990: pp. 18).

¹⁹¹ Dikshit (1988: pp. 315).

¹⁹² IVR, Vol. I, part I: No. 2, 5, 9, 11.

¹⁹³ Kulke (1985: pp. 120-144).

¹⁹⁴ Dikshit (1992: pp. 314-318).

¹⁹⁵ EC, Vol. IV: pp. 23, Yelandur Taluk: No. 46; Filliozat (1973: pp. 57).

¹⁹⁶ Filliozat (1973: pp. 2f.)

Bukka's visit to Sringeri which begins with a praise of Vidyatirtha.¹⁹⁷ Vidyananya appeared for the first time in an inscription¹⁹⁸ from a place called Kuduppum dated Thursday, 25th October, 1375. Thus, it is evident that Vidyananya played an important role only from 1375 until his death in 1386 AD, mentioned in an inscription of king Harihara II (1377-1404), dated May 26th, 1386.¹⁹⁹

Dikshit, who doubts the Telugu origin of Vijayanagara states that the "Telugu version" was in fact started in Karnataka and was confirmed through later literary works, as e.g. writings such as the prophecies of *Vidyananya Kalajnana* and *Guruvamsha Kavya* (both in Sanskrit) and *Keladinripa Vijaya* in Kannada language. All these are works composed in the 16th and 17th century, at the time when Vijayanagara emperors were from the Aravidu dynasty (1565-1649), which was indeed of Telugu origin. The authors of these works, living in Telugu Vijayanagara times, may have constructed this "origin myth", in order to please their rulers. The founders probably served under the Kakatiya for a few years, but that does not make them Telugu. The main reason for the fabrication of such prophecies, rewriting the early history of Vijayanagara was the shift of favor from the Shaiva matha of Sringeri to the Vaishnava god Venkateshvara at Tirupati by the rulers of the mighty kings Krishnadeva Raya (1509-1529) and Acyutadeva Raya (1530-1541/42). To counteract this loss of patronage, it was probably the pontiff and *Jagadguru* Ramachandra Bharati (1517?-1560?) who caused the fabrication of spurious inscriptions and "prophecies".²⁰⁰ Saletore speaks of 1347 as the "year after the foundation of the Kingdom of Vijayanagara."²⁰¹ He concludes that "if in spite of all this evidence one believes in the story of Vidyāraṇya Śrīpāda having helped Harihara Raya I to build the capital, one merely exchanges fact for fiction."²⁰²

The connection between the Hoysala and Vijayanagara played also an important role. Karashima states that:

"In the Hoysala country, Ballala III, who died in the south near Tiruchirappalli in 1342, fighting against the Madurai Sultan, was succeeded by his son, Ballala IV., who seems to have ruled the northern part of the country in league with Harihara

¹⁹⁷ Filliozat (1973, No. 43: pp. 30-32).

¹⁹⁸ Filliozat (1973: No. 25: p. 145).

¹⁹⁹ ARMAD: No 24 of 1933.

²⁰⁰ Heras (1929: pp. 34).

²⁰¹ Saletore (1936: pp. 139-159).

²⁰² Saletore (1936: pp. 152).

and Bukka, most likely headquartered in the Hampi/Hosapattana area, until his death, probably in 1345. After the death of Ballala Hoysala IV., Harihara Vijayanagara I. succeeded him and began to rule independently with the help of his brothers.”²⁰³

It means that Karashima believed throughout that the first rulers of Vijayanagara succeeded directly the crown from Hoysala kings, Ballala III (the father) and Ballala IV (the son). But one should bear in mind that the early title of the first ruler Harihara I was – even after the end of the Hoysala - only *Mahamandalesvara* (“Great Tributary Lord”), but his brother Bukka acquired the additional title of *Maharaja* in an inscription from the Shimoga District, dated 15th October, 1349²⁰⁴ and another one, dated Sunday, 11th March, 1358.²⁰⁵ Only in a large inscription, dated Monday, 22nd September, 1369, Bukka I bore for the first time the imperial title of *Maharajadhiraja*.²⁰⁶ And Dikshit²⁰⁷ argued that there was no necessity for the founders of Vijayanagara to fight with the Hoysala, because their power was on the decline and they passed out of history due to their own weakness as is exemplified by the rule of the last Hoysala Ballala IV. Hence, the Sangama took their place without any opposition.

Epigraphical evidence, too, shows a clear inclination towards the Kannada tradition, as do the styles of architecture and arts. Ritti and Gopal²⁰⁸ show that “[o]f the available published inscriptions, a language wise break-up will be roughly like this: Kannada: 2000, Telugu: 700, Tamil: 1800 and Sanskrit: 600.” In fact, almost all of the early inscriptions of the first dynasty are in Sanskrit and Kannada language, whereas the inscriptions of the later three dynasties are in Telugu. To conclude this issue, let us state that there are no real evidences for a Telugu origin of the Sangama brothers, who were the founders of the Vijayanagara kingdom. Their power was set up well inside the Kannada cultural territory, where they had inherited land from the former local Kannada chieftdom of Kampili. Regardless of their origin, this point should be taken into consideration as the main critical factor in discussing the cultural and political background of the Vijayanagara empire.

²⁰³ Karashima (2014: pp. 189).

²⁰⁴ Filliozat (1973, No. 28: pp. 17f.).

²⁰⁵ Filliozat (1973, No. 50: pp. 40-42).

²⁰⁶ Filliozat (1973, No. 104: pp. 93-98).

²⁰⁷ Dikshit (1988: pp. 316).

²⁰⁸ IVR, Vol. I, Part I: pp. liii.

Concerning the worshipping of the god Virupaksha, the local form of Shiva and husband of Pampa, there is one inscription mentioning the king Someshvara of the Hoysala in 1236 AD at Hampi.²⁰⁹ It is damaged but it can be seen that the king granted a gift of a certain amount of income to the temple of Virupaksha Deva for conducting worship and feeding the Brahmins in the *sattr*a attached to the temple.²¹⁰ The god had already been adopted as the Sangama family's deity in the year 1346.²¹¹ It means that the worship to the god Virupaksha was continued. It is noted on a copper plate inscription issued by Harihara's brother Marappa in the same year, that the pilgrimage center across the river at Hampi was already an object of political interest to the Sangama. The inscription goes on to describe in poetic terms the Sangama use of particular places as their ritual sacred bathing (*tirtha*):

“Their family deity being Virupaksha Deva worshipped by all the gods, their garden canal, the sacred Tungabhadra resembling the Ganga, their pleasure hill the Hemakuta mountain covered with the shadows of peaks, their sporting pond being the Pampasaras lake – this was their good fortune.”²¹²

By looking at the geographical aspect, it can be seen that the territory of the new kingdom was located almost in the center of South India, including some parts of the previous kingdoms which were Hoysala, Kampili (Karnataka), Kakatiya (Andhra Pradesh in present time). Except three inscriptions²¹³ in the capital of Vijayanagara (Hampi), 16 to 17²¹⁴ more were inscribed in some other parts of the kingdom: in Bijapur in the North, which at that time still belonged to the kingdom; in Hassan in the South, where the kingdom of Hoysala just existed some decades ago; in Bangalore in the Southeast, a conflicting area between the Chola and the Hoysala, and in Andhra Pradesh, where the Kakatiya has been ruled by the Telugu royal families.

During the first period of reign of the new power of Vijayanagara, the territory was not a tiny state like Kampili or local state like Hoysala, but was a superpower covering a large land, combining the territory of many previous Hindu kingdoms in South India. The “vacuum of power” as stated by Stein²¹⁵ was a very important factor which

²⁰⁹ Derrett (1957: pp. 120-1).

²¹⁰ ARE: No. B355 of 1934-1935.

²¹¹ Wagoner (2009: pp. 14).

²¹² ARMAD: No. 90 of 1929.

²¹³ IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 12, 18, 19).

²¹⁴ IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 1-11, 13-17).

²¹⁵ Stein (1989: pp. 18).

encouraged the Sangama brothers to found and stabilize their own land to face the North invading challenge.

The origin of the so-called “Superpower of Vijayanagara” is generally attributed to the so-called Sangama brothers.

The Sangama brothers were warriors of Kannada origin. As such, they had a stable position within the South Indian political setup of their times. During the war period in South India, from the 13th to the 16th centuries, warriors had held a very important position.

For reference to the alleged role of Madhavacarya (alias Vidyanarya) and the influence of the *matha* of Sringeri, see chapter two. The way, Vijayanagara inspired Sivaji and the Marathas to continue its function, is exhibited in Dikshit.²¹⁶

As we have earlier done for the Chola, we will now provide a chronological overview of Vijayanagara kings and their deeds, based on inscriptions. Please consider, that for Harihara I alone (the eldest of the Sangama brothers; he is first mentioned as a vassal, and then as independent ruler [1336-1357 AD]), there are at least 19 inscriptions.

1339 AD: This inscription of King Harihara I is found on the right wall of the Janardanasvami temple in Anekere, Channarayapatna taluk, in Hassan district, quite far away from the capital of Vijayanagara. The inscription mentions that under the reign of Harihara I, by the direction of one Lakkhanna Odeya, Rayi Setti, who was in charge of taxes, were granted 11 *gadyanas*²¹⁷ and 12 *hanas*²¹⁸ of money for the supply of oil for maintaining a perpetual lamp in the temple of the god Cennakesava of Aneganakere.²¹⁹

1340 AD: On a rock to the proper right of the Maruti temple in a locality called Tattikote, in Badami village, Badami taluk, in Bijapur district, an inscription states that by the direction of King Hariyappa Odeya, the supreme chief (*mahanayakacarya*) Cameyanayaka granted a village.²²⁰

²¹⁶ Dikshit (1985: pp. 354-357).

²¹⁷ *Gadyana* is a gold coin: Vasudevan (1999: pp. 279); Dallapiccola (2003: pp. 157).

²¹⁸ *Hana* is also a gold coin, but of smaller weight than a *gadyana*: Vasudevan (1999: pp. 245, 281); Mahalingam (1951: pp. 176, 178).

²¹⁹ EC, Vol. V, Channarayapatna: No. 175; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 1.

²²⁰ IA, Vol. X: No. LXXXVII; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 2.

1340 AD (or 1342 AD²²¹): An inscription found on a field near the Banasavadi village, Nelamangala taluk, in Bangalore district, refers to the reign of Harihara I and mentions a general (*nayaka*) called Mahasamanta Mayileya as governing Kukkalanadu.²²²

1343 AD: A subordinate, named as Bhayanna of Somavamsa, is mentioned in an inscription on a stone slab in Gandasi village, Arasikere taluk, in Hassan district, as the establisher of a township called Mangapura.²²³

1346 AD (or 1347 AD²²⁴): An inscription on a stone leaning against the southern wall of the Anjaneya temple in the Sringeri village, Sringeri taluk, in Cikkamagalur district, designates all the five Sangama brothers and Harihara I's son-in-law, as having made a gift of nine villages, along with hamlets attached, situated in Kelanadu, with an income of 150 *gadyanas*.²²⁵

1346 AD: The eldest two of the five Sangama brothers, namely Harihara I and Bukka I, are noted in an inscription, found on a stone in the western outlet of the tank to the north-east of the Kyatamaranahalli village, Bangalore taluk, in Bangalore district.²²⁶

1346 AD: In Catnakodagi village, Tirthahalli taluk, in Shivamogga district, on a stone in a fallow land, an inscription, belonging to Harihara I, makes a reference to a feudatory, bearing the epithet Pandyacakravarti.²²⁷

1346 AD: An inscription, found on a slab lying in a piece of government land to the south of the sluice of the tank to the south of the Hailappanahalli village, Doddaballapur taluk, Bangalore district, shows only the name of King Harihara I and the date.²²⁸

1347 AD: A local chief with the title *prabhu* is mentioned in an inscription found on a slab set up on the village's burial ground (*gundu-topu*) of Hoiyanakere village, Bangalore taluk, in Bangalore district.²²⁹

²²¹ Filliozat (1973: pp. 5).

²²² EC, Vol. IX, Nelamangala: No. 19; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 3.

²²³ EC, Vol. V, Arasikere: No. 159; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 4.

²²⁴ Filliozat (1973: pp. 10).

²²⁵ EC, Vol. VI, Sringeri: No. 1; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 5.

²²⁶ EC, Vol. IX, Bangalore: No. 139; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 6.

²²⁷ EC, Vol. VIII, Tirthahalli: No. 154; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 7.

²²⁸ EC, Vol. IX, Doddaballapur: No. 66; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 8.

²²⁹ EC, Vol. IX, Bangalore: No. 97; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 9.

1348 AD: According to an inscription, found on a slab behind the kitchen of the Kantisvara temple in Kantavara village, Karkal taluk, South Kanara district,²³⁰ a minister (*pradhana*) was governing Mangaluru *rajya* (province).²³¹

1348 AD: In the dry land of Tailagere Kempa in Katigenahalli village, Devanahalli taluk, Bangalore district, an inscription states that Harihara I was ruling at the same time as Bukka I²³²

1349 AD: An inscription found on a rock to the South of Chintamani Matha in Hampi village, Hospet taluk, in Bellary district, notes a son of Harihara I, namely Savanna Vodeya. But in fact, Harihara I had no son, and Savanna Vodeya was known as the son of Harihara I's brother, Kampanna.²³³

1351 AD: Only the name of King Harihara I and the date is mentioned in an inscription on a hero-stone in the enclosure of Virabhadra temple of Araga village, Tirthahalli taluk, in Shivamogga district.²³⁴

1352 AD: An inscription, associated with King Harihara I, found on two fragments of a slab lying to the West of the Anjaney temple to the East of the village entrance in Vadigenahalli village, Devanahalli taluk, in Bangalore district, designates a local chief.²³⁵

1354 AD: On a stone near the ruined Jaina temple in Hire Avali village, Soraba taluk, in Shivamogga district, an inscription refers to the death of the chief of Avali.²³⁶

1354 AD: After the dead chief's funeral the new chief of Avali is mentioned in an inscription, found on a stone near the ruined Jaina temple in Hire Avali village, Soraba taluk, in Shivamogga district²³⁷ in the same inscription above.

1357 AD: King Harihara I and God Hariharesvarasvami are mentioned in an inscription on a stone near the Hariharesvara temple to the North of the Hariharapura village, Koppa taluk, in Cikkamagalur district.²³⁸

With no confirmed dates recorded, one inscription had been found on a boulder in a field near the right bank and one inscription on a boulder on the left bank of the Turta

²³⁰ SII, Vol. VII: No. 231; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 10.

²³¹ South Canara was a district of the Madras Presidency of British India, covered the areas of the present-day districts of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi of Karnataka and the Kasaragod District of Kerala

²³² EC, Vol. IX, Devanahalli: No. 50; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 11.

²³³ IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 12.

²³⁴ EC, Vol. VIII, Tirthahalli: No. 17; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 13.

²³⁵ EC, Vol. IX, Devanahalli: No. 29; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 14.

²³⁶ EC, Vol. VIII, Sorab: No. 104; IVR, Vol I, Part I: No. 15.

²³⁷ EC, Vol. VIII, Sorab: No. 110; IVR, Vol I, Part I: No. 16.

²³⁸ EC, Vol. XII, Pavugada: No. 33; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 17.

canal to the east of the Matanga Hill in Hampi village, Hospet taluk, in Bellary district. Both refer to Harihara I's title,²³⁹ and the second inscription also mentions god Virupaksha.²⁴⁰

2.3.2. Vijayangara as the dominant power of South India

Founded in 1336, and filling the power vacuum in South India after the fall of the old powers, Vijayanagara gradually grew and became the dominant force around the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. During this time, the Bahmani Sultanate and then the five separate sultanates have always had hostile relations with the rest of South India. The south was composed of Hindu states and small independent regions. In this turbulent situation, Vijayanagara conducted military operations, thus continuously expanding its territory from the mid-14th to the 16th century. At the same time, the kings withstood the constant and powerful attacks of the Muslim power, defending Hindu values for nearly three centuries. The first half of the 16th century is considered the most prosperous and powerful period of Vijayanagara under King Krishnadevaraya of the Tuluva dynasty.

This part of the thesis focuses on describing Vijayanagara's development from its foundation to becoming the dominant force in South India, which refers to the landmark events that had a great impact not only on the the kingdom itself but also on the history of the entire peninsula.

As described in section 2.3.1. the foundation of Vijayanagara was fraught with difficulties in the light of the Delhi Sultanate's military campaigns against southern India in the early part of the 14th century. It has strongly disturbed the power structure here, wiped out many ancient states and kingdoms, as well as created conditions for the formation of new powers. Among them, the establishment and growth of Vijayanagara is the most important and influential.

The first Sangama dynasty with the two rulers we mentioned, Harihara I and Bukka I, established a strong position for Vijayanagara for about a century and a half (1336–1485). The founders as well as their descendants, later established the great capital Vijayanagara ("city of victory"), near the northern border of the kingdom with the hostile Muslim forces. From that area, they have continuously conducted military campaigns to protect the territory (mainly from the north) as well as expand their dominion (to the

²³⁹ Devaraj and Patil (1991: pp. 43); IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 18.

²⁴⁰ Devaraj and Patil (1991: pp. 44); IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 19.

south), establish an administrative system stretching from the centre to the local, as well as built relationships with other contemporary forces on the peninsula.

The name of the capital, viz. “Vijayanagara”, which was later commonly used to refer to the kingdom, first appeared in an inscription dated 1356²⁴¹ during the reign of King Bukka I. He and his predecessor Harihara I could be said to have built the center of the new kingdom on the basis of the small state of Kampili that they had just conquered, in which the capital of the new kingdom was built, using the capital of the old kingdom. Some of the old architecture is preserved, such as the small shrines around the main Virupaksha temple. Since then, the city has continuously been expanded with the addition of many new buildings, both, religious and in terms of the royal residence, to the astonishment of later archaeological discoveries and researches²⁴².

The king’s full title is first recorded in an inscription dating to 1368, carved on a stone slab located in the Chikkanna field, Kalya village, Magadi taluk, Bangaluru district, in present-day Karnataka state²⁴³. In this inscription, the king’s title is mentioned as Bukkaraya (co-ruling 1344-1356, sole ruling 1356-1377), who settled a religious dispute between the Jainas and Hindus. Having succeeded his brother Harihara I as sole ruler around 1356, the new king not only consolidated the powerful kingdom, but also continuously expanded its territory. He sent his son Kampana to defeat Sambuvarayar in the Kanchipuram region. His most important deed, though, was the conquest of the Madurai Sultanate (around the year 1370), much of which had formed the former Pandya kingdom. This is recorded in the Sanskrit poem *Madhura Vijayam* (“Conquest of Madura”) by Kampana’s wife Ganga Devi. In the North, the war with the Bahmani Sultanate (1347-1527) began and dragged on throughout the existence of the Vijayanagara kingdom.

Harihaha II (1377-1404), the eldest son of Bukka I, succeeded his father and conquered Goa on the west coast. Goa became the site of a fierce dispute between Vijayanagara and the newly established kingdom of Bahmani until the Portuguese arrived and turned it into their key stronghold. Also under this king, both the Reddi- (also known as Kondavidu, now mostly in Andhra Pradesh) and Velama- (also in Andhra Pradesh) states were defeated by Vijayanagara warriors under the general

²⁴¹ Filliozat (1988: pp. 187).

²⁴² Please see the publications of the Vijayanagara Archaeological Research Program (1977-1991).

²⁴³ Kulke (1985: pp. 125-6; 2001: pp. 217-20); EC, Vol. IX: Ma. 18.

Mangudeva's command, a vassal of Kumara Kampana, the younger brother of King Harihara II, who joined Mangu in the Southern Tamil campaign.

When Harihara II died in 1404, Vijayanagara fell into a dispute over the throne, resulting in Bukka II ascending to the throne for a brief period (1405-1406) and being succeeded by Devaraya I (ruling 1406-1422). During the reign of these two kings, several more important events happened in the empire. New military buildings, including fortifications, walls, and watchtowers were built. Historian Sewell in his famous work *Vijayanagara: The forgotten empire* highly appreciated²⁴⁴ the construction of a dam on the Tungabhadra river: "But his great work was the construction of a huge dam in the Tungabhadra river, and the formation of an aqueduct fifteen miles long from the river into the city. If this be the same channel that to the present day supplies the fields which occupy so much of the site of the old city, it is a most extraordinary work. For several miles this channel it cut out of the solid rock at the base of the hills, and is one of the most remarkable irrigation works to be seen in India."²⁴⁵ However, at the end of Devaraya I's reign, the war between Vijayanagara and Bahmani (during the reign of King Firuz Shah, ruled 1397–1422) broke out again and Devaraya I won some important victories but also suffered severe casualties. During this time, the Italian traveler Nicolo Conti visited Vijayanagara, of course overland, and left important records about the capital, the country and its people. When Devaraya I died in 1422, again, a battle for the throne took place and several kings succeeded each other for a short time each, including Ramachandra (son of Devaraya I, for a few short months) and Vira Vijaya Raya (about 1422-1426). The son of Vira Vijaya Raya, who later took the title of Devaraya II, co-ruled with his father for several years, then officially succeeded him in 1426.

At the height of the Sangama dynasty under King Devaraya II (1422-46), Vijayanagara conquered Orissa in the east and Kerala in the south. He made the Tulu country on the west coast of the kingdom (formerly South Kanara, now Dakshina Kannada district, Karnataka state) into a province directly under the imperial court. As a result, the territory of Vijayanagara was so vast that it was recorded by the Persian ambassador Abdur Razzaq ²⁴⁶, who visited Vijayanagara (which he called *Bidjanagar*) during the time of Devaraya II, that it stretched from Ceylon (modern day Sri Lanka) in the

²⁴⁴ Bukka II and Devaraya I.

²⁴⁵ Sewell (1900: pp. 51-2).

²⁴⁶ Major (1857: pp. 3-43).

southeast to Gulbarga (now Kalaburagi, Karnataka) in the north, from Bengal as far as Goa on the west coast. With Bahmani, Devaraya II kept peaceful relations through marriage as well as through concessions on certain rights, such as money tributes. That action was to avoid a fierce war that could seriously damage the conquest of the eastern and southern lands of the kingdom. During this period, in order to deal with the always lurking danger from the north, the king recruited a number of Muslims into his army, even allowing them to practice their religious rituals in the king's presence. Later, the successors of Devaraya II lost some of the kingdom's lands due to their weakness in the second half of the 15th century. Especially under his son Mallikarjuna Raya (ruled 1447-1465) and subsequent successor Virupaksha Raya II (1465–1485), Vijayanagara was constantly under attack, not only by Bahmani but also by its vassal states. Bahmani recaptured Goa in 1469, while Gajapati from Orissa conquered parts of the Tamil country as far as Tiruchirappalli. Thus, at the end of the Sangama dynasty, Vijayanagara fell into a short period of weakness, lost territories to foreign forces, and at the same time fell into a situation of internal power disputes. However, the capital was still held and the invading armies never reached the core strength of the kingdom in this place.

In that troubled context, appeared two individuals who played important roles in changing the political situation of Vijayanagara, namely Saluva Narasimha and Tuluva Narasa. Saluva Narasimha was a Nayaka who ruled Chandragiri-*rajya*, one of the important provincial administrative divisions of the kingdom, in the north of the Tamil country with the strong Chandragiri fortress built in the 11th century. Vijayanagara's territory expanded as far as the Godavari River in the north, with the help of his general Narasa Nayaka of the Tuluva family. Saluva Narasimha drove the Oriyas (Odia-speaking, present Odisha state) out of the eastern districts of the kingdom. In 1470 he won an important victory over Gajapati kingdom (now in the state of Odisha), capturing Udayagiri.

When King Virupaksha Raya II was assassinated in 1485 by his eldest son, internal turmoil in the dynasty continued. The second son of the deceased king who had just come to power killed the assassin, but was not interested in government affairs. Thus, in 1486, Narasimha overthrew the Sangama dynasty and ascended to the throne himself, thus founding the second dynasty in Vijayanagara history, the Saluva dynasty. Narasimha was on the throne for only 5 years and died in 1491. At this time, the general under the king, Tuluva Narasa, took full power of the government and restored

some of the lost lands of the kingdom, but he did not ascend the throne. It can be said that he was only devoted to serving his master, but the result of his activities laid a solid foundation for his son Krishnadevaraya who created a glorious period in the history of the kingdom. In 1505, the eldest son of Tuluva Narasa Nayaka, Vira Narasimha, overthrew the Saluva dynasty, ascended the throne, and opened the third dynasty, Tuluva (1505-1576). However, this king did not stay on the throne for long but died only a few years later.

King Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529) of the Tuluva dynasty is generally regarded as the greatest of the Vijayanagara kings. In just over 10 years since ascending the throne, he conducted a series of military campaigns and made Vijayanagara the largest territory in its history. First of all, he suppressed the uprising in Umbhattur of Mysore dating back to the time of Vira Narasimha. Next, to the northeast, he campaigned against Gajapati as far as the Simhachalam hills (now in Andhra Pradesh). In particular, Krishnadevaraya defeated Bijapur to take over the Doab of Raichur, which was the site of a centuries-long dispute between Vijayanagara and Bahmani (and its five successors too).

Thus, it can be seen that, in its grandest days, Vijayanagara became a dominant force, that occupied much of southern India, forming a strong defense line to protect traditional Hindu values against the wave of Islamic forces from the North. The central region of the kingdom in which the capital is located is estimated to have comprised about 30,000 square kilometers with a population of about 2 million people, equivalent to the territory ruled by the English tax collector Thomas Munro two centuries later in the same geographic area.²⁴⁷ The capital alone is estimated to have had about 100,000 inhabitants, of course consuming a huge amount of necessities.²⁴⁸ Beyond the central region was a large territory spanning the lands of Kannara, Tamil, Pandya, Tulu, and so on. The entire empire was divided into large provinces (rajya) ruled by governors, who could be princes, king's brothers or generals of great merit or local leaders for many generations. The capital was continuously fortified, both militarily, as well as with royal and religious housing structures, which the travelers of the period and modern scholars alike expressed admiration for. The king was able to mobilize great resources for the construction of buildings in the capital and the northern defense

²⁴⁷ Stein (1989: pp. 58).

²⁴⁸ Stein (1989: pp. 75).

along the Tungabhadra River. In addition, it is clear that Vijayanagara under Krishnadevaraya had a powerful army, combining the king's army with those of his vassals.

The dimension of the power of Vijayanagara and the amount of influence it exerted during its three centuries of existence in South India can only be guessed. That raises the question, what factors have created the dominant force during these times. To answer this question, we must consider the historical context formed by the whole of India from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries as well as the natural, human and political conditions of the state of Vijayanagara.

At the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century, the attack of the Northern Muslims on the southern Indian peninsula severely shook the remaining powerful political forces after the Chola period and caused them to collapse. These were kingdoms like Yavava, Kakatiya, Hoysala, Pandya, Chera, Ganga, etc. When the generals of the Delhi dynasty invaded the southern territory, they established their own power, separate from the central court in the North. Small Muslim states appeared in the south, most of which only lasted only a short while, except in the case of Bahmani, because Hindu forces had risen to restore traditional Hindu values. In this context, the first kings of Vijayanagara defeated the Muslim powers still remaining in the southern peninsula as well as conquered small Hindu states (eg. Kampili, Reddi, Velama) and inherited the territory from Hoysala, a fact, that was controversially discussed among historians for many years. These early kings themselves suffered heavy defeats when they first emerged against the Delhi Sultanate, but they overcame the difficulties with their clever policy and strong will. It can be said that the founders of Vijayanagara really took advantage of the special historical context of a power vacuum in South India, where the Delhi dynasty failed to maintain control, so that they had the chance to fill the vacuum and establish their power.

Controlling a territory that stretch from the Deccan plateau down to the Tamil plains, occupying both the eastern (Coromandel) and western (Malabar) coasts of the southern peninsula, the Vijayanagara kings had vast resources to maintain the power of the kingdom. Although Burton Stein considers that the Vijayanagara kings had limited resources, he himself admits that in the heart of the kingdom irrigated agriculture also flourished, thanks to well developed water policy, like the building of water reservoirs for irrigation in the dry agricultural landscape. In addition, with the conquest of the fertile Tamil plains, the kings also had additional sources of income.

Nevertheless, the possibilities to exploit the Tamil territories depended on the respective political situation of the kingdom. On the other hand, from the end of the fifteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth century, international maritime trade developed on the Indian Ocean and also contributed significantly to the resources of the kingdom. Vijayanagara maintained a fairly good relationship with the Portuguese which resulted for instance in the purchase of war horses for the army, and also in collecting taxes from the foreign traders.

Ruling a vast territory with inhabitants speaking three major Dravidian languages, viz. Kannada (on the Deccan Plateau), Tamil (on the eastern and southeastern plains), Telugu (in the northeastern part of the kingdom), the Vijayanagara kings must have had effective policies to be able to maintain their kingdom for three centuries.

3. Kingship

3.1. The Concept of Kingship in the Chola- and Vijayanagara-Dynasties

3.1.1. An Overview of the Concept of Kingship in Ancient and Medieval India

In the history of India, the first reliable mentions of kings appeared in northern India during the Magadha period around the 6th to 5th centuries BC. In the South, historic kings were first mentioned in literature and inscriptions in the very last centuries BC. Kingship is also mentioned in classical Indian literature. The four most important Sanskrit texts, the Indian idea of kingship has been derived from, are Arthashastra, Manusmriti, Mahabharata, and Shukranitisara. These texts display some aspects of the kingship model that has existed in different historical and political areas on the sub-continent. However, these four texts are of highest importance in the definition of the traditional model of kingship in ancient and medieval India. They defined clearly the core elements, as e. g. king, state, territory.

Arthashastra (lit. “Science of Politics”), allegedly composed by a certain Kautilya, who according to later traditions was a teacher and advisor of the first Mauryan emperor Chandragupta (321-297 BC), was finally redacted in the 2nd/3rd century AD.²⁴⁹ In this text the state factors are defined as follows: king (*raja*), councilor/minister (*amatya/mantrin*), territory (*janapada*), fort (*durga*), treasure (*kosha*), army (*bala*) and friend-ally (*mitra*).²⁵⁰ The king is the core element of a sovereign state and the most powerful person who rules the kingdom on behalf of the gods.

The role of the king and the organization of the state are major topics within the larger subject of Indian history. The Arthashastra depicts how from the beginning of historical times onwards, kings had a very important position in the economical, and political system of the successive states. The king derived his power from three sources – *prabhushakti* (the power of the army and the treasury), *mantrashakti* (advice of wise men, specifically the Council of Ministers) and *utsahashakti* (charisma). *Mantrashakti* was rated as the most potent source followed by the *prabhushakti* and *utsahashakti*. It is clear that the authors of the Arthashastra believed in the importance of institutions

²⁴⁹ Olivelle (2013: pp. 31).

²⁵⁰ Shamasastri (1915: pp. 319-325).

(Council of Ministers) and not of an individual (king) in influencing the destiny of the state.²⁵¹

Next to the king came the *mantri-parishad*, the “Council of Ministers”. This ministerial council was the chief administrative authority in the kingdom. The king was supposed not to take any decision without the consent of the council. Only men who possessed wisdom, purity of purpose, bravery and loyalty were appointed as ministers. These ministers were known for their integrity, leadership qualities and concern for the welfare of the kingdom. Ashoka’s extravagant charity for instance, had been curbed by his ministers.²⁵² During the time of emergencies, the ministers played an important role in the selection of the king. For instance, after the death of Rajyavardhana, king of Sthanvishvara (Thaneshvar) in North India, the Prime Minister Bhandi in consultation with other officials made Harshavardhana the new king of Kanyakubja (Kanauj), reigning from 606-647 AD.²⁵³

The *mantri-parishad* had two levels, viz the “Inner Cabinet” and the “Outer Cabinet”. The inner cabinet had four members – the Chief Minister, the Chief Priest, the Military Commander and the Crown Prince who was included in order to ensure smooth succession and in order to maintain continuity in the case of emergencies. The membership of the outer cabinet was not fixed in number. Invariably the heads of the prominent guilds were co-opted in this body. This gave the *parishad* a representative character.²⁵⁴

According to the Kautilya-Arthashastra’s view, monarchy was not of divine origin but was a human institution and therefore manned by human beings. However, the king was expected to be more than a mere human being, since he was the protector of the *dharma* of the entire society. He had to be a good role model himself. All his actions were subject to public scrutiny hence, he had no private life. The king had to follow his specific royal *dharma*. This included a thorough background in the four branches of knowledge.²⁵⁵ He had to offer protection to the subjects against any sort of evil. He also had to fight battles in order to repulse external attacks. He was responsible to protect private property, to such an extent, that the king was held to restore to the

²⁵¹ Scharfe (1989: pp. 132).

²⁵² Scharfe (1989: pp. 133).

²⁵³ Scharfe (1989: pp. 62).

²⁵⁴ Scharfe (1989: pp. 132-134).

²⁵⁵ The four branches of knowledge are Philosophy, the Three Vedas, Economics and Science of Government, as mentioned in Kautilya’s Arthashastra (see Shamasastri (1915: pp. 5)).

subject the stolen wealth at any cost. And moreover, he also had to preserve the institution of family and had to prevent adultery. Further functions of the king included removal of poverty and misery of his subjects, and support of the helpless, aged, blind, crippled, orphans and widows.

The four main functions of the king were to acquire what is not gained, to protect what is gained, to increase what is protected, and to bestow the surplus upon the deserving. The king was required to possess three powers, which were the power of good counsel, the majesty of the king himself, and the power to inspire. Being the “promulgator of *dharma*”, the king should himself be free from the six passions of lust, anger, greed, vanity, haughtiness, and overjoy.²⁵⁶

3.1.2. Kingship in Practice. Classical North- and South-India in Comparison: Maurya and Gupta Empires vs. the Three Kingdoms of the South

The Maurya

The first great empire in North India was established by Chandragupta Maurya (ca. 321 BC), a few years after the invasion of Alexander the Great in the Punjab the new universal empire centered around the Magadha region. The kings of Magadha did no more retain defeated kings in a subordinate role, as was the common procedure in earlier times, but they took over newly gained territories and integrated them into their home state. The growing influence of commercial and administrative cities and the more settled nature of the farmers of irrigated land would have been powerful factors. The permanent elimination of the old aristocracy in this transition from a hierocratic-aristocratic government into a hierocratic-autocratic government had lasting consequences. As we know from the Girinagara inscription of the Kshatrapa Rudradaman, dated 16th November 150 AD,²⁵⁷ in which the repairing of a dam by Rudradaman is mentioned, the foundation of that building must have been executed by Pushyagupta, the provincial governor of Chandragupta Maurya, and a first repair of the dam was undertaken by the governor Tushaspha, a Yavana (in this case an Iranian) ordered by Ashoka Maurya – which shows that this province was not ruled by a local king.

The expansion of the Maurya empire beyond the limits of the Indian cultural region reached its first peak with the annexation of Arachosia in Afghanistan, ceded by the

²⁵⁶ Shamasastri (1915: pp. 10).

²⁵⁷ EI, Vol. VIII: pp. 45f.

Seleucids to the Maurya in the treaty of 305 BC. In principle, the policy of conquest follows the constant struggle between the preservation of power and expansion, according to the classical Indian theory of *vijigishu* (being desirous of conquering). The Maurya state was surrounded by potential and often actual enemies, who in their turn were again surrounded by their enemies. The question arises, whether the said theory was the base of the policy of the Maurya who indeed had conquered huge parts of India but tried to eliminate enemies once and forever. Ashoka came close to the goal of becoming a universal ruler, more than any Indian king before or after him. Early in his reign (ca. 260 BC), he undertook a major conquest that rounded off his possessions with the conquering of the province of Kalinga opening opportunities for important maritime trade to South India and Southeast Asia. After this war, it seems that Ashoka had no further expansionist ambitions since his empire was now statically safe and the small states in the South did not matter.²⁵⁸ Ashoka also had built up a large bureaucracy with enforcement agencies and the carrying out of regular inspecting tours (cf. Separate Rock Edict 2 and Pillar Edict 4). The huge empire finally failed not because of the religious or the pacifist policy of Ashoka, but because of internal dissensions.²⁵⁹

Post-Maurya Developments

After the collapse of the Maurya empire there was a succession of several states, some in fact quite large, that combined a great number of small local government units with dynastic overlordship as, e.g., the Shatavahana in Andhra of which our knowledge is very limited.²⁶⁰ The Gupta empire (from 319 AD to the 6th century) whose kernel was centrally governed, used a system of loose dependencies for outer provinces. The Allahabad inscription²⁶¹ of emperor Samudragupta (335-375/80) tells how he, through his campaigns, established his rule over most of northern India. The kings of states close to the Gupta center were removed and their states annexed and brought under the central bureaucracy. At the edge of the empire the defeated kings were retained in dependency.

In the 7th century the kings officially adopted for themselves genealogies derived from the Puranas, claiming descent from epic heroes and ultimately from either the Sun or

²⁵⁸ Thapar (1961: pp. 158).

²⁵⁹ Thapar (1961: pp. 197-212).

²⁶⁰ Shastri (1998: passim).

²⁶¹ CII, Part III: pp. 203-220.

the Moon. Towards the end of the 7th century, these genealogies were carried to their final conclusion, for Sun and Moon were taken in the Puranas to spring from god, who was then, logically, also the present king's ultimate ancestor. For instance, the Pallava dynasty, that was established in the northern Tamil region from the 3rd/4th century onwards, claimed to have Brahma or Vishnu as ancestor. In Pallava inscriptions it was Ashvatthama, the son of Drona, who, with a Naga princess, engendered the ancestor of that dynasty,²⁶² referring to the following genealogy:

1. Ambujanatha
2. Angiras
3. Giravatesha (Brihaspati)
4. Shamyu
5. Bharadvaja
6. Drona
7. Ashvatthaman
8. Pallava

This descentance can be found in the Pallankovil inscription²⁶³ of King Simhavarman III (ca. 540-550 CE), the Kuram inscription²⁶⁴ of King Parameshvaravarman I (ca. 669-690) and in two inscriptions²⁶⁵ of the latter's successor Narasimhavarman II (ca. 690-728). Furthermore, it is recorded in the Panamalai inscription²⁶⁶ and the stele inscription at Vayalur²⁶⁷ which bears an elaborated genealogy. The Pallava became a major power during the reign of Mahendravarman I (571-630 AD) and Narasimhavarman I (630-668 AD) and dominated the Telugu and northern parts of the Tamil region for altogether about 600 years until the end of the year 892. Throughout their reign they were in permanent conflict with the Chalukya of Badami in the North and the Tamil kingdoms of the Chola and Pandya in the South. The Pallava were finally defeated by the Chola ruler Aditya I in the 9th century.²⁶⁸

²⁶² The same story is reported of Virakurca who is also reputed to be a founder of the Pallava dynasty: he was "*invested with the insignia of full sovereignty by his marriage with the Nāga princess, daughter of the nāga emperor (phanīndrasutā)*" Jayaswal (1933: pp. 179), Gaudes (1993: pp. 348).

²⁶³ Mahalingam (1988: pp. 89-93).

²⁶⁴ SII, Vol. I: No. 151; Mahalingam (1988: pp. 152-161).

²⁶⁵ A Kanchipuram inscription: Mahalingam (1988: pp. 173-175) and the Panamalai inscription: Mahalingam (1988: pp. 200-202)).

²⁶⁶ EI, Vol. XIX: No. 18.

²⁶⁷ EI, Vol. XVIII: No. 18.

²⁶⁸ Jouveau-Dubreuil (1995: pp. 83).

The Thirukkural, a classical text in Tamil language, composed by Thiruvalluvar in the Post-Sangam era (500 AD or earlier), is also a literary source for understanding the political theory of South Indian kingdoms in the medieval times.

3.2. Cholas: The concept of Kingship under the Cholas

3.2.1. Kings and their family

Clarifying the structure and power of the Chola kingship also means determining the nature of the Chola state. The debate on the Chola state model brings up two views that can be seen as opposing. Nilakanta Sastri and other scholars argue that the Chola state, with the paramount role of kings, was an effective centralized state. Meanwhile, Burton Stein and a few more scholars argue that the Chola state in particular and Hindu state institutions in general were decentralized in nature, in which kings acted as leaders of alliances of small states rather than as emperors who had supreme power and governed the entire kingdom. Perhaps the best approach to the Chola state model in particular and the Hindu states in South India in general is to look at each historical period and see its transformation in different aspects of kingship.

At the beginning of the history of the Middle Chola dynasty (or the Imperial Cholas), the Chola kings functioned more as military leaders than as emperors when the power of local chiefs was still strong. Although claiming to be descendants of the Chola kings of the Sangam Age (the Ancient Chola), the early imperial Chola kings may have been just one among local chieftain families that emerged in the ninth century and earlier under the protection of the Pallavas. However, when Rajaraja I ascended the throne in 985, the king's power was strongly consolidated and expanded. He and his son and successor, Rajendra I (1014-1044), intervened in the management of regions throughout the kingdom, creating a new administrative unit called *valanadu* to exert tighter control over the localities. They also had full power to mobilize troops for major campaigns to expand the influence of the Chola kingdom beyond its original territory and abroad (on the Deccan plateau, the Pandya country and naval expeditions to Sri Lanka, Maldives and Southeast Asia). After 1070, the king's power became less, beginning when the Chola-Chalukya line of kings came to power through marriage-alliances (1070-1178). During the final phase of the Chola empire (1179-1279) under the reign of the kings Kulottunga III, Rajaraja III and Rajendra III, when local chieftains played an increasingly large role, the role of kings ruling from Thanjavur faded and

came to an end. From this it can be seen that the increase or decrease in power of the Chola king was associated with the prosperity of the dynasty and vice versa, the prosperity of the Chola dynasty depended on the personality of the ruler too.

Inscriptions do not clearly show us how the Chola kings ran the affairs of the court and appointed officials. There are not many inscriptions in which the king appears as an individual and makes personal decisions. In that context, based on the king's specific activities recorded directly or indirectly through the activities of other individuals such as royal members, court officials and localities, can partly outline the role and power of the king in the medieval Chola state and society.

The king was the head and gave the supreme orders to run the state, regardless of any historical period or any dynasty. That is the general principle of monarchies. Those orders, according to Y. Subbrarayalu²⁶⁹, were called *tiru-anai* (the "sacred command") and the royal edicts containing them were known as *tiru-olai* or *sri-mukham*. Actions against those orders must be punished. N. Sastri²⁷⁰ believes that the king issued oral orders called *tiruvayk-kelvi* to those under him responsible for managing the kingdom. J. Heitzman²⁷¹ argues that royal orders reflected direct royal involvement in local temple affairs, known as *tirumukam* (the "sacred face" of the king). The king's orders as seen in inscriptions were mostly related to temple matters, specifically the king and royal family giving gifts to the temples, often expensive, or approving requests by temple donors to transfer tax revenues to temples for divine worship, mainly to Shiva. The king was the supreme commander of the army and navy. The Chola army at its peak was very large, as it is mentioned in an inscription²⁷² in the Chalukya kingdom of 1007 that the invaders from Chola (under the reign of King Rajaraja I) numbered up to 900,000 soldiers. The number of infantry estimated by Chola opponents may be inaccurate or intentionally exaggerated, but it also shows that in times of prosperity, the Chola kings could mobilize a huge military force to conduct expeditionary campaigns. The Chola navy was very strong, as demonstrated by the fact that they conducted successful maritime campaigns in Southeast Asia (the war with Srivijaya), the Maldives and controlled the Andaman and Nicobar Islands as an outpost. It can be seen that in the late tenth and eleventh centuries, the Chola state operated centrally

²⁶⁹ Subbrayalu (2012: pp. 231).

²⁷⁰ Sastri (1958: pp. 460).

²⁷¹ Heitzman (1987: pp.43).

²⁷² EI, Vol. XVI: No. 11.

and effectively, creating strength for the Cholas to expand their territory. We do not know how the recruitment and training of the Chola army was conducted. However, it can be said that, to achieve such military power, the Chola kings had to centralise power in their hands to a very high degree. Only then would they be able to mobilize armies from the kingdom's heartland in Thanjavur and the armies in localities that were in the hands of appointed officials and vassal leaders.

Shivaism was the state religion during the Chola period. The Chola kings built great temples, notably those at and around Thanjavur. Among them, the most prominent are two temples named Brihadisvara in Thanjavur (by Rajaraja I) and Gangaikonda Cholapuram (by Rajendra I). These temples were considered royal temples, where the king and his court conducted ceremonies. The king's power was demonstrated in the fact that local leaders, large and small, also built their temples and linked them with royal temples through established traditions. As the king's power increased, so did the mobilization of contributions for temple construction and sponsorship of religious activities.

The king was considered the agent of the gods, protecting and ruling the mortal world on behalf of the gods. Although he had the supreme power and made the final decisions, in inscriptions the king was rarely mentioned as a direct donor, that role was reserved for queens, princes or king's officials. Personal images of the king were rarely created in temples and the king's visits to religious establishments were limited to Thanjavur and its surroundings²⁷³.

Among the medieval Chola kings, the most prominent were Rajaraja I and his son, Rajendra I, who ruled the Chola for about 30 years each. The period they ruled is considered the highest peak of Chola history, when the Chola kingdom had the largest territory, was the most stable, and demonstrated its power the most. As mentioned above, this was the period when kingship showed the highest concentration in the central government, headed by the monarch, during more than four centuries of Chola existence.

Rajaraja I (ruled 985-1014), the second son of King Parantaka II (ruled 958-973), ascended the throne in 985 after the death of his predecessor Uttama (973-985), his cousin. He ascended the throne in the context of the Chola kingdom having been

²⁷³ There are a few examples: images believed to be of Rajaraja I preserved in sculpture on the Brihadisvara temple in Thanjavur, and a relief of Rajendra I at Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple.

consolidated for more than a century under his father and his cousin Uttama, although the power of the king and the central court at that time actually only controlled the capital area, Thanjavur, and local chiefs had a loose relationship with the court.

To strengthen his power, Rajaraja I conducted important military campaigns, conquering opposing vassals and invading territories outside the kingdom. Initially, he started the war against the Pandya and Chera and in Sri Lanka. He had important achievements, which were defeating the Chera, destroying Kandalur Salai (in present-day Kerala state), capturing the Pandya capital Madurai, and placing Chola rule in northern Sri Lanka. On the Deccan plateau, the Chola were in a constant war with the Chalukya kingdom, mainly revolving around Vengi. The Chola annexed large territories south of the Tungabhadra river. In the Indian Ocean, Rajaraja I sent a navy to occupy the Maldives, turning the archipelago into an important outpost for controlling maritime trade. He also sent envoys to China, then ruled by the Song Dynasty, to seek trade relations.

All these successful military campaigns consolidated and enhanced the power of the king and the central court. On that basis, Rajaraja I was able to carry out important reforms to increase the intervention of the central court in the localities. For the first time in Chola history, he conducted land survey in the countryside²⁷⁴. Moreover, he established an intermediate administrative unit called *valanadu* that was placed between the *mandala* (so-called provincial unit) and the *nadu* (so-called district unit). The king appointed officials to rule over local administrative units, at least up to that intermediate level. Before Rajaraja's time, the power of local leaders was still strong and less influenced by the central government in Thanjavur. By this time, the king had turned those local leaders into his officials who served the court and had a close relationship with the central government. This administrative and bureaucratic system essentially established the supreme power of the king in Chola history, and also brought the kingdom into a period of prosperity. His policies were followed by his son Rajendra I and subsequent kings, in which the administrative system was maintained until the empire's dissolution at the end of the thirteenth century.

Rajendra I (ruled 1014-1044)

In his final years, Rajaraja I placed his son Rajendra I as co-ruler and when he died in 1014, his successor became the new emperor of the kingdom. Inheriting a strong and

²⁷⁴ Subbarayalu (2012: pp. 209).

prosperous kingdom from his father, Rajendra I continued to consolidate power using his father's methods and maintained a policy of effective, centralized rule. He continued to maintain Chola rule over the Pandya country, Sri Lanka and Kerala. His army also advanced to the banks of the Ganga River, capturing the kingdom of the Eastern Gangas. To commemorate that victory, he took the new title Gangaikondachola ("the Chola king who reached the Ganga"), moved the capital to a new location named after him, Gangaikondacholapuram, located northeast of Thanjavur, and built the Gangaikondacholapuram temple modeled after the Brihasvara temple in Thanjavur that his father built. The king continued to implement a sea-oriented policy, sending his navy to attack Srivijaya, a powerful kingdom in Southeast Asia, gaining some control over it. Learning from his father, he also sent envoys to the Song Dynasty of China.

Rajendra I continued to maintain the policy of local control by using the administrative and bureaucratic system from his father's time. *Mandala*, *valanadu* and *nadu* continued to be the backbone of the kingdom's administrative system. The heads of these administrative units function as officials appointed by the royal court and have little autonomy. It is seen that during the most prosperous period of the Cholas (985-1070), the names of local chiefs were mentioned less frequently in inscriptions than in the preceding and subsequent periods, indicating a high degree of centralization of power during this time.

When Rajendra I died (in 1044), his son ascended the throne, taking the title Rajadhiraja (ruled 1044-1052). The next kings were Rajendra II (ruled 1052-1064) and Virarajendra (ruled 1065-1070). Overall, the kingdom continued its prosperity and maintained the king's authority. The king, or "emperor" as some scholars use to say, had during this prosperous period truly centralized power and he tightly controlled the entire Chola kingdom.

From 1070 onwards, there arose a problem in the Chola succession, which was the sudden rise of the Chola-Chalukya line of kings, starting from the reign of King Kulottunga I (ruled 1070-1122). In Chola history, the relationship with the Chalukyas, a kingdom on the Deccan plateau, was notable and complex. The Eastern Chalukya initially submitted to the Western Chalukya of Badami but later broke away to form their own state, called the Chalukya of Vengi, politically linked to the Cholas through intermarriage. Kulottunga I was the son of King Rajaraja Narendra and Queen Amangaidevi of the Eastern Chalukya kingdom which ruled the Vengi region which is

today part of the state of Andhra Pradesh, distinct from Western Chalukya or Chalukya of Badami in the western Deccan plateau. Both Kulottunga's parents were related to the Chola royal family: his mother was the daughter of King Rajendra I, and his father was the son of another daughter of King Rajendra I. Thus according to the hierarchy in royal family, his father in fact was married to his own aunt (to the sister of his mother). In 1061, Rajaraja Najendra died, and Kulottunga became the king of Eastern Chalukya. When his cousin, King Athirajendra Chola, died, Kulottunga, king of Eastern Chalukya assumed the Chola throne. He ruled both the Chola and the Eastern Chalukya kingdoms until his death in 1122, hence for more than half a century. The united Chola-Eastern Chalukya kingdom survived until the time of Kulottunga III in the early thirteenth century. Eastern Chalukya, centered on Vengi, became the northeastern provinces of this kingdom.

It is often said that Kulottunga III (ruled 1178-1216) was the last great Chola emperor, because of the vastness of the Chola territory at his time. In fact, the king's power began to decline under him, as local lords increasingly played an important role and gradually overwhelmed the king. In the south, the Pandya region rose up against the central Chola court, causing Kulottunga III to send troops to suppress the south several times (in 1182, 1188-1189, and 1205). The war with Hoysala, the kingdom of the Kannada-speaking people on the Deccan plateau, also persisted in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. In the North, the Telugu Chola leaders gradually separated from the influence of the central court. By the time Kulottunga III died in 1216, the central Chola court only effectively managed the territories in the central region along the Kaveri River. In that context, the last emperors Rajaraja III (1216-1246) and Rajendra III (1246-1279) had less and less power compared to their predecessors and were unable to restore the kingdom's strength as it once had been. Rajaraja III was weak and was controlled by Rajendra III, his younger brother, for the last three years of his life. Some scholars doubt whether a civil war took place between the last two kings, or even whether Rajendra III may have killed his brother, Rajaraja III, in order to take the throne, but Sastri states that this is misinformation²⁷⁵. Finally, Rajendra III was defeated by the Pandya king and the Chola state completely collapsed.

The Royal Family

²⁷⁵ Sastri (1955: pp. 431, 441).

Since King Vijayalaya ascended the throne in 848 (or 850), the Chola royal family has gone through many generations of kings until the last king, Rajendra III (died in 1279), remained without a successor. The kings of the central royal branch ruled from the Kaveri region, later expanding their vast territories as mentioned above. While a line of local chieftains in the Telugu-speaking region (in present-day Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) also claimed to be descendants of the legendary Sangam-era king Karikala Chola, commonly known as Telugu Cholas. They included many families that ruled different regions, the most prominent of which was the Nellore Cholas, who ruled the Nellore region. They were vassals of the Chalukyas, Kakatiyas and central Cholas. By the early thirteenth century, under Chola Tikka I (1223-1248), Nellore Cholas grew stronger, helping King Rajaraja III in the war against the Hoysalas in the west. The Nellore line eventually lost their political role and disappeared at the end of the thirteenth century.

Here we focus on the royal family of the Chola or Tamil Chola empire, whose heartland was the Kaveri plains. Members of the royal family include kings, queens, princes, and their immediate relatives. The Chola kings followed polygamy, which means that the king often had many different consorts. Queens often appear in inscriptions as the ones who give large and expensive gifts to temples.

The crown-prince in many cases was called a co-ruler with the king, a method for him to be trained and to get used to the role of the supreme ruler. The case of Rajaraja I and his successor, crown prince Rajendra I, is the most well-known example, when in the last years of his life the king let his son co-rule in order to practice running the empire as well as to ensure the succession process.

3.2.2. The Royal Court

The inscriptions do not clearly mention a council of ministers with the function to advise the king, but do mention officials assisting the king.

Sastri²⁷⁶, on the basis of analysis of eleventh-century inscriptions, shows that there was a large and powerful bureaucracy assisting the king in running the kingdom. An analysis of inscriptions reveals that there are countless titles given to individuals. However, not all of those titles show that their holders have a substantial role in the political system that would reflect the actual meaning of their titles. Therefore, when

²⁷⁶ Sastri (1955: pp. 461).

analyzing, we must be very careful, distinguishing between what is just a nominal title and what is a title referring to an actual function.

There are some known titles, like *olai-nayakam*, pointing to an official who reviewed the king's orders; *adikari* and *naduvirukkai*, pointing to officials who confirm that order; *puravuvavi*, denoting the department of officials who put that order into the register (called *vari*). According to Subbarayalu²⁷⁷, *adikari* is prominent in his role second to the king's supremacy in the bureaucracy, followed by *senapati* (leader of the army), while *dandanayakam* (also leader of the army) rarely appears at the senior official level. According to Karashima²⁷⁸, *senapati* and *dandanayakam* were military commanders. Next came the officials like *srikariyam* (who supervised temple affairs for the state) and *naduvagai* (who handled tax settlement of the *nadu*). At the lowest level of the bureaucracy were the soldiers. Beside that there were several *brahmanas*, who at different levels played advising roles for the king and courtiers.

Taxation is the most important source of income for the state treasury, ensuring the operation of the state and the power of the king. The largest tax was the land tax, called *irai* or *kadamai*, which, according to Subbarayalu²⁷⁹, was collected from landowners who directly use the land. There were also other taxes collected from merchants, craftsmen and others. The collection of such taxes, in kind (such as paddy) or in money, required the arrangement of an effective bureaucracy from the local (*mandalam*, *valanadu*, *nadu*, *village*) up to the central level. The existing inscriptional documents, although numerous, provide limited detailed information about the implementation process and the individuals who collected taxes for the central court. High-ranking officials such as *adikaris* or *senapatis* were in charge of collecting local taxes with the help of lower-ranking officials.

Locally, the king appointed officials to head *the mandala* and *valanadu*. There is no clear evidence of recruitment of officials at lower administrative levels. Perhaps, the appointment of lower officials was the responsibility of respective local leading officials. Usually the *viceroys* at the head of the *mandalams* were princes appointed by the king. Under Kulottunga I, the office of *mandala-mudali* ("Chief of a *mandalam*") existed for only short period of time and it seems that on ascending the throne of the Chalukya-Chola kingdom he tried to replace the old *viceroys* with individual from outside the

²⁷⁷ Subbarayalu (2012: pp. 232-233).

²⁷⁸ Karashima (2014: pp. 131).

²⁷⁹ Subbarayalu (2012: pp. 233).

royal family²⁸⁰. At the lowest local level, there are officials called *ur-alvan*, *ur-paripallikinran*, *uril-ninran* or *ur-mel-ninran*, which all refer to officials who administer the village.

3.3. Vijayanagara: The changing picture of the concept of Kingship in the Vijayanagara kingdom

3.3.1. Rayas and their Royal family

The documents about the Vijayanagara kings, their royal families and their courts are rich, but often misleading. First, the inscriptions, like those of the Chola kings, often provide data on chronology, the relationship between monarchs and vassals, officials, and temples. Meanwhile, they provide very little direct details about the power, the role and the method of governance of the kings. However, based on the analysis of epigraphical materials, we can somewhat imagine the role and position of the king, royalty and officials in the political system of the kingdom.

Some semi-historical works in Kannada-language show views and ideas about kingship during the Vijayanagara period, for instances Nanjunda Kavi's *Ramanatha Charite* (ca. 1525) and *Shri Krishnadevaraya Dinachari*, considered as Krishnadevaraya's diary, one of the rare prose-works of Kannada literature, ascribed to Timmaya and Mallaya. In addition, the religious literary work *Karnataka Krishnaraya Bharata* (circa 1510) composed by Timmanna, a court poet under Krishnadevaraya's orders, based on *the Ramayana* also more or less shows some aspects of kingship during the period.

In addition, documents produced by foreigners visiting the kingdom, provide important and detailed informations from the perspective of outsiders. Another notable source is literary works, notably the poetry of King Krishnadevaraya of the Tuluva dynasty in the 16th century. These documents, together with archaeological evidences (e.g. temples, citadels, fortress, statues,) help to visualize a polity that existed for three centuries throughout much of southern India.

Many scholars like Stein and Karashima, by analyzing literary, epigraphical, and iconographical sources, have built up ideas and perspectives on the development of kingship (image of the king, his power, his role) in the history of South India – so to

²⁸⁰ Subbarayalu (2012: pp. 236).

say the evolution of kingship from the Chola to Vijayanagara. It is possible to build a new perspective on the development of political history of South India, from the ninth to the sixteenth centuries.

The king, the center of the political system, had ultimate power, including civil, military, and judicial ones. A distinguishing feature of the Vijayanagara kings was that they were always dealing with hostile military forces. The very first kings (Harihara I and Bukka I) earlier had been generals serving under the Hoysala or Kakatiya dynasties. To maintain their power, the kings established a political system based on military power and implemented foreign policies that served to consolidate that power.

First of all, like other Indian kings, the kings of Vijayanagara often bore very long titles mentioned in inscriptions. The noble title Mahamandalesvara, which began to be used for the Vijayanagara kings from the Harihara period onwards, is shown in an inscription²⁸¹ dating to 1346 in Shivamogga district. This title appears to originally have been used for a local chieftain only, as mentioned in the Arthasastra, having the meaning of viceroy. Could it be that the king at that time was not yet recognized as independent of the Kakatiya dynasties?

During the Vijayanagara rule, the king had an advisory council to help him effectively govern the kingdom, but the ultimate decision-making power remained with him. He was directly running the country, leading the army and in many cases commanding expeditions. Regarding the judicial power, there is evidence that the king was directly consulted to resolve disputes.

The king assigned territories to local lords – generals -, in return they were expected to be loyal and serve the king in military campaigns. It appears strange, that the Vijayanagara kings recruited many Muslims into their court and army, although for three centuries they did not stop fighting the northern states. In one inscription²⁸², Krishnadevaraya was called “The Sultan among Hindu kings”.

Vijayanagara Kings, like their predecessors from the Chola, Hoysala, Kakatiya or Chalukya times, meticulously carried out their religious duties.

The early Sangama kings are mentioned in the inscriptions that they made pilgrimages to the Sringeri shrine, Chikkamagaluru district, more than 300km southwest of the capital Vijayanagara. That Bukka I visited Sringeri and the ascetic monk Vidyatirtha,

²⁸¹ IVR, Vol. I: No. 7.

²⁸² EI, Vol. I: pp. 361.

the dynasty's religious advisor, is shown in the 1356 inscription at the Ganapati-Vagesvari temple²⁸³. His son, Harihara II also visited Sringeri to pay homage to Bharati-tirtha-sripada, leader of the temple council of Sringeri, as recorded in the 1390 inscription, probably after the mentor Vidyatirtha had died.²⁸⁴ Sringeri was considered a royal sanctuary, with land and taxes from the villages surrounding the temples granted from the Sangama dynasty onwards. Harihara I²⁸⁵, Bukka I²⁸⁶, Harihara II²⁸⁷, and Devaraya II²⁸⁸, members of the Sangama dynasty, are mentioned in inscriptions to have bestowed royal gifts of land and taxes on surrounding villages to temples or *mathas*, the monasteries that administered the holy places. Krisnadevaraya²⁸⁹ of the Tuluva dynasty, Srirangaraya III²⁹⁰ of the Aravidu dynasty did likewise.

The kings were advised, following the model of an ideal king in *Karnataka Krishnadevaraya Bharata*: "The king should keep the learned and religious brahmins happy and contented because (they) ensure prosperity to the kingdom, the king and his progeny".²⁹¹

From inscriptions, we come to know many details of royal donations to different kinds of religious institutions. Thus, the first king Harihara I, the eldest of the five Sangama brothers (during his reign hardly mentioned directly in inscriptions) is said in an inscription dating from 1346 (or 1348 AD)²⁹² to have given, along with his four brothers and his son-in-law, an income worth 150 gadyana gold coins from 9 villages to monks of a Hindu religious monastery (*matha*). In fact, the direct donor was a person named Vira Kikkayitayi, possibly a high-ranking official. Meanwhile, the remaining inscriptions of the king often speak of local officials granting land to their subordinates, making offerings to temples or issuing tax orders. For example, an inscription²⁹³ dating from 1339 AD, possibly the earliest inscriptions of Vijayanagara, mentions the title *Odeya* (meaning: lord or chief)²⁹⁴, viz. Lakkhanna-Odeya, giving orders to a merchant named Rayisetti responsible for taxes, to grant a sum to finance the lamp oil for the temple of

²⁸³ IVR, Vol. I: No. 36.

²⁸⁴ VR, Vol. 2: No. 515.

²⁸⁵ VR, Vol. II: No. 510.

²⁸⁶ VR, Vol. II: No. 511-2.

²⁸⁷ VR, Vol. II: No. 513-517, 519.

²⁸⁸ VR, Vol. II: No. 521-3.

²⁸⁹ VR, Vol. II: No. 527.

²⁹⁰ VR, Vol. II: No. 529-30.

²⁹¹ Kotraiah (2003: pp.36).

²⁹² IVR, Vol. I: No. 5.

²⁹³ IVR, Vol. I: No. 1.

²⁹⁴ Wagoner (1996: pp. 862).

Cennakesava in Aneganakere, Belur, the former capital of the Hoysala kingdom. Another typical case is an inscription²⁹⁵ referring to Harihara I's vassal Bhayanna of Somasvansa who built the city of Mangapura as well as a lake named Mangasamudra. Looking at the history of Vijayanagara over three centuries, it can be seen that there were many times when the king's power was weakened for various reasons, such as lust, being too young to take the throne, or failing in battle. At those times, there were troubles and chaos within the court, leading to the king being dethroned, sent to prison, and high-ranking officials or military commanders bringing a new king to the crown.

Krishnadevaraya

Krishnadevaraya, the younger half-brother of King Vira Narasimharaya (ruled 1505-1509) ascended the throne in 1509 when his predecessor died. At that time, he was about thirty years old. His coronation was celebrated on Sri Krishna's birthday, to convey the idea that the king was the embodiment of the God. The book *Shri Krishnadevarayana Dinachari*, considered a diary recording the king's activities, talked about that coronation ceremony as follows:

"The minister at the court of Vidyanagara (ie. Vijayanagara) respectfully suggested to Vira-Narasimharaya, then king, to nominate Krishnaraya crown prince. The king requested the minister to make the necessary arrangements, and at an auspicious moment he handed over his signet-ring. The preparations for the coronation ceremony were completed in due course. Present at the ceremony were the king's officers, nobles, scholars, learned persons of the court, astrologers, ascetics, elderly and young persons.

Then, as prescribed by the scriptures, the king was asked to give away valuable objects as an act of charity (by performing) the *shodasha-dana* .

The king also gave in charity the equivalent of his own weight in silver, pearls, gems and fabulous wealth; furthermore, he instituted gifts for several thousand families and others.

After that he was bathed in the holy water brought from the four oceans and from the rivers Ganga, Yamuna, Saravasti, Narmada, Godavari, Sindhu, Kaveri, Tamraparni and others.

Then gems were poured over his head. He donned a yellow silk cloth and was anointed with sandal paste, musk, saffron paste and *agaru* (yellowish fragrant

²⁹⁵ IVR, Vol. I: No. 4.

paste). He put on jewels set with the nine kinds of gems. He then visited the temples of Vitthala and Virupaksha and paid his respects to the gods. He also paid homage to the elders.

A golden band was tied on his forehead; he was taken to the state treasury and made to touch, as an auspicious act, the nine kinds of gems, heaps of which were stored there. Similarly, he was taken to the arsenal, to touch the weapons. He was then led to the throne and sat (for some time) in the audience. Finally he took leave of Narasimharaya and of (the minister) Appaji. Afterwards he dined in the company of his sons-in-law, sons, close relatives, torch-bearers and others.”²⁹⁶

Regarding the king personally, the Portuguese traveler and merchant Domingo Paes, who met him ten years later, described the king as having an average built, slightly overweight, but with a good figure, showing scars of a smallpox disease on his face. He had a cheerful personality but could also get angry. Paes judged that he was a perfect king, treated foreigners openly, and had a great career²⁹⁷. Those are rare details about the king’s personality. Paes’s assessment of the king’s good behavior towards foreigners appears reliable, for during his reign Krishnadevaraya had good relations with the newly arrived Portuguese who were based on the coast. In addition, the king used highly qualified people from the Muslim world in the Middle East in his court. Those officials of Muslim background were allowed to build Muslim-style castles in the capital city of Vijayanagara. They brought good knowledge and skills to serve the court.

Literary documents, such as *Shri Krishnadevaraya Dinachari*, also reveal other aspects about this great king, like describing his morning activities and other details. This book²⁹⁸ describes him waking up about an hour before dawn, listening to the words of philosophers and political scientists, then performing personal hygiene and praying and other religious activities. After that, the king listened to his officials report on the religious and military situation in the kingdom, the security situation and temples in the capital, financial matters, and he was informed about his envoys. Then the king met the ministers of his advisory council.

²⁹⁶ Kotraiah (2003: pp. 44).

²⁹⁷ Cited by Sastri (1958: pp. 267-8).

²⁹⁸ Kotraiah (2003: pp. 51-52).

Krishnadevaraya had two queens known from inscriptions²⁹⁹ as Tirumala-devi and Chinnaji-amma, who visited and offered offerings at the Tirumalai temple together with the king. None of his other wives is mentioned. With those two queens, he had three children, of whom Tirumalaraya succeeded him at the age of six but died just a year later. He is also said to have had a “beloved son” who was a *nayaka* mentioned in an inscription, dated in 1520, but was most likely rather an adopted son³⁰⁰.

Having just inherited the throne of Vira Narasimha (1505-1509), Krishnadevaraya faced the greatest challenges to the foundation of the kingdom he inherited. In the north, one of the five Muslim states, Bijapur, attacked, and in the south there was an uprising in Ummattur, near present-day Mysore. Through his military command, Krishnadeva repelled both threats, fortified the kingdom’s borders and quelled internal rebellion.

Not stopping there, around 1512, he also directly led his army to the east on an expedition to conquer the Gajapati kingdom. The Vijayanagara army captured the key fortress of Udayagiri and a series of other locations, capturing Prince Virabhadraraya, son of King Prataparudra of Gajapati. He returned to the capital and built a victory column. This event is recorded in many inscriptions, such as one dated to 1513, located at the Krishna temple in Hampi and two inscriptions dated to 1517 at Tirumalai temple in present-day Andhra Pradesh. He then set out to conquer Kalinga, the land under Gajapati’s influence, reaching as far as Bezawada (today Vijayavada city, Andhra Pradesh), occupying the Komdapalli fort in 1515 and capturing the nobles of this region. When he returned to the capital, he and his two queens visited the temple and worshiped at Sri Kalahastiswara temple (Tirupati district, present-day Andhra Pradesh state). This incident has been recorded in many inscriptions³⁰¹ at the Tirumalai temple, which today belongs to Tirupati district, Andhra Pradesh state. These inscriptions mention the king offering to the gods the spoils obtained from his expeditions. The war with Gajapati continued until 1519 when Krishnadevaraya once again defeated the army of that kingdom, firmly consolidating the territory captured from it.

In the war with the Muslim states in the North, Krishnadevaraya achieved some victories but also suffered losses at times. The biggest war in which he led the

²⁹⁹ SII, Vol. VIII: No. 495.

³⁰⁰ VI, Vol. II: No. 471.

³⁰¹ SII, Vol. VIII: No. 495; TTDI, Vol. III: No. 80/578 TT; EC, Vol. III (Rev. 197): Nj. 110, etc.

Vijayanagara army was the battle of Raichur, in the strategic land between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers, a place of fierce competition for a long time between the two most powerful forces on the Deccan plateau, Vijayanagara and Bahmani (inherited by the five Sultanates which were Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmadnagar, Berar, and Bidar). That event took place in 1520, between the Vijayanagara army led by Krishnadevaraya and the army of the Muslim emirate of Bijapur with the victory going to Vijayanagara. This victory played an important role in strengthening the northern borders of Vijayanagara and brought glory to Krishnadevaraya's reign.

Under the reign of Krishnadevaraya, the kingdom's territory reached its greatest extent when it captured most of Gajapati's territory in the northeast. This was also the period when Vijayanagara had to deal with another foreign problem, that of the Portuguese. The king was wise to take advantage of this relationship in the complicated historical situation at that time by purchasing war horses, an extremely important factor in consolidating his strength in the long war with the powerful Muslim forces on the Deccan Plateau.

Krishnadevaraya is considered a passionate patron of the arts. He supported poets and he himself is told to have composed poetry, although this is debatable. The literary works published during his reign are of high value until today, in terms of providing us with an understanding of political and social aspects, the society, philosophy and art of the Vijayanagara period.

Royal family

The royal family, in addition to the king, included queens, princesses, princes and other close relatives of the king. They also contributed to the king's running of the country.

During the Sangama dynasty, we see that the kings appointed princes as governors to rule over the kingdom's provinces. During the Saluva and Tuluva periods this practice changed. There are cases in which a member of the royal family holds great power in the province and later on returns to the capital to climb the throne.

Female members of the royal family are rarely mentioned in inscriptions or literary works. They are described as living in apartments on the highest levels of the palace, moving from apartment to apartment with their entourage. Literature (e.g. *Mohana Tarangini* (MT)) depicts how women sometimes go to high floors of palace towers,

where they find the necessary privacy to chat with their companions³⁰². The queen's entourage is described in *Ramanatha Charite* (RC):

“There was a lady carrying a pouch, others carrying a spittoon, a fan, a fly-whisk (or fly-flap), a mirror, sandals, yet another spittoon and others. An attendant puts anklets on the feet of the queen; another enhances her eyes with collyrium, a third applied a beautiful *tilaka* of fragrant musk on her forehead, and a fourth helped her to put on pearl earrings”³⁰³.

We know from inscriptions that Krishnadevaraya had two queens, viz. Tirumaladevi and Chinnaamma. However, other kings may have had more than two queens, as described in RC, a Kannada literary account:

“Some queens of the king's harem were as beautiful as Rati; they were not only charming but also intelligent and clever. There was one who was an excellent actress; a number of others were good dancers and musicians; some had a deep knowledge of literature and other classical works. All of them were endowed with feminine charm and grace in their talk, behavior, smile, gait and other qualities”³⁰⁴.

In inscriptions³⁰⁵, female members such as queens and the king's mother are also mentioned as those who granted land, exempted taxes or donated items to temples.

3.3.2. The Royal Court

Before turning my attention to the royal court of Vijayanagara, I want to give a clear overview of the different dynasties that formed the Vijayanagara Empire, by providing a chronological chart of the individual kings.

The Sangama dynasty

1336/1346-1357 AD	Harihara I
1344-1377 AD	Bukka I
1377-1404 AD	Harihara II
1404-1405 AD	Virupaksha I
1405-1406 AD	Bukka II
1406-1422 AD	Deva Raya I

³⁰² Kotraiah (2003: pp. 52-53).

³⁰³ Kotraiah (2003: pp. 56).

³⁰⁴ Kotraiah (2003: pp. 54).

³⁰⁵ ARE: No. 697 of 1922.

1422 AD	Ramachandra
1422-1424 AD	Vira Vijaya Raya ³⁰⁶
1424-1446 AD	Deva Raya II
1447-1465 AD	Mallikarjuna
1465-1485 AD	Virupaksha II ³⁰⁷
1485 AD	Praudharaya

The Saluva dynasty

1486-1491 AD	Narasimha Saluva
1491 AD	Thimma Bhupala
1491-1505 AD	Immadi Narasimha

The Tuluva dynasty

1491-1503 AD	Narasa Nayaka ³⁰⁸
1505-1509 AD	Vira Narasimha
1509-1529 AD	Krishna Deva Raya
1529-1542 AD	Achyutaraya
1542 AD	Venkata I
1542-1576 AD	Sadasiva

The Aravidu dynasty

1542-1565 AD	Rama Raya
1565-1572 AD	Tirumala I
1572-1585 AD	Sriranga I
1586-1614 AD	Venkata II
1614 AD	Tirumala II
1614-1618 AD	Sriranga II
1618-1630 AD	Rama Deva
1630-1641 AD	Venkata III

³⁰⁶ He is also called Bukka III (VR, Vol. I: pp. xv).

³⁰⁷ Karashima (2014: pp. 371) mentions him as Virupaksha III.

³⁰⁸ He was not a king but had a very important role in the establishment of the Tuluva dynasty. Since the accession of Saluva Narashima II, he was the de facto king and in 1505 AD his son Vira Narashima took the throne of Vijayanagara, started the Tuluva dynasty.

The royal court consisted of high-ranking officials, including those holding administrative, military, financial and religious positions. These people form a council with the function of advising and assisting the king in running the kingdom. A passage in the *Shri Krishnadevaraya Dinachari* (SKD) lists the attendees of a royal assembly as follows (in the presence of the king):

“Sons-in-law, princess, vassals, nobles, local leaders, palace officials, close royal relatives, poets, officials, cultural figures, scholars, monks, temple priests, astrologers, etc. A very large group of people representing the *seventy-two branches of art* participated in the meeting³⁰⁹.

The most important body of the royal court was the council of ministers, which was headed by a minister, bearing the title Mahapradhani or Mahapradhana. There were also people bearing the title Pradhani, Dandanayaka. These ministers were responsible for running court affairs under the guidance of the king. The appointment of these high-ranking ministers is not clear from documents that have survived to this day, but we can see some aspects of it. These officials all came from high social classes, and from noble families. They could concurrently hold high-ranking local positions such as being governors of provinces, as seen in inscriptions.

Regarding the selection process of officials, we see that they came mainly from the aristocracy. An exemplary minister is described in the *Karnataka Krishnaraya Bharata* (KKB) as follows:

“A good minister should be bold, courageous, liberal, of good character, popular with the subjects, learned, clever, trusted, pure, open-hearted, born into a brahmin family, knowledgeable about all religious and dharmic duties and of smiling countenance. In times of disputes, the king should entrust the responsibility of administering justice to the learned and religious brahmins. They should not succumb to bribes, but should discharge justice according to the *dharma* of the land and punish those found guilty.”³¹⁰

According to the above passage, an ideal minister should come from a family of brahmins, which, in fact, rarely happens, as they usually come from families of the

³⁰⁹ Kotraiah (2003: pp.52).

³¹⁰ Kotraiah (2003: pp.38).

aristocratic *ksatriya* level. Some officials at the central court were also of Muslim origin as mentioned in the section about the kings. Their Muslim-style palaces can still be seen today in the capital area of Hampi.

The king's courtiers reported daily work to help the king understand the situation of his kingdom. They also represent the king to handle specific affairs of the country. The relationship between the minister and the king is described in *the Karnataka Krishnaraya Bharata* as follows: "A wise and good minister should be completely trusted and the state affairs should be entrusted to him. He will always work for the prosperity of the king, the kingdom and its subjects."³¹¹

Through the inscriptions, we can also see that there were a number of minor officials such as the horse keeper³¹² or the king's personal staff³¹³. On behalf of the king, the staff went to Tirumalai temple and made offerings to the gods. It can be understood that in addition to the high-ranking officials mentioned above, besides the king there were also people holding low positions, serving specifically for the king and the royal family.

What we do not know is, what these officials received in terms of salaries. However, it can be understood that the source of money and items to pay them comes from tax revenue. It is possible that these officials received money and cash equivalents from the treasury, or they were entitled to collect taxes on the land they were granted. The council of ministers was allowed to have its own office (large as a palace) in the capital, as described by Abbdur Razzak who visited the empire in the fifteenth century³¹⁴.

High-ranking local officials such as governors had their envoys represent them in the capital, serving as liaisons between central and local governments. In some cases, local officials were also summoned to the capital to meet the king and report on their work.

³¹¹ Kotraiah (2003: pp.38)

³¹² VI, Vol. I: KN 261.

³¹³ TTDI, Vol. III: No. 27.

³¹⁴ Major (1857: pp. 25).

4. Administration

4.1. The Structure of the Chola Empire

4.1.1. Overview

During the reign of the Imperial Chola dynasty, which existed for more than four centuries (ca. 850-1279 AD), there were many fluctuations with regard to territory and administration. Furthermore, we see a long succession of kings, as pointed out in chapter two. The administrative system developed by the Chola dynasty actually became the foundation of many following systems in South India including the next “superpower” – Vijayanagara.

Nilakanta Sastri³¹⁵ in his important book on Chola history “The Cholas” suggested a particular method to study the local administrative system of the Chola. He analyzed inscriptional documents, from which he drew sketches of the political, social, and economic structure of villages during the Chola period: “And from the hundreds of Chola inscriptions that have come down to us, we see that under the Cholas the villages of Southern India were full of vigour and strength”.³¹⁶ He draws attention to village councils (one for the general village (*ur*), and in special cases a council called *sabha*, that functioned only for the brahmin part of the village in the case of a *brahmadeya*, see below) and their relationships with village resident groups, and with the central government through intermediate administrative levels. As for the intermediate administrative unit, he mentioned³¹⁷ it in the section about the government in the Chola kingdom. In it he wrote about *mandalam*, *valanadu* and *nadu* as intermediate level administrative units, ensuring that the localities were under the rule of the central Chola government.

Subbarayalu, on the basis of a survey of inscriptional documents, wrote the work “Political Geography of the Chola country” in 1973, in which he comprehensively and in detail treats about the administrative system of the Chola kingdom. In it, he made specific surveys about *mandalams*, large administrative units, variations in their names and boundaries. He also analyzed the foundation and role of the *valanadu*, an

³¹⁵ In the part “XVIII. LOCAL GOVERNMENT”: Sastri (1955: 486-519)

³¹⁶ Sastri (1955: pp. 486)

³¹⁷ In the part “THE CHOLAS: THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHOLA EMPIRE”: Sastri (1955: pp. 445-485)

administrative unit created by Rajaraja I, which made a great mark in establishing the bureaucratic regime governing the kingdom's territory. His detailed surveys of *nadu* and villages were similar. Subbarayalu basically maintained his views on Chola local administration as an efficient administrative system with the power directed towards the center right through his academic writing, as we can see from the collection of his articles named "South India under the Cholas" (published in 2012).

Veluthat³¹⁸ refers to *nadu*, as a territory that had an important socio-political role during the Chola empire and other contemporary states in South India. He analyzed its form as a territorial unit that arose from the spontaneous grouping together of farmers. It was recognized by the Pallava, Pandya and Chola states which turned them into administrative units. In turn, officials called *nattar*, who first had been spokesmen of the groups of farmers that initiated the *nadus*, became representatives of the respective states. From there, Veluthat argues that the Chola state and the contemporary Hindu states were largely decentralized but tried to achieve centralization against all centrifugal forces.

There are more scholarly opinions about different aspects of this administrative system. Karashima³¹⁹ in his analysis of the nature of the Chola state mentioned the *mandalam* in its bureaucratic setting and the *valanadu* as an attempt by the central government under Rajaraja I to increase the centralization of the state. Krishnaswami,³²⁰ when referring to the Tamil region under Vijayanagara rule, also mentioned and analyzed local institutions at the village level.

From inscriptional documents and from scholarly studies from over the past several decades, we can witness the opinion that at the apogee of the Chola dynasty, there existed four levels of administration, viz. 1. *mandalam*, 2. *valanadu*, 3. *nadu*, and 4. village³²¹. Each level of these administrative units has its own characteristics, which are reflected in inscriptional documents. The relationship between the central government and those administrative units creates a remarkable picture of the ups and downs of the history of the Chola kingdom. It can be seen that this administrative system, even though it fluctuated depending on historical periods, actually existed and

³¹⁸ "Nadu in the Socio-political Structure" in *The early medieval in South India* : Veluthat (2009: pp. 109-128).

³¹⁹ Karashima (2014: 131-3).

³²⁰ "Local institutions in the 14th and 15th centuries": Krishnaswami (1964: pp. 71-105) and Provincial Government and Feudalism: Krishnaswami (1964: pp. 161-195).

³²¹ For individual descriptions of these units, see below.

had the function of maintaining and consolidating the power of the Chola kings over the entire territory.

Besides, it is also necessary to mention a number of leaders of regions considered as vassals of the Chola. It helps distinguish clearly between areas directly ruled by the king and areas with a dependent relationship from the central government. Among them, the prominent Telugu Chola, a clan of leaders, also claimed to be descendants of the ancient Chola kingdom and have direct relationships with the Tamil royal court.

4.1.2. *Mandalam* and sub-divisions in the Cholas

The highest level is the *mandalam*, also named *padi*. The term *mandalam* had been used during the Classic Age to refer to parts of territories of the Chera, Chola and Pandya.³²² A *mandalam* formed the largest territorial division and was applied by Rajaraja Chola I. At the end of his reign there were nine *mandalams*, the names of which were often changed. Every *mandalam* comprised at least one big town, sometimes more. These towns were generally called *nagaram*.

Subbarayalu³²³ gives a list of the *mandalam* s that existed during the reign of Rajaraja Chola I. He enumerates Cholamandalam, including the big cities of Gangaikondacholapuram, Tanjore and Nagapattinam; Rajarajamandalam, also called Pandi-nadu, which refers to the Pandya around the city of Madurai; Kongumandalam with Karur as the main city; Gangapadi, located in today's Southern Karnataka, with Talakkad as the main city; Nulambapadi, also situated in South Karnataka encompassing the place of the source of the Kaveri river. A smaller *mandalam* Tadigaipadi or Vikramacholamandalam was obviously located within Nulambapadi; Marayapadi the northernmost of all the *mandalams* is situated in parts of today's Andhra Pradesh and Telangana as well as in North Karnataka; Jayangondacholamandalam, with the main cities of Kanchipuram and Nellore; Mumudicholamandalam, which was also called Ilamandalam and was situated in today's Sri Lanka and encompassing the cities of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. Some inscriptions mention one more region called Naduvilmandalam, which nevertheless was obviously not considered as a complete *mandalam*, it was situated between Cholamandalam and Tondaimandalam.

³²² Stein (1977: pp. 18).

³²³ Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 15).

As already stated, the concept of *mandalam* was applied by Rajaraja Chola I. With this step he obviously tried to ameliorate the administration of the by now vast Chola territory which belongs to the traditional Chola land on the Kaveri basin, the Pandya country, Kalinga in Northern Andhra Pradesh, Lanka, and the Maldives. Rajaraja Chola I also changed the names of the three most important parts of his empire:

- The former Pandinadu was named Rajarajamandalam
- The former Tondainadu was named Jayangondacholamandalam
- The former Cholanadu was named as Cholamandalam

Initially, the heartland of the Chola kingdom was called Cholanadu and was smaller in scope than Cholamandalam in the eleventh century.³²⁴ This provincial unit was the heartland of the Chola and attractive to many eyes. In this *mandalam* the connections between different patterns of administration are clearer than in any others.

During the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, there were some evidences³²⁵ for the viceroalties that existed for about five decades in the distant *mandalams*, especially with reference to Pandimandalam or Pandinadu. The viceroys were generally Chola princes. Kulottunga I (1070-1122 AD) sustained Chola power by paying more attention to domestic administration rather than to an expansion of the territories. During his reign, there was one special institution, the office of *Mandalammudali* (meaning literally the chief or head of a *mandalam*), which is mentioned in inscriptions.³²⁶ There are a few references from those inscriptions to royal orders being communicated to the *Mandalammudali* stationed in Gangamandalam (Mysore) and Pandimandalam (Pandya country). Probably he tried to replace the earlier viceroy by the office of *Mandalammudali* manned by non-royal personnel. The *naduvagai* (officers) at the *nadu* level have already been noticed. They were certainly government officials (revenue officials³²⁷), not functionaries of the corporate body of the *nadu* or *nattar*. There was another *nadu* official position called *nadukuru* who had the same function (settlement officials) like a *naduvagai*, according to Subbarayalu.³²⁸ He also mentions *nadukankani* officials who only had connection to temple affairs.³²⁹ Sastri noted that a *naduvagai* was a revenue official and a *nadukuru's* duties were connected with the

³²⁴ Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 14).

³²⁵ Subbarayalu (2012: pp. 236).

³²⁶ EC, Vol. XIV, Yelandur: No. 146.

³²⁷ Sastri (1955: pp. 456).

³²⁸ Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 42).

³²⁹ Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 43).

revenue survey and settlement of the *nadu*. Other positions such as *sanduvigraham*, *mahamatra*, *nattukkandu katchi* are also named by him, but their functions are not clear. These *nadu* officials represent the central government of the Chola that had strong influence on the district level of the administrative system.³³⁰

One inscription³³¹ in Yelandur taluk:

“[r]ecords the exploits and the conquests of the king; At the request of the Rajaguru, the king made Rājēndra-Chola–Chcharuppedimangalam and two other villages into an agrahara and granted the same as a tax free Brahmadeya to 108 caturvedibhattas with exemption from all imposts. subsequent in the 34th year of his reign at the request of Vesalipparaiyan he made addition to the former grant. The goddess Durga appears to have been set up at the same time by the order of the king.”³³²

However, Hall states that Kanchipuram since the times of the Pallava was the capital, perhaps as early as from the 3rd century CE, and the kings:

“[b]egan to extent their hegemony over that portion of the coastal plain known in ancient times as Tondaimandalam (the Sanskritized form of the Tamil Tondainadu, geographically corresponding to all or part of the modern Nellore, Chittoor, North and South Arcot, Salem, and Madras-Chingleput districts), networks of maritime commerce already connected that region with outside world”.³³³

And he also mentioned that during the last decades of the Chola rule, “Tondaimandalam became the theater struggles for over political supremacy”.³³⁴ It can be thought that this idea would be wrong by looking at the works of Subbarayalu and other scholars on the geographical political history of South India. Indeed, the term Tondaimandalam or Jayangondacholamandalam has only appeared onwards the reign of Rajaraja Chola I.³³⁵

Heitzman examines the Chola heartland’s inscriptions in five taluks: Kumbakonam, Tiruchirappalli, Tiruttraippundi, Tirukkoy(v)ilur, and Purukkottai. He insists that within

³³⁰ Sastri (1955: pp. 472).

³³¹ EC, Vol. XIV, Yelandur: No. 146.

³³² EC, Vol. XIV: pp. 9.

³³³ Hall (1980: pp. 88).

³³⁴ Hall (2011: pp. 148).

³³⁵ Subbarayalu (1973: pp.15); Veluthat (2009: pp. 111); Sastri (1955: pp. 111) mentioned Cholamandalam when Aditiya I (871-907) annexed the land from the Pallava but he did not state if the term existed already.

the traditional “Circle of the Chola” (Cholamandalam) we may expect the fullest possible record of political processes featuring the Chola kings.³³⁶

Naduvilnadu was a special case, sometimes equated with a provincial unit. The name means literally “the land in the center”. It was located between Tondaimandalam/ Jayangondacholamandalam and Cholamandalam or as suggested by Subbarayalu, it is located between the Pennai and the Northern Vellaru rivers. He states that the location is based on the presumption that the southern boundary of the Tondainadu was the Pennai river, the north of Cholanadu was called Vellaru. However, he mentions that the Tondainadu’s border was 40 miles north of Pennai and Jayangondacholamandalam reached the Pennai river. There were set up eight tribal chieftain units into *valanadu* by Rajaraja Chola I, the main factor in giving shape to the Naduvilnadu.³³⁷

Subbarayalu comes to the conclusion that:

“Naduvilnadu was at the first time only during the reign of Kulottunga Chola I. occurred and covered the whole territory which had been occupied by chieftain areas during pre-Rajaraja Chola I. days, North of the Gadilam and South of the Tondainadu. It reached the greatest extent at the end of the 12th century . But in the 13th century it was only a nadu”.³³⁸

This point is remarkable because it shows the decline of the central power when the chieftain areas have gradually lost their control, not only in the outer but also in the inner regions of the Cholamandalam. Naduvilnadu was a buffer zone between the royal core land and another *mandalam* (Tondaimandalam) where the royal court also lost control during the 13th century to local rulers of which the most prominent were the Telugu Chola.

The *mandalams* were large administrative units under Rajaraja I and his successors. In the Chola empire they were administrative units that came directly under the central court based in Thanjavur. Thus, a *mandala* of the Chola empire differed widely from the *mandala* political system known from other parts of India, in which princely states had a high degree of autonomy and only a loose relationship with the central government leader, or more accurately, with the leader of the alliance of states. The central Chola court actually administered these administrative units by appointing

³³⁶ Heitzman in Kulke (1995: pp. 161 - 194).

³³⁷ Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 83).

³³⁸ Idem.

important members of the court (such as princes) to head positions who had to keep close connection to the centre.

The second division is the *valanadu*. It denotes a territorial division, intermediate in size between *mandalam* and *nadu*. *Valanadu* was applied by Rajaraja Chola I, who reigned from 985 to 1016 AD. At his time the Cholamandalam, for instance, was divided into ten *valanadus*. By the 12th century it had increased to 15 divisions. *Valanadu* literally means “fertile country” and is often found in classical Tamil literature as an epithet of the Chola Country. Hence, it is mainly known as a literary term. However, from about 1000 to 1250 AD the term clearly denoted a political division. One *valanadu* normally contains several *nadus* or *kurrams* as mentioned in inscriptions.

First of all, it should be kept in mind, that Rajaraja Chola I was not the creator of the concept of *valanadu* as an intermediate administrative unit. *Valanadu* had in fact existed during the Pandya dynasty, in the late 9th century as seen from the inscriptions. He applied the concept of this division to strengthen his power.

An inscription³³⁹ at the Subrahmanyasvamy temple in Tiruchendur, Thoothukudi district, today’s Tamilnadu, dated around 875-879 AD, mentions the three *valanadus* Parantakavalanadu, Srivallabhavalanadu, and Amitagunavalanadu. It registers a gift of the Pandya king Varagunamaharaja II, alias Varagunavarman II (862-880 AD), of 1,400 *kasus*³⁴⁰ for maintaining the various annual requirements of the temple of Subrahmanya bhatarar. It mentions the recipients of the amounts which were assemblies (*urar, sabha*) of villages situated in the *valanadus*.

The *valanadus* appeared not before the reign of Rajaraja Chola I (985-1016 AD) in Cholamandalam, which was seen for the first time in an inscription dated Sunday, 1st December 989 AD.³⁴¹ According to Subbarayalu,³⁴² there are nine *valanadus* mentioned in inscriptions in the big temple at Tanjore. However, his survey showed that more than two *valanadus* were yet not mentioned, namely Umbalanadu and Karikalakkanna.

During the reign of Rajaraja I, there were ten *valanadus* within the Chola-mandalam which increased to fifteen in the early 11th century as a result of bifurcation and

³³⁹ SII, Vol. XIV: No. 16a.

³⁴⁰ *Kasu* means coin in the Tamil language: Nagaswamy (1982: pp. 69, 82, 110).

³⁴¹ EI, Vol. IX: pp. 207

³⁴² Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 57-58).

rearrangements³⁴³. Rajendra I introduced *valanadus* at Pandi-mandalam as well as at other *mandalams* and Kulottunga I extended this establishment to Tondai-mandalam.³⁴⁴

The grouping of *nadus* into the *valanadus* of Rajaraja Chola I demonstrates a more sentient control over localities. That also contributes to strengthening the king's power as I have mentioned in chapter two. This was distinct from Stein's opinion who thought that localities were a formal loyalty to the central government.

The *valanadu*s did not appear in the inscriptions after the reign of Rajaraja Chola I. Instead, the administrative *nadu* divisions are mentioned so often, even under Vijayanagara rule in the Tamil country from the late 14th century. The short existence of *valanadus* can be considered as the highest manifestation of the reign efforts towards the consolidation of central power. Although after the end of Rajaraja Chola I, this administrative unit no longer exists but the power of the central government remains unweakened. The weakening of the Chola court actually happened at the end of the 12th century when they plunged into the wars with neighbors.

The appearance of *valanadu* in the early eleventh century was an attempt by the Chola central government, headed by Rajaraja I, to strengthen centralized power and to effectively manage the kingdom's by then vast territory, strengthening also the king's position and facilitate the mobilization of resources for overseas expeditions.

The third one is the *nadu* (also called *kurram*³⁴⁵) which was considered as a subdivision of a *valanadu*. Each *nadu* comprised, on an average, ten villages. Some of the *nagarams* (see above) are found inside *nadus*.

Amongst the basic units of administration, *nadu* and village were two main terms which have been analyzed by many scholars for a long time in the 20th century. They have focused on the functions of those units to answer that very important question: How did the central government control its basic administrative units?

The term *nadu* appears in many inscriptions not only during the existence of the Chola dynasty but also in many other times. Today, one of the biggest states in India is named Tamilnadu. The term has two meanings. Firstly, in Dravidian languages, it characterizes a country and that definition had existed long time before the times of the Chola. In this sense, the term *nadu* is only a general notion of a vast land,

³⁴³ Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 66-7).

³⁴⁴ Subbarayalu (2012: pp. 214).

³⁴⁵ Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 19f.)

equivalent to the land concept in English. In the second sense, *nadu* is the official name of a local administrative unit, also known as *kottam* or *kurram*, which has surely appeared from the Chola dynasty onwards. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the existence and role of this administrative unit in need of prudent, avoiding confusion. Scholars acknowledge the extremely important role of the *nadu* in the Chola history in particular and in the medieval history of South India generally. However, the key difference is that they have different perspectives on the relationship of this administrative unit to the central government.

Normally, most *nadus* derived their names from the name of one of the villages within their territory. But according to Veluthat, “[t]here was nothing special about that village to qualify it as the “center” of the *nadu*, its “head-quarters”.³⁴⁶ That means the center of a *nadu* is not much different from other villages in the same administrative division. It seems to relate to the fact that the reorganization of *nadus* is quite frequent and does not create a real hub for it.

Stein³⁴⁷ assumes that the *nadus* existed “long before” the Chola empire. He believes that the Neolithic farming communities in the plains and uplands were the bases of these group lands that during the early centuries of the Christian era, even the *nadu* units were crystallized as is clear (to him) from the early Tamil literature. A major confusion has crept here regarding to both of the archaeological and literary evidence. He also criticized³⁴⁸ the idea that the Chola had a scheduled administration system. For him, the existence of *nadu* shows the state of power dispersion in the political structure of Chola in particular and of South India in general.

But according to Karashima³⁴⁹ in his examining the inscriptions of the Chola time, there is evidence for the existence of a bourgeoisie – like a machinery in the Chola administration or at least the effort of the kings of the middle Chola period (or in the heyday of the Chola as many scholars mentioned in the 1970s, 1980s) to centralize the government under a system. The most well-known example of that thinking is the assembling of *nadus* into a *valanadu*, bestowal of certain titles (Brahmarayan, Pallavarayan and Vilupparayan) on administrative officers. The creation of *brahmadeyas* by granting villages to Brahmanas in almost every *nadu* in the central

³⁴⁶ Veluthat (2014: pp.112).

³⁴⁷ Stein (1980: pp. 97-8).

³⁴⁸ Stein (1980: pp. 256-7).

³⁴⁹ Karashima (2014: pp. 133).

part of the kingdom suggests also that line of their policy. The Chola kings broke the autonomy of the *nadu* to try controlling the peasants directly through their own administrative machinery. That autonomous authority of the *nadu* had been the independent unit of production during the preceding Pallava and Pandyan period.

According to Subbarayalu³⁵⁰ the term *nadu* has a synonym called *kurram*. As both of them appear in many inscriptions on the same level, at least since the 10th century onwards. He argues that there are many epigraphical evidences³⁵¹ to prove that those terms denote the same level or can be mutually changeable. For instance, in one inscription³⁵² dated to 997 AD during the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, the village Chirupaluvur is said to be in Kunrakkurram and in the subsequent passage it is stated that another village, Tenpalanpadi, was in the same *nadu* to indicate that the village was in the same *kurram*. This inscription is in the caves on the Udayagiri and Khandagiri hills, near the village temple Ananta Vasu Deva, which was constructed later in the 13th century, in Bhuvaneshvar, in the state of Orissa.

During the first period of the Imperial Chola (ca. 850-985 AD), the kings were not the sole rulers of the country. There were a number of chiefs belonging to small, ancient lineages maintaining some sort of subordinate relationship with the superior Chola monarch. Those chiefs had their own territories clearly demarcated and named after their family names like Vanako-padi, Mala-nadu, and others. Their territories ruled by them were only small areas covering one or two *nadus* (about 100 sq.km.)³⁵³ but some others were vast areas that extended over town or more modern taluks.

The term *kurram* (also called *kottam*) was a territorial and administrative unit in the Chola kingdom. It comprises a group of villages which manages local affairs through the agency of an assembly *mahasabha* which was elected annually by an elaborate system. It exercised extensively the powers of local self-government, subject to the royal control, imposed local taxes, had its own local treasury and enjoyed full control over the lands of the Union. It also looked, through committees of its own, after tanks, gardens, maintenance of peace and dispensation of justice within its locality.³⁵⁴

It can be seen that Bhattacharya, in his "A dictionary of Indian history", does not mention that this term is on the same level as *nadu*. The author also believes that the

³⁵⁰ Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 19-20).

³⁵¹ SII, Vol. II: No. 70; SII, Vol. VI: No. 683; SII, Vol. XVII: No. 597; EI, Vol. XXII: No. 34.

³⁵² ARE: No. 236 of 1899; SII, Vol. VI: No. 687.

³⁵³ Subbarayalu (2012: pp. 129).

³⁵⁴ Bhattacharya (1967: pp. 534).

local self-government in the Chola kingdom worked with particular efficiency.³⁵⁵ He states that by the year 1300 AD there were about 140 *nadus* (or *kurrams*) in the Chola-*mandalam* only and about 65 units in the *Naduvilnadu* area.

The boundaries of a *nadu*, as far as it can be seen, are not clear because the *nadu* did not have natural boundaries, except in some special cases. Some of them had parts on both sides of a river. By analyzing epigraphic evidence, Subbarayalu³⁵⁶ has found that there were three types of *nadu* which had at least two subdivisions: *Kalarakurram*, *Pachchilkurram*, and *Poygainadu*. By calculating the average square of a *nadu* he gives an amount of twelve square miles.

Nadu was a prominent administrative unit during the history of Chola and other states in medieval South India, acting as an intermediate administrative unit, based on natural and socio-political conditions of the regions of the Chola empire.

The last level is the village. There were two different types of village. The first was the “normal” village in which the assembly functioned for the entire *ur*. This denotes the traditional peasant village, in which the majority of the village assembly was usually composed of *Vellalar* (a caste in the Tamil region³⁵⁷) landholders. The second was called *brahmadeya*. A *brahmadeya* usually was a gift of the king to a group of *brahmins*, usually situated in a fertile area. In a *brahmadeya* village, the village assembly was called by the Vedic denomination *sabha*.

In the first group of villages (*ur*), the village council had the role of representing all groups of its residents in handling internal affairs and in representing the village before the central government. The name *ur* means “village” or “town” or generally “settlement”. The council consisted of adult male members of the village. Besides that council, there were also different organizational institutions in the village, catering to the fields of religion, economics, and society. The *ur* council also existed parallel to *the sabha* in villages of the *brahmadeya* type.

Brahmadeya villages are special in the sense that the main part of the village, having been a gift to a group of Brahmins, was inhabited by *brahmanical* population exclusively. The council for the *brahmadeya*, called *sabha*, represented only the resident Brahmins, who were often favored by the central government. Often, they were endowed with land in order to enable them to practice their religious functions.

³⁵⁵ Bhattacharya (1967: pp. 551).

³⁵⁶ Subbarayalu (1973: pp. 22).

³⁵⁷ Kathleen (1981: pp. 29).

In these villages, between the 10th and early 13th centuries, there is evidence that an official appointed by the central government sat in the³⁵⁸ *sabha* councils when meetings took place to resolve problems. However, this official only gave suggestions on solutions based on *the sastras* and only the senior residents of the village were the ones who had the power to make the final decision.³⁵⁹

Regarding the concept of *Brahmadeya*, Burton Stein³⁶⁰ defines them as gifts to priests and other religious functionaries, also to help catering to the needs of pilgrims, if they were situated along pilgrimage routes. Gifts are generally understood to be a kind of investments on which the donor expects to receive a specified return, as the donation has created a religious merit. This concept is known as the rule of *karma*, according to which good deeds done in this life yield returns in the following rebirths. Moreover, the expected result was not meant for the original donors themselves, but for others such as parents, political or religious leaders. In case the king made a major donation, as for instance a *brahmadeya*, it may be for the wellbeing of the entire country and its inhabitants.

Villages under the Chola continued to maintain their autonomy. The inscriptional documents give us a clearer and more detailed view of the structure of villages during this period. We also see that the Chola state made efforts to intervene at the grassroots administrative level through state officials having close contact with the villages in matters of tax collection and the administration of land grants.

4.1.3. Chola and its Vassals: Chiefs and Feudatories in the later Chola period (12th -13th Centuries)

In order to clearly draw the boundary between the territories of the kingdom and the territories of vassals that have a dependent relationship with the central government, we need to observe whether the king has appointed officials to rule the land or not. Of course, as mentioned above, village-level administrative units are unique and essentially autonomous, but they are not the subject of consideration here. The vassal territories had a troubled relationship with the Chola government throughout the kingdom's history and each had its own characteristics.

³⁵⁸ Subbarayalu (2012: pp. 236).

³⁵⁹ Sastri (1955: pp. 499).

³⁶⁰ Stein in: Frykenberg (1969: pp. 183).

In the early stages of medieval Chola history (848-985), although the Chola royal family of the Kaveri region claimed the title of king, its power was limited only around the capital, as stated in the previous section of this thesis. It was only when Rajaraja I ascended the throne and conducted successful military campaigns that the king gained supreme power spanning the entire kingdom. This power was maintained until the late twelfth / early thirteenth centuries under the reign of King Kulottunga III. By the early 13th century, the power of the central Chola government actually weakened and local chieftains emerged, seriously threatening the existence of the kingdom. Govindasamy in his book *The Role of Feudatories in Later Chola History* gives a list of the “feudatories” of Chola as follows: The Kodumbalur Chiefs, The Paluvettaraiyar, The Miladudaiyar, The Bana, The Kongu Chola, The Kadavaraya, The Malayaman, The Sambuvaraya, The Yadavaraya, The Telugu Chola, The Muttairiyar. According to Karashima,³⁶¹ there were six chiefs: Yadava, Sambuva, Chedi, Kadava, Vanako, Arasu in the later Chola period in the South Arcot district.

The concept of “feudatories” needs to be carefully considered because it easily causes debate. Here, we do not consider the multiple connotations of that concept. However, one thing is very clear: the existence of local chiefs during the later Chola period, when the power of the central government weakened. Initially these local leaders still obeyed the Chola king. However, during the period when the king’s power gradually shrank back to the area around the Kaveri plains, the power of local chiefs became increasingly strong and interfered in the affairs of the politics. For example, in the case of the Pandya, they became the force to overthrow the last emperor of the royal Chola court.

The vast territories had a relatively loose relationship with the Chola central government, always depending on the strength of the Chola state at a particular time as well as its relationship with other states in South India.

At the end of the Chola kingdom, the local chieftains in their territories became increasingly powerful, causing the king’s authority to shrink. As a result, vassals emerged in power, leading to the collapse of the central government. Among them, the Pandya region stands out, when its leader rose up, proclaimed himself king and waged war against the royal court. Finally, the rise of vassal chieftains was one of the

³⁶¹ Karashima (2014: pp. 178).

reasons that led to the end of the existence of the Chola dynasty at the end of the thirteenth century.

4.2. Vijayanagara: Vijayanagara’s Administrative Structure

4.2.1. Overview: Three regions in Vijayanagara

Administrative units at the provincial level are of different kinds. There are regions situated very remote from the centre. Others are characterised by their proximity to the central court. And almost all individual regions possess specific historical and cultural features. Here, it is possible to temporarily divide these provincial administrative units into the following groups: Western Deccan highlands (Araga, Chandragutti, Mangaluru, etc); Telugu speaking region in the northeast (Kondaividu, Penugonda, Udayagiri, etc); Tamil region (Chandragiri, Padaividu, Madurai, etc).

Western Deccan highlands

The western Deccan highlands, or Kannada-speaking regions, are largely located in today’s state of Karnataka. These were provinces close to the capital Vijayanagara, like Araga, or situated near the west coast of the empire, like Mangaluru. Among them were provinces directly administered by the king, such as Araga under the Saluva and Tuluva dynasties. This area can be considered as the base of the power of Vijayanagara, where the presence of the king was felt more directly than in other regions. For this region, many *rajyas* are mentioned in inscriptions, among which were Araga, Haive, Tulu, Konkan, Mangaluru, etc.

An obviously important administrative unit, mentioned quite often, is Araga-rajya, also referred to as Araga-18 *kampanas*, or Araga-venthe/vemthe. According to Venkata Ratnam³⁶², this administrative unit today belongs to several taluks of Shimoga-, and Chikmagalur districts. This province is located to the west of the capital Vijayanagara. The table below shows how Araga-rajya is mentioned in the inscriptions in chronological order, along with the names of the governors and places in the province.³⁶³

Date of inscription – Kings	Governors	Sub-divisions
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³⁶² Ratnam (1972: pp. 10).

³⁶³ Here we rely on the collection of Vijayanagara inscriptions by BR Gopal Vol. I and II (1985), with references to older collections such as South Indian Inscriptions (SII) or Epigraphica Carnatica (EC). KN stands for Karnataka, AP stands for Andhra Pradesh and TN stands for Tamil Nadu for and the numbers on the back are the order of the inscriptions in the collection.

(Source)		
1363 – Bukka I (KN 2117)	<i>Mahāmandalēśvara</i> Vandagiri (Udayagiri) Viruppanna-Vodeya, prince, son of Bukkanna- Vodeya	Nagari fort
1368 – No detail about the king (Perhaps Bukka II ?) (KN 2110)	Probably Viruppanna- Odeya	Mudhuvanka-nadu
1377 – Bukka I (KN 2084)	Prince Udayagiri Virupannodeya, son of King Bukka I	Village Attigara, Nasavandu-nadu-division, Muduvanka-nadu
1377 – Harihara II (KN 1994)	<i>Mahapradhana</i> Madarasa-Odeya (ruled Araga, Gutti and the other <i>rajyas</i> of the <i>male-desa hill</i> <i>country</i>)	Harahali-nadu (?)
1386 – Harihara II (KN 33)	Prince Chikkaraya, son of Harihara II	Villages Kelamenasi, Besauru in Kikkunda- nadu; Sataligeaya-nadu
1387/1394 – Harihara II (KN 2122)	Sovanna-Vodeya	Hamlet Asaganahalli, village Kuravalli in Niduvala-nadu
1390 – Harihara II (KN 1987)	<i>Mahapradhana</i> Mallappa- Odeya	Neluvaloge-nadu
1396 – Harihara II (KN 2126)	<i>Unmentioned</i>	Muduvanka-nadu
1396-1397/ 1414/ 1424- 1425 – Devaraya I (KN 2124)	Rayanna-Vodeya	The village Kuta (Kunta)
1401 – Harihara II (KN 2092)	Jannarasa-Vodeya	Bikkavalli in Muduvanka- nadu
1402 – Harihara II	<i>Unmentioned</i>	Neluvalige-nadu

(KN 1995)		
1404 – Harihara II (KN 2130)	Vithanna-Odeya, minisster of the king	Village Mukta Hariharapura Beluru in Muduvanka- nadu of Araga-venthe
1404 – Harihara II (KN 2115)	Vitthappa-Odeya of the lineage of Sankappa Rayappa belongs to the Brahmakshatriya aristocratic group	Araga-venthe: Beluveya- nadu – village Kuduvalli <i>alias</i> Virupambikapura
1404 (Probably) – Harihara II (KN 2102)	Probably Vithappa-Odeya	Hombucha-nadu (?)
1405 – Bukka II (KN 2118)	Vithanna-Odeya of the Brahmakshtriya aristocratic group	Mandu-nadu Hombuchcha-nadu
1405 – 1406 King unknown, son of Harihararaya (II) (KN 2109)	The name of <i>the odeya</i> that ruled Agara is lost	Satalige-nadu
1407 – Devaraya I (KN 2098)	Kumara Vithanna-Odeya of the Brahmakshatriya lineage of Sankappa Rayappa family	Halavanahalli Mandanadu-30 in Hombuchcha-nadu-2
1407 – Devaraya I (KN 2125)	Vitthanna, son of Rayanna-Odeya	Muduvanka-nadu: the village Maiyse
1407-1408 – Devaraya I (KN 2087)	Rayyapodeva's Vithanna	<i>Unmentioned</i>
1412 – Pratapa Devaraya, son of Harihara II (KN 2113)	Linganna-Odeya of the Brahmakshatriya aristocratic group	<i>Unmentioned</i>
1417 – Pratapdeva- maharaya	Rayappa Vithanna- Vodeya	<i>Unmentioned</i>

(KN 2128)		
1417 – Devaraya I (KN 2127)	Vinthanna-Vodeya, son of Brahmadeva-Odeya of the Brahmakshatriya aristocratic group	Madavalige-nadu Satalige-nadu
1421 – Davaraya I (KN 2138)	Srigirinathadeva, son of Bommanna and grandson of Rayappa-Vodeya.	Hangara-bayalu within Hiriya-Holaluru Tirthamutturu in Kelabhagi of Santalige in Araga- venthe.
1422 – Devaraya I (KN 2135)	Srigirinathadeva	Hennangi Village, Bukkarajapura
Unknown date – Devaraya I (KN 2089)	Vitthappa	Belali and Kittaduru
1432 – Devaraya I (KN 2120)	Srigirinatha-Odeya, son of Rayappa-Odeya of Brahmakshtriya family	Satalige-nadu: Kolavali
1432 – Devaraya I (KN 2136)	The name of whose governor is lost	Bakkarayapura
1437 – Devaraya II (KN 2123)	Srigirinatha-Heggade	Malayala-matha.
1463 – Malikkarjuna (KN 2114)	<i>Unmentioned</i>	Santalige-magani
1463 – Malikkarjuna (KN 2082)	Srigirinatha, father of Devappa-dandanatha, a minister of the king	Niduvella-nadu of Santalige-magani: Saraballige village surnamed Gajabete Devarayapura, with the village of Hallivana.
Unknown date – Mallikarjuna (KN 2101)	Srigirinatha- Vodeya	Satalige-nadu: Kacharavali-Alageri – the

		village (?) Horakodamani (?)
1468 – Virupaksha (KN 2132)	<i>Mahāpradhāna</i> Devappa- <i>dannayaka</i>	<i>Unmentioned</i>
1502 – Narasinga- maharaya Saluva (KN 1954)	<i>Unmentioned</i>	Village Molaur
1560 (KN 2086) Sadasiva	Sadasivaraya- <i>nayaka</i> (of Keladi)	Aivattu-nadu: Bellagodu- agrahara <i>alias</i> Narasimhapura.
1566 (KN 1956) Sadasivaraya	Immadi-Sadasivaraya- <i>nayaka as māgaṇi</i>	Madavali and Nilamaneya

From the inscriptions listed above, we see that the lower administrative units that are located in the territory of Agara-rajya are: Mudhuvanka-nadu, Kikkunda-nadu, Niduvala-nadu, Neluvaloge-nadu, Neluvalige-nadu, Beluveya-nadu, Hombucha-nadu, Manduigenadu, Aduvalige-nadu, Madaluruvaldu and possibly some other regions but the administrative hierarchy is unknown.

Moreover we can see some notable points, like the following:

First, the governors of Agara-rajya were nobles with high status, directly attached to the royal family in the early days, like the princes. One inscription³⁶⁴, dated in 1386, under the reign of Harihara II, recorded that Prince Chikkaraya, the king's son, ruled over *Araga-rajya*. In this inscription the prince gifted to three vedic scholars 100 *varaha-gadyanas*³⁶⁵, taken from the villages of Kelamenasi, Besauru and their hamlets. These villages belong to Kikkunda-nadu. An additional amount of 50 *varaha-gadyanas* for the third scholar was taken from several villages of Sataligeya-nadu. So, here we see, that in Agara there are two *nadus*, Kikkunda-nadu and Sataligeya-nadu. Second, there was a period of nearly 30 years (1404-1432), in which the governors of this province were from the Brahmakshtriya aristocracy under the reigns of Harihara II and Devaraya I. By then, the position was hereditary.

³⁶⁴ VI, Vol. I: KN 33.

³⁶⁵ This refers to a kind of income, the actual nature of which is unknown to me.

Third, this provincial administrative unit is mentioned in many inscriptions during the reign of the kings of the Sangama dynasty. Meanwhile, at a later stage, it is mentioned sparingly during the Saluva dynasty (dated 1502³⁶⁶) and the Tuluva dynasty (dated 1560³⁶⁷ and 1566³⁶⁸). From this fact it appears that, while this administrative unit was highly appreciated by the Sangama dynasty, which was primarily concerned with consolidating power in the regions near the center of the kingdom, the focus shifted in later time to more far off regions.

There was a large coastal area including Konkana, Haive, Tulu and Nigire often referred to collectively as an administrative unit ruled by a governor, although in fact, these are the four individual *rajyas*. This administrative unit of four *rajyas* is a region rich in agriculture and maritime trade. Because of that, the Kings of Vijayanagara attached great importance to it and often sent nobles of high status and close ties to the court, to govern here. At some point in time, the king had to send his governors to put down a rebellion at Nagire and incorporate the territory into the region of the four *rajyas*. Thus, it can be seen that, although all four places are called *rājyas*, they are often taken together into one large administrative unit and ruled by one governor appointed by the king. The governors of this administrative unit all had very high positions, from the first to the third dynasties, as we can see from the inscriptions. It shows that the Vijayanagara kings attached great importance to the area, due to its important role in the empire's external trade system.

Konkana-rajya was an ancient kingdom that preceded the Vijayanagara period. The name Konkana refers to a coastal area now located in the so-called Konkan region in today's state of Maharashtra. One inscription³⁶⁹, dated to 1424, records that Harideva-Odeya, who was in the high position of a *mahāpradhāna* chief minister at the court of King Devaraya II, was appointed to govern Konkana. This proves that this region was highly valued by the king. The attachment of Konkana changed to different territories in the course of time, as we can see from inscriptions. Thus, KN 501, an inscription dated to 1369 and KN 1953 an inscription dated to 1367, state that Idugundi, Konkana and Hoysala were bordering kingdoms of Agara and Gutti; KN 1969, an inscription³⁷⁰ states that an individual called Bachanna-Vodeya was holding the title

³⁶⁶ VI, Vol. III: KN 1954.

³⁶⁷ VI, Vol. III: KN 2086.

³⁶⁸ VI, Vol. III: KN 1956.

³⁶⁹ VI, Vol. I: KN 915.

³⁷⁰ VI, Vol. III: KN 1969.

mahamantrisvara and governed the Konkana-rajya and Chandragutti-rajya from Gova-nagara.

Moreover, the situation of Haiva-rajya, a part of Tulu-nadu, is comparable to Konkana. Tulu-nadu is often said to be composed of the two parts Haiva and the land of Tulu, combined together. Nagire, in particular, was at times part of this region, at times detached, and it even rebelled against the central court, as mentioned in the inscriptions of the reign of Achyutadevaraya of the Saluva dynasty of Vijayanagara.

The Telugu speaking region

The Telugu speaking region in the north-east of the country includes the region of Penugonda, geographically near to Vijayanagara, including the town named Penugonda, which later became the capital of the Aravidu dynasty (1565-1646). Under the Tuluva king Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529), the new province of Kondavidu was added.

The Telugu region, according to some controversial opinions, is the birthplace of the Sangama dynasty. The most noticeable thing is that this is where Vijayanagara's military campaigns took place to occupy the northeastern lands and annex them to its territory.

The table below lists some administrative units located within the Telugu speaking Kondavidu region and thus complements the table of the Kannada speaking region given above:

Chronology (Source) King's dynasty	Governor	Subordinate administrative units
1494 – not mentioned king AP 530	<i>Not mentioned</i>	Village Pallam
1534 - Achyutadevaraya AP 651	<i>Not mentioned</i>	Three villages: Poliva, Valli and Manganur
1535 - Achyutadevaraya AP 669	<i>Not mentioned</i>	Tirumalai
1535 – Achyutadevaraya AP 673	<i>Not mentioned</i>	<i>Not mentioned</i>

1538 - Achyutadevaraya AP 878	<i>Not mentioned</i>	Three villages Chirala, Parala and Andupalli in Addanki-sirmai
1544 - Achyutadevaraya AP 900	<i>Not mentioned</i>	Three villages Chirala, Parala and Andupalli in Kondavidu-sirmai
1546 - Sadasivaraya AP 785	<i>Not mentioned</i>	Sendaluru (and two villages belonging to it but not specifically mentioned)
1548 - Achyutadevaraya AP 932	<i>Not mentioned</i>	Village Vankayalapattu, surnamed Sriramachandrapuram
1554 - Sadasivaraya AP 938	<i>Not mentioned</i>	<i>Not mentioned</i>
1594 – Venkatapatideva- maharaya AP 955	<i>Not mentioned</i>	<i>Not mentioned</i>

The Tamil country under Vijayanagara: history, local administration and conflict

I am focusing here mainly on the old territory of the Chola kingdom, which at Vijayanagara times still possessed many traces of the old dynasty and was conquered only at the end of the 14th century by general Kumara Kampuna. He was a prince, son of King Bukka I (1357-1377), who conducted the so-called southern campaign. He initially captured chieftain Sambuvaraya in the Kanchipuram region and later invaded the Madurai Sultanate. This last incident took place around the 1370s. For about a century (1370-1485) the Tamil region was thus under the rule of the Sangama, and the region was peaceful and witnessed few changes. By 1485, Saluva Narasimha, who had been appointed governor of Chandragiri by the Sangama dynasty for many years, overthrew this dynasty and ascended the throne, establishing the Saluva dynasty.

In 1531, the Brahman-born chieftain Saluva Narasimha Nayaka, also known as Chellappa, who had ruled the region since 1510, joined with Tamil chieftains to rebel

against the Vijayanagara central court ruled by Achyutadevaraya. It is important to know that during the reign of Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529), governor Saluva Narasimha Nayaka was given noble titles and enjoyed many special privileges from the great emperor. From inscriptional data we can see, that Saluva Narasimha Nayaka granted lands without using the king's name. On the other hand, he sent tribute and military support to the capital, especially to Achyuta in resisting the plot of Rama Raja, the king's brother-in-law. But then Rama Raja replaced officials who were loyal to the emperor, such as Chellappa, with others who served himself. According to Burton Stein's interpretation³⁷¹, the reason for Chellappa to rebel against Achyuta was rather the success of Rama Raja's plot to separate the king from his loyal assistants and not any dissatisfaction with the emperor's interference with Chellappa's right to establish and protect religious offerings in the Chola country.

Chellappa's rebellion was crushed in 1532 and Achyutadevaraya appointed a new governor, Salakaraju, related to the emperor's family by marriage, who ruled the Tamil region until 1543. Initially Salakaraju obeyed the emperor. An inscription³⁷² dated 1533 shows him donating two villages to the Chennakesvara temple, of which he renamed one village after the emperor, Achyutarayapuram. Another inscription³⁷³ also dated 1533 says that he was given a *nayankara* territory by the emperor. However, he also rebelled against the emperor and consequently was suppressed.

The Vijayanagara kings, as far as available inscriptional and literary documents indicated, never set foot into Tamil land. They often sent princes and courtiers to rule this region, like a governor or viceroy. The problem was to control this representative and the king often appointed members of the royal family (but sometimes they still rebelled against the central government).

After the fall of the Tuluva dynasty in 1565 marked by the battle of Talikota, the Tamil region came under the influence of the Aravidu dynasty with its capital at Penugonda. However, the Tamil *nayakas* became increasingly powerful and established their own zones of influence, prominent among which were the Madurai, Thanjavur and Senji *nayakas*. Formally the *nayakas* still declared allegiance to *the rayas* in Penugonda but in reality they had established independent kingdoms. These kingdoms survived until

³⁷¹ Stein (1989: pp. 50).

³⁷² SII, Vol. XVI: No. 103.

³⁷³ SII, Vol. XVI: No. 106.

the early eighteenth century, when the Mughal dynasty extended its power far into South India.

The Tamil region can be divided into two: the northern region included provinces such as Padaividu and Chandragiri; the southern region comprised the Kaveri river delta and the Pandya country. In this region, the provincial administrative unit is often called *chavadi* or *uchavadi* and rarely *rajya*, even though they share the same provincial administrative hierarchy. According to Subbarayalu and Rajavelu³⁷⁴, there are five *uchavadis* in this country, including: Chandragiri, Padaividu, Valudilampattu, Tiruchchirappalli and Tiruvarur.

Krishnasvami³⁷⁵ and Ratnam³⁷⁶ claim that the Tamil country had five *rajyas* under the reign of King Krishnadevaraya: Chandragiri-rajyam, Padaividu-rajyam, Tiruvadigai-rajyam, Chola-rajyam, Madura-rajyam or Pandya-rajyam. The name Chola-rajyam is suspicious because it does not appear in inscriptions of the Vijayanagara period.

Chandragiri was originally the northern region of the old Chola empire. Inscriptions from the Chola period mentioning this place are mostly written in Tamil. Chandragiri was also the capital of the Aravidu dynasty (1592-1604) when Penukonda was attacked by the Golconda Sultanate. On the other hand, the name Jayankonda-chola-mandalam is still mentioned quite often.

As an example for the depiction of administrative hierarchy of Tamil regions under Vijayanagara, I here offer a table that lists the inscriptions³⁷⁷ mentioning Chandragiri under Vijayanagara from 1427 during the Sangama dynasty to 1606 during the Aravidu dynasty.

Chronology (Source)	Governor	Subordinate administrative units
King's dynasty		
Shift. 1415 (TN 234) – Devaraya I	<i>Unmentioned</i>	Four villages: Cundakkayi, Kovattakkudi, Todaiyur, and Karungulam (?)

³⁷⁴ Subbarayalu, R and Rajalu, S (2014: xviii).

³⁷⁵ Krishnasvami (1964: pp. 161).

³⁷⁶ Ratnam (1972: pp. 10).

³⁷⁷ Source: *Vijayanagara Inscriptions* (1985-1996), B.R. Gopal (ed.), 4 Volumes, Mysore: Directorate of Archaeology and Museums; Subbarayalu, Y. and Rajavelu, S. (2014), *Inscriptions of the Vijayanagara Rulers*, Volume V, Part-I (Tamil Inscriptions). AP stands for Andhra Pradesh and TN stands for Tamil Nadu.

1462 (AP 485) Saluva Narasingaraja-udaiyar	It seems that Saluva Narasingaraja himself was the governor because at this time he was not crowned king. He was considered a vassal of the Sangama dynasty rather than a royally appointed governor.	Sattakkudi
(AP 487) Saluva Narasingaraja-udaiyar year unknown	Saluva Narasingaraja-udaiyar himself acted as governor	Tirupati
1462 – Mallikarjuna TN 423: 348	<i>Narasingaraja-udaiyar?</i> <i>Not mentioned</i> (but mentions two <i>sadam military officers</i> named Koneri and Ulagalandavelan)	Narayanapura-parru?
1464 (AP 489) The king's reign is unknown	Saluva Mallayadeva, son of Saluva Erra-Kampayadeva, brother of Periya Mallayadeva-maharaja	Villages Ilamandiyam and Vikramaditta-mangalam (It is unclear whether these two villages are actually located in Chandragiri-rajya or not) Village Elambakkam
1464 – Mallikarjuna TN 430: 355	<i>Mahamandalesvara</i> saluva Mallayadeva-maharaja, son of Saluva Errakampayadeva-maharaja	<i>Unmentioned</i>
1468 (AP 498) Saluva Narasingadeva-maharaja	<i>Not mentioned.</i>	The village Agaram-Murukkampattu in

		Tanigai-nadu within Narayanapurapprru
1468 (AP 499) Saluva Narasimha	<i>Not mentioned.</i>	The four villages: Vanjipakkam, Mallimalai, Selaikkur and Bhimapuram in Kilaippadai-nadu
1468 – Saluva Narasimha I ? not yet ascended the throne TN 367	<i>Is it Saluva Narasimha?</i>	The villages: Vanjipakkam, Mallimalai, Se(lai)kkur and Bhimapuram in Kilaippa-nadu
1510 (AP 280) Krishnadevaraya	<i>Unmentioned</i>	<i>Unmentioned</i>
1513 (AP 573) Krishnadevaraya	<i>Not mentioned</i>	Villages Chatravati, Darada, Karrakampevati
1522 (AP 1005) Krishnadevaraya	<i>Unmentioned</i>	The village Sanganapalli in (Mudalich)-chimai, a division of (Padi)-nadu
1532 (AP 863) Achyutadevaraya? Unclear	Rama-bhattar, son of Bhutanatha Sishtabhattar	<i>Unmentioned</i>
1537 (AP 1014) Achyutaraya	<i>Unmentioned</i>	Krishnarayapuram
1541 (AP 1016) Achyutaraya	<i>Unmentioned</i>	Krishnarayapuram
1541 (AP 1018) Achyutaraya	<i>Unmentioned</i>	Krishnarayapuram
1554 (AP 938) Sadasivaraya	<i>Unmentioned</i>	<i>Unmentioned</i>
1606 (AP 959) Venkatapatideva- maharaya I	<i>Unmentioned</i>	The village Timmapuram

The name of the governor of Chandragiri, notably Saluva Narasimha, is rarely mentioned. He was appointed as *mahamandalesvara* of Chandragiri by the court and he constantly increased his power. In 1485, he overthrew the Sangama dynasty and founded the Saluva dynasty (1485-1505).

A noteworthy point is that the name Jayankonda-chola-mandalam, which appeared during the Chola period, is still often mentioned in inscriptions as we can see in the table above (in the years 1450, 1537, 1547). However, it is not an official administrative unit and its extension wider than that of Chandragiri-rajya. It shows that the imprint of the administrative system of the Chola period is still preserved for a long time.

Padaividu's territory was largely part of Tondai-mandalam during the Chola period. An inscription³⁷⁸ dated in 1449 during the reign of King Deva Raya II states that Padaividu-rajya was located in Tondai-mandalam and there was a great meeting of *nattavar* and *mahajanam* of Padaividu-rajya. *Mahajanam* was probably a *rajya* official appointed by the royal court. The details of the inscription, unfortunately, have been lost, so it is unclear what the content of that meeting was and how the central government managed it with the provincial unit.

Overall, the Tamil country was a land rich in agriculture and commerce and thus important for Vijayanagara. Due to its remote geographical location from the capital and more importantly, due to very strong local forces, the Vijayanagara court introduced soft and flexible policies towards this region. To say that Vijayanagara enjoyed little of the benefits of Tamil prosperity is an understatement. Tamil lands have always been an important part of Vijayanagara, despite upheavals in dynastic politics.

4.2.2. Rajyas and Sub-divisions in Vijayanagara Empire

The territory of Vijayanagara was the largest of all the Hindu states that have ever arisen in South India, inhabited by groups of people who spoke different languages of the Dravidian language family. On the other hand, due to its formation and territorial expansion, Vijayanagara had a landscape that stretched from the Deccan highlands to the Tamil plains and along the coastlines in both the west and the east. All those factors required constant and vigorous efforts from the kings who ruled from Hampi to manage their kingdom and utilize the rich resources to their full extent.

³⁷⁸ IVR, Vol. V, Part I: TN 370.

Excluding the Vijayanagara capital area, the kingdom was divided into so-called *rajyas*, which literally means *kingdoms*, but served, in modern terms, as administrative units on the level of provinces. However, there are scholars who argue that *rajya* is not the only term of the provincial administrative unit under the authority of the court. T.V. Mahalingam³⁷⁹ states that *rajya* is also known as *mandalam* and *nadu*, to which later, A.V. Venkata Ratnam³⁸⁰ agreed. Venkata Ratnam moreover remarks that concepts such as *sime*, *sthala*, *valita* and *venthe* replace the concept of *rajya*, and he further states that they are used to indicate the smaller administrative units located within a *rajya*³⁸¹. However, B.R. Gopal³⁸², while compiling the inscriptions of the Vijayanagara period, considered this statement as to be too vague. He argued that those terms refer to administrative units with a hierarchical order from high to low and in some specific cases the epigraphs referring to the above units contradict each other in terms of administrative relationship between them³⁸³. Noboru Karashima argued that, especially in the southeastern part of the kingdom, the provincial administrative unit was called *rajyam* with its headquarters called *chāvadi* or *uchāvadi*, but there were cases where the use of the denominations of the two concepts are interchangeable³⁸⁴. Burton Stein³⁸⁵ rarely mentions this administrative system specifically, but he states that the term *rajya* refers to the provincial unit. Thus, *rajya*, being the most obvious, common and widely accepted term, denotes an administrative unit under the direct control of the central government, or a provincial administrative unit. Moreover, there are administrative divisions in the Deccan region associated with the terms “18 *kampanas*” (e.g. Araga 18 *kampanas*, Gutti 18 *kampanas*), *durga* (e.g. Guttidurgarajya), or with large numbers (e.g. Kalasa 1000) all being equivalents of *rajya*. Meanwhile, the terms *sime*, *sthala*, *valita*, *venthe* and also *nadu* are rarely used to refer to these administrative units on a provincial level, but in most cases they denote subdivisions of *the rajya*. Therefore, when looking specifically at each provincial administrative unit and the administrative units which come below them, extreme caution is required. The most secure approach is to stick to the place name rather than to the accompanying terminology.

³⁷⁹ Mahalingam (1940: pp. 279-280).

³⁸⁰ Ratnam (1972: pp. 9).

³⁸¹ Ratnam (1972: pp. 10).

³⁸² VI, Vol. I: pp. xxi.

³⁸³ VI, Vol. I: pp. xxi-xxii ; Vol. II: pp. xlix-lv; Vol. IV: pp. xxiv-xxvi

³⁸⁴ Karashima (2014: pp. 199-200).

³⁸⁵ Stein (1989: pp. 42).

In the case of *the mandalam*, the large administrative unit of the Chola period, it was clear that it could not be used as a substitute for the provincial administrative unit called *rajya*, just like in Tamil inscriptions of the Vijayanagara-era, *mandalam* is mentioned quite often to refer to larger areas than the *rajya*. There is one exception, when in Vijayanagara-inscriptions the terms Chola-mandalam and Chola-rajya were sometimes used to refer to one and the same administrative unit, denoting only the region surrounding Thanjavur. But it should also be noted that this is a special case because this administrative unit was the center of the former Chola kingdom, so the old administrative division was still influential in the Vijayanagara period.

The number of *rajyas* increased with the expansion of the kingdom's territory. Inscriptional sources show that the places associated with the term *rajya* in today's states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana numbered about seventy³⁸⁶. However, in reality, at the same time, the number of *rajyas* was not as large, since there are some places denoted as *rajya* only a few times (such as Nalluru-rajya, Navila-nada-rajya, Sode-rajya, etc.), whereas in combination with other place-names, the term *rajya* is used throughout the history of Vijayanagara. Venkata Ratnam gives a list of 24 *rajya* administrative units, as well as their territorial extent over modern administrative units. In Tamil, there are at least five *rajyas*: Chandragiri-rajya, Padaividurajya, Tiruvadigairajya, Cholarajya and Madurarajya/ Pandyarajya³⁸⁷.

The administrative boundaries of the *rajyas* were generally stable. Changes may have occurred depending on dynastic politics, administrative needs, or other reasons.

Compared with the large administrative divisions of the Chola period such as *the mandalam* in the Tamil region, *the rajya* of the Vijayanagara period was smaller. For example, Chandragiri-rajya in northern Tamil region is mentioned as being an administrative division such as *valanadu* or *kottam* in Jayagonda-sola-mandalam³⁸⁸.

The officer installed as the head of a *rajya* carried the role of a governor appointed by the central court. At first usually only members of the royal family were considered for this post. For example, in Araga-rajya (located in present-day Shimogga and Uttara Kannada territories) several members of the Sangama royal family were appointed governors: Marappa-vodeya, the youngest brother³⁸⁹ of Harihara I and Bukka I;

³⁸⁶ See Appendix.

³⁸⁷ Krishnaswami (1964: pp. 162). He is uncertain whether Thanjavur and Tiruccirapally together are one or two *rājyas*.

³⁸⁸ VI, Vol. IV: AP 448-449.

³⁸⁹ EC, Vol. VIII: Sb 375.

Vandagiri (Udayagiri) Viruppanna-vodeya³⁹⁰, prince, son of Bukka I; Prince Chikkaraya-vodeya³⁹¹, son of Harihara II.

As the territory expanded, especially after the conquest of the Tamil region, the Vijayanagara kings broadened the group of people from whom to appoint governors. They are high-ranking officials at the central court such as chief minister, ministers and other members of high-ranking noble families with close ties to the royal family. This policy of expanding the composition of those appointed as governors has actually been a practice since the reign of King Devaraya II. Territorial expansion required a larger number of governors to govern the newly established provinces, while the number of high-ranking and capable members of the royal family that could accommodate that requirement was limited. Harihara II appointed Vithanna-Odeya³⁹², a minister, as governor of Araga. This governor belonged to an aristocratic group called the Brahmakshatriya, many members of which continued to serve as ministers and governors of Araga under kings Harihara II³⁹³, Bukka II³⁹⁴, Devaraya I³⁹⁵ and Devaraya II.³⁹⁶ After conquering Kondavidu in 1516 from the Bahmani kingdom, Krishnadevaraya appointed the prime minister Saluva Timma³⁹⁷ as governor of this new province.

They possessed many titles, including *mahamandalesvara*, *pradani*, *mantri* or *rahyam-karta*, etc. According to Karashima³⁹⁸, they are assisted by from personal of the military with the title of *adikaris*. Karashima enumerated the rajyams in the southeastern part of the empire (South Andhra Pradesh and northeastern Tamil Nadu) as follows: Penugonda, Muluvay, Chandragiri, Padaividu, Kunrattuor, Vazudilampattu, Tiruvarur, Rarapuram and the uchavadis or headquarters of these.

According to Sastri, the governors of the provinces appointed from the center were more like the military commanders of a strategic fortress than ordinary civil servants of the court³⁹⁹. He also argues that the boundaries of the *rajyas* change over time to

³⁹⁰ VI, Vol. III: KN 2084, KN 2108, KN 2117.

³⁹¹ VI, Vol. I: KN 33.

³⁹² VI, Vol. III: KN 2130.

³⁹³ VI, Vol. III: KN 2115, KN 2130, KN 2102.

³⁹⁴ EC, Vol. VIII: TI. 126.

³⁹⁵ EC, Vol. VIII: TI. 1, 122, 190.

³⁹⁶ VI, Vol. III: KN 2123.

³⁹⁷ VI, Vol. I: KN 237; Vol. II: KN 764.

³⁹⁸ Karashima (2014: pp. 200).

³⁹⁹ Sastri (1955: pp. 298).

suit management needs⁴⁰⁰. This position of his may need to be examined more closely, although it is reasonable to see that during their existence before 1565, these provinces had a certain change in boundaries. Sastri unfortunately failed to specifically mention the names or administrative boundaries of these provincial units. Meanwhile, on the basis of epigraphical survey, scholars such as Venkataratnam, Noboru Karashima, Cynthia Talbot, Burton Stein and others have devoted much effort to clarify the administrative system of Vijayanagara.

Basically, a governor runs only one provincial unit. In some special cases, however, there were governors who ruled over two or more provinces. An inscription⁴⁰¹, dating to the year 1475, in the village of Kantavara, Udupi Taluk, records that Vitharasa-odeya was ruling Barakuru and Mangaluru-rajya, although before and after that year he is recorded as ruling only one of those two *rajyas*. Another Inscription⁴⁰² from the reign of King Harihara II, in the year of 1396, says Chikka Mallappa- Voḍeya ruled both Tulu, Haive and Konkana *rajyas*. These three provincial administrative units were all located in the western coastal territory of the empire. This noble house had the title *voḍeya/wodeya/odeya* (literally *warrior* in Kannada), referring to those who were high in the nobility. An epigraph⁴⁰³ dated 1526, from the reign of King Krisnadevaraya, now kept in the Dharwar district museum, Karnataka, records that a person, Mahābaladēvi Padumaladēvi-amma, ruled over the four *rajyas* Nagire, Haive, Tulu, Konkaka and several other *rajyas*. Thus at least this aristocratic woman is recorded as ruling more than 4 administrative units at the provincial level. The other *rajyas* mentioned by the inscription are currently unknown. Most likely this woman was the queen mother or spouse of the king. Another inscription⁴⁰⁴ in 1542 speaks of a *mahamandalesvara* who ruled over Haiva, Tulu and Konkana, while one inscription⁴⁰⁵ in 1547 says that Saluva Krisnadevaraya-vodeya was similar to the above but occurred during the reign of Achyutadevaraya, adding Nagire and he has his capital in Gerasoppe. The official's mother is mentioned in the inscription along with her four brothers, all of whom were children born to Mallidevi of Nagire. Thus, at least three generations of the governor who ruled this region were originally from the Nagire region. On the other hand, Nagire

⁴⁰⁰ Sastri (1955: pp. 298).

⁴⁰¹ VI, Vol. II: KN 1011.

⁴⁰² VI, Vol. II: KN 1105.

⁴⁰³ VI, Vol. II: KN 664.

⁴⁰⁴ VI, Vol. II: KN 900.

⁴⁰⁵ VI, Vol. II: KN 901.

was not always administered together with the other three regions and there are inscriptions such as one inscription⁴⁰⁶ in 1530 which records that the governor of Haduvali-rajya once invaded Nagire-rajya led by Immadi Saluva Krishnadevaraya-vodeya ruler, who may have been the governor in the 1547 epigraph mentioned above. It shows that the boundaries of the administrative units of Vijayanagara in this case have certain fluctuations over time, but here specifically, we see that the Nagire region is sometimes a separate province belonging to the region including the four rajyas mentioned above. It is possible that the king had to mobilize military forces from neighboring localities to conquer and incorporate this country into the administrative system of the empire.

The main task of the governors was to head the provinces on behalf of the king, wielding military, judicial and tax-collecting powers. Although they were controlled by the central government, they had their own territories, crowns, and armies. Basically, within their territory they were entitled to decide on their own on matters of governance provided, they fulfilled their obligations to the central court and showed allegiance to the kings. To avoid regionalization, the Vijayanagara kings often rotated governors from one province to another. Accordingly, the power of the central government was guaranteed. We can say that the political institutions of Vijayanagara were not similar to the decentralized feudalism in medieval Europe, as some historians have argued⁴⁰⁷. In terms of military functions, the governors were the chief generals of the provincial armies, had the highest responsibility for the defense of their territories, and must always be ready to follow the orders of the kings. This was a particularly important task for local officials in the Vijayanagara period, as the empire was always dealing with the Muslim powers from the North, and later with the Europeans. In addition, within the empire, there were also rebellions that required the central court to send troops to restabilize the situation. These could be initiated by rebellious, squishy governors or by local chiefs, the *nayakas*, who failed to fulfill their tax and military obligations to the central court. Inscriptions⁴⁰⁸ repeatedly record such events, especially during the period of the decline of the central governance.

⁴⁰⁶ VI, Vol. II: KN 899.

⁴⁰⁷ Karashima (2014: pp. 194).

⁴⁰⁸ VI, Vol. II: KN 890 (In the year of 1431 under the reign of Devaraya II, there was a war at Nagire-rajya between local powers. Lakhanna-Vodeya, governor of Honnavura-rajya, joined to support Sangiraya-Odeya of Nagire to recapture Haduvalli from Sangiraya of Haduvalli, a local chief who fought against the governor of Nagire); VI, Vol. II: KN 899 (During the reign of King Achyutadevaraya in 1530,

Fernão Nunes (or Nuniz), the Portuguese horse-merchant who visited Vijayanagara in the 16th century during the reign of King Achyutadevaraya, recorded⁴⁰⁹ the names of several governors and their contributions in money, soldiers, elephants and war horses for the central court. For example, Salvanayqye⁴¹⁰, minister of Achyutadevaraya, governor of Charamaodel region (Coromandel/Cholamandalam) with an annual income of 11 million gold *pardãos* (a unit of Portuguese currency at that time) had to contribute one third of the income revenue as well as 30,000 foot soldiers, 3,000 horses and 30 elephants for the central court.

In terms of administrative functions, the governors acted as intermediaries who collected and transported tributes and taxes from their respective localities and delivered them to the central court. There were also trade taxes and marriage taxes. Hundreds of tax names are counted from the inscriptions, according to Noboru Karashima⁴¹¹. A very interesting inscription⁴¹² dated in 1554 shows that, during the reign of King Sadasivaraya, there were 12 taxes collected from 16 provinces approved by the king. Understandably, the king and the central government approved the taxes collected from the *rajyas*, which the governors were responsible to enforce.

To carry out their duties, the governors had subordinate officials who supported them. As mentioned above, Karashima⁴¹³ claims that those officials in the first dynasty (Sangama) were called *adikaris*, who were often military personnel. He also noted that many texts settled in Tamil Nadu indicate that these *adikaris* heavily oppressed the people through their arbitrary taxation which led to rebellions against the provincial government and leaders.

Here are a few points that need clarification. Firstly, titles of governors such as (*maha*)*pradhani*, *dandanayaka* and especially *mahamandalesvara* are common in inscriptions. These governors, in addition to the head of a province (*rajya*) or provinces, were also assigned by the king to concurrently hold positions in the court,

mahamandalesvara Gururaya-Vodeya who was governing Haduvali-rajya is stated to have invaded Nagire-rajya which was being ruled by *mahamandalesvara* Immadi Saluva Krishnadevarasa-Vodeya; VI, Vol. II: KN 486 (In the year of 1516, under the reign of King Krishnadevaraya, Bhujabala-maharaya of Vijayanagara attacked Tulu-rajya and camped in Mamgaluru), etc.

⁴⁰⁹ Sewell (1900: pp. 365-370).

⁴¹⁰ This is how the Portuguese informant wrote the name. The correct name could not be traced.

⁴¹¹ Karashima (2014: pp. 197). According to his counting, there were 631 tax terms in inscriptions in Tamil Nadu, 556 and 260 tax terms respectively in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

⁴¹² VI, Vol. IV: AP 938. The twelve taxes listed include: *avasaranya-sa-vargam*, *teppattu-sarakku melakai*, *magamai*, *kodai*, *ayam*, *arappu*, *ullayam*, *perayam*, *mulai*, *visam*, and *taragu*.

⁴¹³ Karashima (2014: pp. 200).

such as chief minister, minister, or general. Secondly, officials under the governor (assisting or acting on behalf of the governor in specific cases) did not carry those noble titles. They may have been officials serving as the governor's personal staff or they may have been *nayakas* whose territories were granted by the king or overlord, but still lied within larger territories ruled by the governor.

Inscriptions form the main source for research on local administrative units in Vijayanagara. However, these documents are very complex, do not comprehensively cover this administrative system and sometimes have contradictory content. Therefore, it is difficult to sketch out a complete local administrative system of Vijayanagara at levels below the provincial level. In such conditions, only a few sketches can be given about it.

Common names of units below the provincial administrative units are *sime/sima/sirmai*, *valita*, *sthala*, *nadu*, *kottam*, *venthe/vemthe*, *valanadu*. On this matter, the views of historians differ widely.

Referring to inscriptional evidences, Karashima believes that *sime/sima/sirmai* refers to the domain of the *nayakas* or *nakanrattanam*. However, his argument is based on unclear evidence. The same is true for the case of *chavadi* or *uchavadi* which he claims to have been the seat of *rajya*.

Gopal, through inscriptional data, points out that the top-to-bottom order of local administrative units differs between regions. Moreover, he discovered contradictions between the contents of these inscriptions. In *Inscriptions of Vijayanagara Rulers* (volume IV), a collection of inscriptions from Anantapur and Chittoor districts, Andhra Pradesh, he points out that *rajya*, *nadu*, *sima*, *sthala* are large administrative units, of which *rajya* and *nadu* are sometimes synonyms while *sthala* is a subordinate administrative unit of *sima*. Also their respective hierarchical order is not always the same. For example AP 12 counts *valita* as a subdivision of *nadu*; AP 22 understands *sime* as a subdivision of *venthe*; AP 33 counts *sima* as a subdivision of *rajya*; AP 78 quotes a hierarchical order of *pura* within *sthala* within *nadu* within *rajya* and AP 992 has *puram* within *nadu* within mandala, and finally AP 1055 *nadu* within *kottam* within *mandalam*.

First of all, from the inscriptional documents it can be seen that basically all of the above local terms are sub-provincial administrative units, although there are a few exceptions (*venthe*, *nadu*).

Secondly, depending on each region, the names of these administrative units have different connotations. For example, in the Telugu-speaking region (present day Andhra Pradesh and Telengana states), names such as *kottam* (district) as well as *valanadu* are common, while in the Kannada region, the units *sime/sima/sirma* and *sthala* are more common.

Thirdly, it is difficult to name the officials in charge of the intermediate administrative units situated between province and village. In this regard, it can be said that the *nayakas* played a large role in managing the lands within the province but they were not administrative officials appointed by the royal court nor did they manage specific localities. Their domains may cover a few villages or a few larger administrative units.

4.2.3. From the Nayaka administrative system to independent Nayaka kingdoms

The *nayaka* system was a concept used to define a network of military chiefs scattered throughout the Vijayanagara empire, that had relationships with the central court and the local administrative units. These military chiefs were called *nayakas* (leaders), to whom the land, called *nayakkattanam*, was allocated by the *rayas*. In return, they were obliged to pay a fixed income from their domain and, in particular, to contribute armies, elephants, and war horses to the military campaigns of the *rayas* on the king's request. This system is a unique feature in the administration of Vijayanagara, compared to the Chola state and other states in South India.

In the 16th century, during the reign of King Achyutadevaraya (1529-1542), the Portuguese merchant Fernão Nunez described⁴¹⁴:

“In this way the kingdom Bisnaga (Vijayanagara) is divided between more than two hundred captains (*nayakas*) who are all heathen, and according to the lands and revenues that they have so the King settles for them the forces that they are compelled to keep up, and how much revenue they have to pay him every month (year?) during the first nine days of the month of September”.

Later researchers allege that the more than 200 *captains* he mentioned were military leaders or *nayakas* who were allocated with land by the king, rather than officials in the administrative system. However, in academic literature there are different views about the nature of this system.

⁴¹⁴ Sewell (1962: pp. 370).

One view is that the *nayaka* system has many similarities with the decentralized feudal system in medieval Europe.

The *nayakas* that Nunez called *captains* actually appeared right from the beginning of Vijayanagara, flourishing around the mid-15th century during the Sangama dynasty⁴¹⁵. The *nayakas*, being conferred by the king with their own domains, usually had a very close relationship with the king, who represented the central government. Karashima⁴¹⁶, based on inscriptions from Tamil Nadu, suggests that their domain was the *sima/sime/sirmai* and that their numbers ranged from hundreds to thousands. Meanwhile, Stein⁴¹⁷ believes, that the number of *nayakas* is not that large, and that besides a few very powerful *nayakas*, such as the heads of the fortresses of Senji, Thanjavur, Madurai, etc., there are others more, but that total number was only about 58. Venkata Ratnam⁴¹⁸ argues, that the *nayakaship* was a grant by the king, initially for individual generals, but later as a succession, due to the weakening of the central court.

As envoys of the *nayakas*, there were two groups of officers at the court to act as representatives and to establish contact with the central government. According to Nunez, group one was in charge of the military in the capital, whereas group two, consisting of civilians, was responsible for the maintenance of the nayak's economic interests. On that basis, Krishnasvami⁴¹⁹ argued, that, when the power of the king and the central government in the capital was strong, the king could transfer *the nayaka* from one territory to another. However, when the central government weakened for various reasons, the major *nayakas* proclaimed autonomy. It even occurred that the one or the other declared his independence. This phenomenon appeared for instance during the reign of King Achyutadevaraya and then became more common under Sadasivadevaraya. Towards the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century, after the battle of Talikota, the *Nayaka* kingdoms formed themselves, independent from the Aravidu dynasty.

The *nayaka* system played an important role in providing human resources and economic resources, and being implimental for the tax collection of the Vijayanagara king. In fact, the *Nayakas* participated in virtually every level of Vijayanagara politics.

⁴¹⁵ Karashima (2014: pp. 198-199).

⁴¹⁶ Karashima (2014: pp. 195-196).

⁴¹⁷ According to Karashima (2014: pp. 195).

⁴¹⁸ Ratnam (1972: pp. 16).

⁴¹⁹ Karashima (2002: pp. 24).

Although Ratnam⁴²⁰ suggested, that the *Nayakas* also held power as governors, it indeed appears, as though the main power in the *rajyas* or *maharajyas* was always in the hands of governors directly appointed by the court. The governors themselves also had territories assigned to them by the king, but it is difficult to equate them with the common *Nayakas*, as their power and responsibilities overshadowed that of the *Nayakas*.

The *Nayaka* system is unique in that it is neither a sub-provincial administrative system, nor a system of independent dominions. The king used this system to control the right to collect taxes and secure military forces for frequent wars with Islamic states. It can be said that the *rayas* of Vijayanagara created a system of local military chiefs with close ties to the central court, while guaranteeing them a certain degree of autonomy.

After the battle of Talikota in 1565, the Aravidu dynasty that ruled from Penugonda lost influence not only in the Muslim-occupied area, but also gradually in the rest of the formerly huge kingdom. Against this background, the powerful *Nayakas* of the Deccan (Mysore) and of the Tamil plains (Madurai, Thanjavur, Senji) broke free and were recognized as independent rulers, by the diminished Aravidu dynasty that was still present in Penugonda. It can be said, that the creation and maintenance of the *Nayaka system* created the initial seeds for the birth of independent *Nayaka* kingdoms. These newly formed kingdoms existed from the seventeenth to the early eighteenth centuries, before they were completely conquered by Muslim powers and the Mughal dynasty.

⁴²⁰ Ratnam (1972: pp. 14).

5. Conclusion:

The history of South India was always linked to the history of the entire subcontinent. However, it always had its own characteristics due to its geographical location, languages, cultures, and societies. This land, in terms of language and culture, is the Dravidian region. During the medieval period of South India's history, two states emerged that left the most obvious marks, namely the Chola empire (848-1279) and the Vijayanagara empire (1336-1646). Although these two states did not coincide in terms of territory or have direct connections or inheritance, they have one thing in common: they were both hegemonic states that covered large parts of South India at their respective peak periods. For Chola, it was the period under kings Rajaraja I (985-1014) and his son Rajendra I (1014-1044). As for Vijayanagara, its highest peak occurred during the reign of king Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529). If Chola played an important role in creating models of state and centralized administrative organization, Vijayanagara for several centuries had the role of uniting regions in southern India under a Hindu state institution, protecting traditional Hindu values, especially during a period that saw Islam spreading almost throughout India.

In terms of state organization, Chola and Vijayanagara, as well as many other Hindu states (such as Rashtrakuta, Chalukya, Hoysala, etc.) took the form of centralized monarchies. The centralisation always developed to be strongest during the most prosperous periods of these states. At that time, the power of the king, who was the head of the royal court and held the supreme position, was extreme. He intervened deeply into local political structures as well as had the ability to mobilize financial resources and manpower. The latter was used for building architectural works and decorative arts. Moreover, there was always great need for military personnel to enable the armies to bring home great victories. Scholars debate about the question of decentralization and centralization. Both sides have their arguments. However, it can be said that no matter what political model is imposed on South Indian history, the hegemony of the Chola and Vijayanagara central governments cannot be denied.

At their peak, the Chola and Vijayanagara states, both, controlled vast territories and were the most powerful dominant forces in South India at their respective times. The central monarchical governments of these two polities created quite efficient bureaucratic systems. Thanks to that, they mobilized important resources of wealth

and people to build magnificent royal and religious architectural works. On the other hand, they also created powerful military power, achieved important military victories and consolidated and expanded their spheres of influence.

However, the circumstances of origin of these two kingdoms differed widely. The Chola for a long time did not have to face inimical forces that could destroy them. Therefore, they had ideal conditions to expand their sphere of influence also abroad, specifically in the Indian Ocean region (especially today's Sri Lanka, the Maldives and other islands) and in Southeast Asia (their attempt for dominance over Sri Vijaya is well-known; less focus has been laid on multiple trade connections with countries that cover today's West Malaysia, parts of Indonesia - especially Sumatra - , Cambodia, etc. From inscriptions we know that Tamil traders even reached South China.) Vijayanagara was founded in the context of powerful Muslim forces spreading over the Indian subcontinent. Over approximately three centuries, Vijayanagara successfully protected Hindu values and traditions against these forces. The empire's power diminished sharply with the arrival of the first colonial forces from the West, resp. the Portuguese, from the sixteenth century onwards. These forces intervened in the political affairs and thus weakened the political power Vijayanagara held over South India. The empire finally had to enter into agreements with the Portuguese, which finally resulted in a sizeable reduction of the trading monopoly that finally had to be shared.

For most of its existence, Vijayanagara had to mobilize forces to compete for influence with non-Hindu forces in South India, and therefore had little connection with other regions. Under these circumstances, the military character of the government became stronger and it led to the development of the *nayaka* system, a historical phenomenon unique to South India. The *nayaka* chiefs, whose main function was military, were both an important force that helped the Vijayanagara emperors maintain and consolidate their power, but at the same time also a factor that weakened the central government in Vijayanagara's final historical period.

Originating from a local state, controlling the fertile land around the Kaveri River Delta, Chola gradually grew into a large empire from the late tenth century onwards, becoming hegemonic in Southern India. The state structure also changed towards centralization. Military victories in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries were an important basis for kings Rajaraja I and Rajendra I to carry out political and administrative reforms of the kingdom. A quite effective centralized bureaucracy was

introduced and developed. The establishment of the new administrative unit *valanadu* is an outstanding effort to illustrate the new system, because it was a sign of the central government's deep and strong intervention with local authorities. For about a century (985-1070), this centralized Chola apparatus was an important condition for the prosperity of the kingdom.

According to several scholars, the era of the so-called imperial Cholas ended in 1070. However, in my opinion, the era can be considered to have continued up to the early thirteenth century (Kulottunga III). Although there were political upheavals at the top due to the controversial issue of succession to the throne beginning with King Kulottunga I, who started the Chalukya-Chola line (ruled 1070-1122), the centralized apparatus continued to be maintained. It became essential from the beginning of the thirteenth century, during the last two kings Rajaraja III and Rajendra III, who gradually lost from their hands the centralized power of the Chola kingship.

Regardless of whether the early kings of the Sangama dynasty and subsequent dynasties were of Kannada or Telugu origin, Vijayanagara was a state ruled by people who spoke many different languages of the Dravidian language family. It had gathered Hindu forces to protect traditional values that have existed for thousands of years in this land against the invasion of Muslim forces. Vijayanagara stood for more than two centuries and left behind many cultural and political legacies (for instance the succession of nayaka kingdoms). The Vijayanagara emperors, *raya*, who descended from warriors in the war against Muslim armies, became powerful rulers in South India, ruling over a territory as vast as ever in South Indian history. In order to maintain the military power of the central government, they established the *nayaka* system based on the loyalty of local military leaders, who were granted royal favors. In return, they gave the king the right to command their army when needed, which was vital in maintaining the existence of the kingdom. The *nayaka* system was the backbone of Vijayanagara hegemony in medieval South India.

For the Tamil land, which they had occupied since the 1370s under the Sangama dynasty, the Vijayanagara kings, ruling from the capital in present-day Hampi, had relatively flexible and open policies. The Tamil region was rich in agriculture and trade but it was remote from the central government in terms of both geographical distance and political ideology. This was the land of powerful kingdoms of the past, notably the Cholas, with cultural, social and political traditions distinct from those of the Telugu and Kannada homelands of Vijayanagara. Therefore, to avoid conflicts and to mobilize

resources from this region, the Vijayanagara kings both respected and maintained some of the region's political traditions and adjusted the administrative system to be compatible with the entire region. They also apply the *nayaka* system in the Tamil region. These policies were effective for a long time and problems only began to arise after the reign of Krishnadevaraya (ruled 1509-1529) when conflicts at court led to the rebellion of Tamil chieftains against the royal court under Achyutadevaraya (ruled 1529-1542). Thereafter, the *nayakas*, local military leaders, in the Tamil region remained loyal to the Vijayanagara emperors even when the capital on the Deccan plateau was captured and the last Vijayanagara dynasty, Aravidu, was displaced to Penugonda in the Southeast. It was the great *nayakas* with their independent kingdoms who continued to resist Muslim forces until the early eighteenth century when the English colonial forces entered.

The Chola emperors claimed their descent from the line of kings that ruled the ancient Chola kingdom during the so-called Sangam Age (ca. 3rd century BC till 3rd century AD). Therefore, they gained a solid support from traditions and religions that were deeply rooted in Southern India since ancient times. The king held the supreme power of the kingdom and the royal family also participated in political affairs. They have established an efficient bureaucracy and their power was exercised through their officials, although the structure of that machinery of government is not really clear in all respects. However, it can be seen that power was exercised through many governmental levels and was often not carried out directly.

The first emperors of Vijayanagara, on the other hand, were warriors who served in the armies of Hindu kingdoms against invading Muslim forces and then established their own kingdom. They, with the help of their advisor and spiritual teacher Vidyatirtha, created their own tradition about their origin. The strongest basis for their legitimacy was doubtlessly their leadership of Hindu forces against the invasion of the Muslims. Thus it is, why the Vijayanagara emperors were generally able to represent communities speaking many different languages and following many different cultural traditions in Southern India - all under the same "umbrella" of traditional Hinduism. They established and maintained an extensive bureaucracy and administration in their territory, along with controlling the local *nayaka* military system. The power of the Vijayanagara kings was direct and relied heavily on the loyalty of local military leaders, which formed the main difference between the status of the kings of the Chola and the Vijayanagara dynasties.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to the fact that villages are the basic administrative units of Asian agricultural societies. There have been various studies conducted over the years on their role during Chola and Vijayanagara periods. However, the diversity and complexity of this institution require more extensive research which I intend to undertake in future. Here, I only briefly mention the village structure, focusing mainly on its relationship with the central government and intermediate administrative levels. Sources of documents about villages in India in general and South India in particular are very rich, not only inscriptional documents but also archaeological documents, folklore, geography, etc. Conducting more detailed research on it contributes to clarify the overall picture of the history of South India through historical periods.

The relationship of the South Indian states, here notably the Chola and Vijayanagara, with the world outside India, such as Southeast Asia, the Arab Muslim world, China, and the West⁴²¹ is also one important aspect when we consider their royal, administrative and economic structures. I briefly mentioned it in the overview of the historical process in chapter two of the thesis. More comprehensive studies of this relationship will become a meaningful contribution to South Indian historical research.

⁴²¹ In South Asia as well as in parts of Southeast Asia, archaeological remains document more or less direct contacts with Roman traders. – I have already mentioned the early Portuguese visits to Vijayanagara from the sixteenth century onwards.

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APPENDIX

In this appendix, I present some of the most important inscriptions that I used in my dissertation, in order to give the readers an insight into this kind of literature. As can be seen from the footnotes, I used copious inscriptional materials. Those presented here serve only as a few examples.

A: SELECTED INSCRIPTIONS UNDER THE CHOLA DYNASTY

1. King Parantaka II (957-973)

A set of 7 Copper plates, discovered in 1850 at Udayendiram (Tirupatthur district, Tamil Nadu)

- *Reference*: SII, Vol. II, part III: No. 76 (pp. 375-390).
- *Date*: unclear.
- *King*: Parantaka II.
- *Bilingual*: Sanskrit and Tamil.
- *Remarks*: Genealogy of Parantaka II (reign 958-973), mentions the mythical Chola kings and the early medieval Chola kings and claims that they were heirs of the ancient Cholas.

TRANSLATION

A.— *Sanskrit portion*

Hail! Prosperity!

(Verse 1.) May he (*viz.*, Vishnu) incessantly grant you prosperity, the lord of Prosperity (*and*) master of the Universe, of whom the eight-bodied (Siva) himself became one half of the body;⁴²² from the lotus on whose navel the creator of the worlds was produced; (*and*) whose true nature the primeval speech (i.e., the Veda) reveals!

(V. 2) Let it far remove your sins, the being (*viz.*, Siva) which is the enemy of Cupid; whose diadem is the moon; the dark (*spot*) on whose throat resembles a particle of a cloud; (*and*) in whose forehead is sunk a (*third*) reddish eye!

(V. 3.) From the lotus on the navel of Vishnu was produced Brahma; from his Marichi; from him (Kasyapa) the founder of a *gotra* (*and*) husband of Diti; from him the Sun,

⁴²² *Viz.*, in the form of Harihara, which consists of Vishnu and Siva joined in one. Compare No. 73, verse 4.

who is praised by (Indra) the lord of gods; from him Rudrajit, who was full of terrible power; from him the glorious Chandrajit; (*and*) in his race Sibi, the best of kings, who saved a pigeon (*by offering his own flesh to a hawk*).

(V. 4.) In his race, which was resplendent with the fame of Kokkilli, Chola and Karikala, (*and*) which was the birthplace of Kochchankan and other noble kings, was born the glorious (*and*) victorious Vijayalaya, whose footstool was worshipped by the best of kings.

(V. 5.) His son was Aditya, who overcame the whole crowd of exalted kings; whose splendor, being emitted to enter various countries, dispelled the darkness (*which were*) troops of enemies; who learned the true state (of the affairs of his enemies) from his spies; who made the excellent wheel (*of his authority*) roll with incessant speed; (*and*) to whom, the continually rising, joyfully bowed the four regions.⁴²³

(V. 6.) From him was born the glorious king Viranarayana, a jungle-fire to enemies, who, visibly (*and*) amply manifesting the glory of Chakradhara,⁴²⁴ (*which resides*) in him, now wears for a long time, as easily as an arm-ring, the circle of the earth, together with the seven continents, oceans and mountains resting on (*his*) strong arm.

(V. 7.) He practiced many meritorious acts and gifts, (*as*) the hemagarbha (*gift*), the tulabhara (*gift*), gifts (*of land*) to Brahmanas, and (*the building of*) temples.

(V. 8.) As Sakra (Indra) the daughter of Puloman, as Sarva (Siva) the daughter of the lord of mountains, (*and*) as (Vishnu), the enemy of Kaitabha the daughter of the ocean, he married the daughter of the lord of Kerala.

(V. 9.) He uprooted by force two lords of the Bana kings and defeated the Vaidumba and many other kings in various regions. His army, having crushed at the head of a battle and Pandya king together with an army of elephants, horses and soldiers seized a herd of elephants together with (*the city of*) Madhura.

(V. 10.) Having slain in an instant, at the head of a battle, an immense army, dispatched by the lord of Lanka, which teemed with brave soldiers (*and*) was

⁴²³ Every word in this verse also applies to the sun (aditya), whose name the king bore.

⁴²⁴ This word has to be taken in two ways viz., as a synonym of chakravartin, 'an emperor,' and as an epithet of Vishnu, one of whose names (Narayana) forms part of the king's name.

interspersed with troops of elephants and horses, he bears in the world the title Samgramaraghava, which is full of meaning.⁴²⁵

(V. 11.) When he had defeated the Pandya (*king*) Rajasimha, two persons experienced the same fear at the same time: (Kubera) the lord of wealth on account of the death of his own friend,⁴²⁶ (*and*) Vibhishana⁴²⁷ on account of the proximity (*of the Chola dominions to Ceylon*).

(V. 12.) May it be victorious, the Ganga family, at the beginning of which was the great sage Kanva, who was born in the excellent race of Kasyapa, (*and*) the power of whose austerities was very great; which obtained increase through the might of Simhanandin; (*and which is*) the best of victorious (*dynasties*)!

(V. 13.) In the great (*city of*) Kuvalalapura, which was the dwelling-place of Prosperity, resided a king whose name Konkani (*was well known*) on earth; who was a descendant of Kanva (*Kanvayana*); who became the first of the whole Ganga race; (*and*) who was anointed to the conquest of the Bana country (*mandala*).

(V. 14.) (*While still*) a youth, he who resembled the powerful Sisu (Kumara)⁴²⁸ in gracefulness, split in two a huge stone pillar with the sword held in (*his*) hand at a single stroke. The crowds of enemies became afraid when they perceived at the head of the battle his lofty, excellent banner, which bore a beautiful swan.⁴²⁹

(V. 15.) In his lineage, which deserves respect because there were born (*in it*) the glorious Vishnugopa, Hari, Madhava, Durvinita, Bhuvikrama and other kings, was born Sivamara's son, the glorious Prithivipati (I.), a matchless hero of wide fame.⁴³⁰

(V. 16.) By the promise of security, he who was unequalled by others, saved Iriga and Nagadanta, the sons of king (*ko*) Dindi, who were afraid,— the one from king Amoghavarsha, (*and*) the other from the jaws of death.

⁴²⁵ The name *Samgramaraghava*, i.e., '(resembling) Rama in battle,' was appropriate in his case, because he defeated an army of the king of Ceylon, just as Rama had killed Ravana, the fabulous ruler of Lanka.

⁴²⁶ This seems to imply that the Pandya king Rajasimha possessed great wealth, which was seized by the conquering Chola king.

⁴²⁷ This is the name of Ravana's younger brother, who was raised to the throne by Rama.

⁴²⁸ This god is supposed to have split the mountain Krauncha.

⁴²⁹ *Sitapinchha* is the same as *svetagarut*, which the Amarakosa (ii. 5, 23) gives as a synonym of hamsa.

⁴³⁰ It is difficult to say which of the three words *prithuyasas*, *prithivipati* and *ekavira* is the actual name of the king. I select *Prithivipati*, because the same name is borne by another king in verse 20 and 22.

(V. 17.) At the head of a battle called (*after*) Vaimbalguri, he who had slain the army of the enemy with (*his*) sword, caused a piece of bone, which had been cut from his own body by the sharp sword, to enter the water of the Ganga.⁴³¹

(V. 18.) Having defeated by force the Pandya lord Varaguna at the head of the great battle of Sripurambiya, and having (*thus*) made (*his*) title Aparajita (*i.e.*, 'the Unconquered') significant, this hero entered the heaven of (*his*) friend (*viz.*, Indra) by sacrificing his own life.

(V. 19.) His son was the glorious king Marasimha, the light of the Ganga family (*and*) the only abode of honor, who possessed the power of the sun in dispelling darkness,— a crowd of enemies.

(V. 20.) His son was called Prithivipati (II.), the foremost lion among kings, whose face beamed with kindness, who was exalted by birth, who kept the vow of (*resembling*) the *Kalpa* tree towards friends, who was the fire of death to enemies, and who bore, from the forehead to the feet, wounds received from the enemies in battle.

(V. 21.) This prince, a flamingo in the tank of the Ganga family, received from that⁴³² Parantaka, who attacked kings in battle, a grant (*prasada*) in the shape of a (*copper*) plate (*patta*),⁴³³ which was the instrument of the attainment of the dignity (*pada*) of lord of the Banas (*Banadhiraja*).

(V. 22.) Oppressed by the Kali (*age*), the political crowd of virtues, *viz.*, courage, liberality, gratitude, sweetness, courtesy, wisdom, patience, intelligence, purity, tranquility, dignity, mercy, forbearance, *etc.*, forthwith joined, in order to rest without grief and fatigue, this Prithivipati (II.) because they thought that he was born of the race of Bali.⁴³⁴

(V. 23.) He deservedly bore the other name Hastimalla,⁴³⁵ as he tore up the Hill-chiefs (*Girindra*) together with the Pallavas, as he was devoted to virtue, as his fingers (*always*) carried gifts, as he bore the earth, (*and*) as he was prosperous from birth;— [just as the divine elephant Airavata tears up large hills like sprouts, is beloved by

⁴³¹ It is not clear if the bone was cut out by one of the enemies or by himself, nor why it was subsequently immersed in the Ganga.

⁴³² This pronoun refers to the Chola king whose reign was described in verse 6 to 11.

⁴³³ With *pattamayah prasadah* compare *parasada-pattaka*; *Ep. India*, Vol. III, p. 312.

⁴³⁴ In reality, Prithivipati II was not a descendant of Bali, the mythical ancestor of the Bana kings (*Ep. India*, Vol. III, p. 74), but the Bana kingdom had been conferred on him, a Ganga, by Parantaka I.

⁴³⁵ *I.e.*, 'the wrestler with elephants' or 'the best of elephants.'

Indra, carries rut on the tip of his trunk, bears the earth, and was born (*from the milk ocean*) together with the goddess of Prosperity].

(V. 24.) He whose banner bore (*the emblem of*) a black-buck, who was the lord (*of the city*) of Parivipuri, whose crest (*anka*) was a bull, whose drum (*was called*) *Paisacha*, who was fearless in battle, (and) who was the lord of Nandi,— though himself (*called*) Hastimalla,⁴³⁶ on submitting a request, was commanded (*accordingly*) by king Parakesarin.⁴³⁷

(V. 25.) “The religious merit of those who perform (*grants*), and of those who protect (*them*), (*is*) equal. Therefore protect (*the present gift*)”: (*Speaking*) thus, the matchless hero Parantaka incessantly bows (*his*) head, whose diadem are the lotus feet of Cupid’s enemy (Siva)⁴³⁸, to future kings.

(V. 26.) This king granted the land called Kadaikkottur, on his (*viz.*, Hastimalla’s) behalf, to (*the village of*) Udayendu-chaturvedimangalam.

(V. 27.) The two *pattis*⁴³⁹ called Vidyadharipatti (*and*) Devapatti in this (*village*) had been formerly enjoyed by the Digambaras.

(V. 28.) The king made the gift excluding these two (*patties*) of that (*village*); for, these two were known to have formerly belonged to the Kshapanakas.⁴⁴⁰

B.— Tamil portion.

(Line 71.) In the fifteenth year (*of the reign*) of Madirai-konda Ko-parakesarivarman,— His Majesty (*Peruman-adigal*) had, at the request of Sembiyan Mavalivanarayar, converted (*the village of*) Kadaikkottur in Mel-Adaiyaru-nadu, (*a subdivision*) of Paduvur-kottam, together with Udayasandiramangalam, into a brahmadeya, called Viranarayanachcheri after his own name.

(L. 75.) the eastern-boundary of this (*village is*) a banyan tree (*alam*) on the east of (the land called) *Idaiyarrukkollai* on the east of the Palaru (river); going to the south of

⁴³⁶ The lion and the elephant are considered as natural enemies. Hastimalla means ‘the best of elephants,’ and Parakesarin ‘the lion of enemies;’ hence the *virodha*.

⁴³⁷ This seems to mean that Hastimalla received Parakesarin’s permission to make the present grant.

⁴³⁸ *I.e.*, who is a devotee of Siva. Compare Vol. I, p. 5, notes 3 and 10; Vo. II, p. 11, note 3; and *Ep. Ind*, Vol. IV, p. 83, note 3.

⁴³⁹ Regarding *patti* see p. 359, note 12.

⁴⁴⁰ The Kshapanakas are the same as the Digambaras in verse 27.

this, a *marudu* (tree);⁴⁴¹ and going to the south of this, the (*channel called*) *Vayirakkal*, which feeds the (*tank called*) *Vinnamangalattareri*.

(L. 78.) The southeastern boundary (*is*) the Palaru (*river*).

(L. 79.) The southern boundary (*is*) a group of nux vomica trees (*etti*); ascending to the west of this, a pit on the north of the waste land (*of the village*) of SIRRARIYUR; ascending to the west of this, a banyan tree at the outlet on the eastern side of the (*tank called*) *Vinnappuliyeneri*; ascending to the west of this, a crooked neem tree (*vembu*) on a large (*piece of*) barren ground; ascending to the west of this, an expanse of water; ascending to the west of this, a bush on the south of a cross-road⁴⁴² and *indu* (creepers);⁴⁴³ and ascending to the west of this, the foot of a high hill.

(L. 83.) The western boundary (*is*) a resounding boulder; going to the north of this, the “cross-road of the three women;” and going to the north of this, the “horse’s halter.”

(L. 86.) Its northern boundary (*is*) *Adiyaman-mundai*;⁴⁴⁴ descending to the east of this, *Pidamburai* (?); descending to the east of this, a pond with *kura* (shrubs);⁴⁴⁵ descending to the east of this, a path (*of the breadth*) of one buffalo; descending to the east of this, a hillock near a banyan tree on the north of the (*tank called*) *Kangayaneri*; descending to the east of this, a large vein (?) of stone; descending to the east of this, a large boulder near a *kallali*;⁴⁴⁶ descending to the east of this, a large *turinjil* (tree);⁴⁴⁷ descending to the east of this, a large boulder; descending to the east of this, a stone wall (?) near a *turinjil* (tree); descending to the east of this, a pond near a *tanakku* (tree)⁴⁴⁸ on the north-west of a bare cross-road, and a large boulder on the bare cross-road; descending to the east of this, a thicket of *karai* (shrubs);⁴⁴⁹ and descending to the east of this, the bank of the Palaru (*river*).

⁴⁴¹ *Marudhu* or *marudham* in Tamil and *Arjuna* in Sanskrit is the tree *Terminalia alata*. It forms part of Tiruvidaimarudhur or Madhyarjuna, the name of a famous shrine of Siva near Kumbhakonam, which Samkara is said in the *Samkaravijaya* to have visited; see Dr. Aufrecht’s *Oxford Catalogue*, p. 248a.

⁴⁴² *Kuruki* is perhaps the same as *kurukkupathai* and *kurukkuvazhi*.

⁴⁴³ According to the Tamil dictionaries, this is a thorny creeper, *Mimosa rubicaulis*.

⁴⁴⁴ *Adiyaman* is probably the same as Adigaiman, ‘the king of Adigai,’ and mundai means ‘a shaven widow.’ Perhaps this fanciful name designated a bare rock, which resembled a human head in shape.

⁴⁴⁵ *Webera corymbosa*.

⁴⁴⁶ This may be the same as *kallalam*, *Ficus virens*.

⁴⁴⁷ *Mimosa amara*.

⁴⁴⁸ *Morinda umbellate*.

⁴⁴⁹ *Webera tetrandra*.

(L. 96.) Having assembled accordingly (*the inhabitants of*) the district (*nadu*), having caused (*them*) to walk over (*the boundaries of*) the (*granted*) land, having planted stones and milk-bush (on the boundaries), having excluded the two patties called *Vichchadiripatti* and *Devarpatti*,⁴⁵⁰ which had been formerly a *pallichchandam*,⁴⁵¹ (but) having included⁴⁵² the cultivated land situated within the above four boundaries, and having caused an edict (*sasama*) to be drawn up in accordance with the order of the king,— I, Sembian-Mavalivanarayan, gave (*the above land*), together with a gift of one thousand (*gold coins*), to all the inhabitants of Udayasandiramangalam.

(L. 101.) Om. Obeisance of Narayana!

2. King Rajaraja I (985-1014)

2a. An inscription at Ukkal temple, near Kanchipuram (20 km), district of Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu, on the North wall of the Mandapa.

- *Date*: the 124th day of the 24th year of his reign, and which was engrossed on the 143rd day of the same year = 1009 AD.
- *References*: SII, Vol. III, Part I: No. 9.
- *Summary*: This interest record contains an order which Rajaraja I issued at (his capital) Tanjavur on the 124th day of the 24th year of his reign, and which was engrossed on the 143rd day of the same year. This order deals with defaulters of land revenue in villages held by Brahmanas, Vaikhanasas and Jainas in the Chola, Tondai and Pandya country. The villagers were authorized to confiscate and sell the land on which no taxes had been paid for two full years.

The royal order was written by the secretary Rajakesarinallur Kilavan, or, as he is called in two of the Tanjavur inscriptions, Karayil Eduttapadam.⁴⁵³ It was signed by the chief secretary Mummudi-Chola-Brahmamaharaja, and by Mummudi-Chola-Bhoja. These two officers are mentioned in the large Leyden grant⁴⁵⁴ and in inscriptions of the Tanjore temple.⁴⁵⁵ Their original names were Krishna Rama and Irayiravan Pallavayan. During the reign of Rajaraja I they bore the titles Mummudi-

⁴⁵⁰ These two *pattis* are also referred to in verses 27 and 28 of the Sanskrit portion.

⁴⁵¹ This word means “a gift to a Jaina temple”

⁴⁵² Literally, “not having excluded.” See Vol. I, p. 118.

⁴⁵³ See Vol. II. p131 f. and p. 28, note 3 (SII, Vol. II: pp.131 f. and pp. 28).

⁴⁵⁴ Lines 129 to 133, 162 to 164, and 436 to 440 (Leyden grant: Tamil copper-plate inscriptions that are preserved in the Museum of Leyden in Netherlands).

⁴⁵⁵ Vol. II. Nos. 31, 12 and 55.

Chola-Brahmamaharaja and Mummudi-Chola-Bhoja, which are derived from Mummudi-Chola, a surname of Rajaraja I. After the accession of Rajendra-Chola I they received the additional titles Rajendra-Chola-Brahmamaharaja and Uttama-Chola-Pallavaraiyan.

TRANSLATION

(Line 1.) Hail! Prosperity! On the 124th day of the 24^h year (*of the reign*) of the glorious king Rajaraja-Kesarivarman, *alias* Sri-Rajarajadeva, who, (*in*) his life of growing strength, during which,- (*in*) the belief, that, as well as the goddess of fortune, the goddess of the great earth had become his wife,- he was pleased to destroy the ships (*at*) Kandalur-Salai, and conquered by (*his*) army, which was victorious in great battles, Vengai-nadu, Ganga-padi, Nulamba-padi, Tadigai-padi, Kudamalai-nadu, Killam, Kalingam, Ila-mandalam, (*the conquest of which*) made (*him*) famous (*in*) the eight directions, and the seven and a half *lakshas* of Ilatta-padi, - deprived the Selinas of (*their*) splendour at the very moment when Udagai, which is worshipped everywhere, was (most) resplendent; - the lord Sri-Rajarajadeva, being graciously seated in the college (kalluri)⁴⁵⁶ on the south of the painted hall (*chitra-kuta*) at the great hippodrome gate (periya-sendu-vayil) in Tanjavur, was pleased to order as follows: -

(L. 4.) “(*The land of*) those landholders in villages of Brahmanas, in villages of Vaikhanasas, and in villages of Sramanas (*i.e.*, Jainas) in Sonadu, in the adjacent districts included in Sonadu, in Tondai-nadu, and in Pandi-nadu, *alias* Rajarajavalanadu,⁴⁵⁷ who have not paid, on the land owned by them, the taxes due from villages, along with the (*other*) inhabitants of those villages, for three years, (*of which*) two are completed, between the 16th and the 23rd years (*of my reign*), shall become the property of the village and shall be liable to be sold by the inhabitants of those villages to the exclusion of the (*defaulting*) landholders. Also, (*the land of*) those who have not paid the taxes due from villages for three years, (*of which*) two are completed, from the 24th year (*of my reign*), shall be liable to be sold by the inhabitants of those villages to the exclusion of the (*defaulting*) landholders.”

⁴⁵⁶ Compare Vol. II. p. 109. (SII, Vol. II: pp.109)

⁴⁵⁷ See Vol. II. p. 320, note 3. (SII, Vol. II: pp. 320, note 3)

(L. 8.) Accordingly, having been written by the royal secretary, Rajakesarinallur Kilavan, and having been approved by the chief secretary, Mummudi-Sola-Brahmamarayan, and by Mummudi-Sola-Posan, (*this order*) was engrossed from dictation on the 143rd day of the 24th (*year of the reign*).

2b. An inscription on the North and West walls upper tier of the central shrine of the Thanjavur temple.

- *Date*: the 23th-29th year of the reign of Rajaraja I = 1011 AD.
- *Reference*: SII, Vol. II, part I., No. 1 (pp. 1-14).
- *Summary*: This inscription consists of nine parts carved on the north wall and four parts carved on the west wall of the central temple. It includes a list of gifts from the king, his sister and his fiancée, spanning the period from the 23rd to the 29th year of Rajaraja I's reign, with the inscribed title Rajakesarivarman. We know from inscriptions that this great temple, which he himself ordered to be built, was named after him Rajarajesvara, meaning Isvara (temple) of Rajaraja, while its modern name is Brihadisvara. This inscription also lists a series of military victories of the king at Vengai-nadu, Ganga-padi, Tadigai-padi, Nulamba-padi, Kudamalai-nadu, Kollam, Kalingam, Ira-mandalam, including Place names associated with the concepts *nadu*, *padi*, *mandalam* are terms that refer to the administrative units of the kingdom.

TRANSLATION

First Part

1. Hail! Prosperity! This (*is*) the edict (*sasana*) of Rajaraja (*alias*) Rajakesarivarman, which is cherished by the multitude of the diadems of (*i.e.*, which is obeyed by) the crowd of all princes.⁴⁵⁸

2. On the twentieth day of the twenty-sixth year (*of the reign*) of Ko-Rajakesarivarman, alias Sri-Rajarajadeva, who,— while (*his*) heart rejoiced, that, like the goddess of fortune, the goddess of the great earth had become his wife,— in his life of growing strength, during which, having been pleased to cut the vessal (*kalam*) (*in*) the hall (*at*)

⁴⁵⁸ This Anushtub verse is quoted with three misreading, in Dr. Burnell's *South-Indian Palaeography*, second edition, p. 40, note 2. Similar verses are found on the seals of the two Leyden grants; see Dr. Burgess's *Archaeological Survey of Southern India*, Vol. IV, pp. 204 and 224.

Kandalur,⁴⁵⁹ he conquered by his army, which was victorious in great battles, Vengainadu, Ganga-padi, Tadigai-padi, Nulamba-padi, Kudamalai-nadu, Kollam, Kalingam, Ira-mandalam, (*the conquest of which*) gave fame (*i.e.*, made (*him*) famous) (*in*) the eight directions, and the seven and a half lakshas of Iratta-padi,— deprived the Seriyas (*i.e.*, the Pandyas) of their splendor, while (*he*) was resplendent (*to such a degree*) that (*he*) was worthy to be worshipped everywhere;— having been pleased to make gifts (*in*) the royal bathing-hall (*tiru-manjana-salai*) to the east (*of the hall*) of Irumadi-Soran within the Tanjavur palace (*koyil*), the lord (*udaiyar*) Sri-Rajarajadeva vouchsafed to say:— “Let the gifts made by us, those made by (*our*) elder sister,⁴⁶⁰ those made by our wives, and those made by other donors to the lord (*udaiyar*) of the sacred stone-temple (*tirukkarrali*), (called) Sri Rajarajesvara,— which we caused to be built (*at*) Tanjavur, (*a city*) in Tanjavur- kurrum, (*a subdivision*) of Pandyakulasani-valanadu,— be engraved on stone on the sacred shrine (*sri-viman*)! (*Accordingly, these gifts*) were engraved (*as follows*):—

3. On the three-hundred-and-twelfth day of the twenty fifth year (*of his reign*) the lord Sri-Rajarajadeva gave one gold (*image*) Kolgaidevar,⁴⁶¹ which is to be present (*at*) the sacred offerings (*sri-bali*),⁴⁶² weighing eight hundred and twenty-nine kuranju⁴⁶³ and three quarters and three manjadi by the stone called (*after*) Adavallan.

4. On the same day (*he*) gave one dish (*tala*) of gold for the sacred offerings, supported by a lotus (*padmasana*), weighing nine hundred and ninety-five *karanju* and a half and four *manjadi* by the same stone.

5. On the fourteenth day of the twenty-sixth year (*of his reign*), the lord Sri-Rajarajadeva gave one sacred diadem (*tiruppattam*) of gold, weighing four hundred and ninety-nine *karanju* by the stone called (*after*) Adavallan.

⁴⁵⁹ This expression, which was mistranslated in Vol. I, seems to refer to some incident in the king's early life, perhaps to some feat, by which he showed the great strength of his arm. In an inscription of the 12th year of his reign, which was published in Vol. I (No. 146), *Kanthalur-salai kalamarutha* is the only epithet, which precedes the name of the king as a kind of *biruda*.

⁴⁶⁰ Akkan seems to be used for just as for Akkai, just as Amman for Ammai. The elder sister referred to is Kundavaiyar, the queen of Vallavaraiyar Vandyadevar; see the introduction No. 6. The gifts which were made by herself, the king's wives and others, are recorded in various other inscriptions of the Tanjavur temple.

⁴⁶¹ *I.e.*, “the god (*who is*) to receive (*the offerings*)”.

⁴⁶² According to Winslow, the secondary idol of a temple (*eluntharulum vighraham* or *utsava-vighraha*) is carried about in processions, while the chief idol (*mula-vighraha*) remains stationary.

⁴⁶³ 1 *karanju* consists of 20 *manjadi*, 1 *manjadi* of 2 *kunri* and 1 *kunri* weighs about 2 grains.

6. On the same day (*he*) gave one sacred diadem of gold, weighing four hundred and ninety-four *karanju* and a half and two *manjadi* by the same stone.
7. On the same day (*he*) gave one sacred diadem of gold, weighing four hundred and eighty-four *karanju* and a half and two *manjadi* by the same stone.
8. On the same day (*he*) gave one sacred diadem of gold, weighing four hundred and ninety-seven *karanju* and a half and two *manjadi* by the same stone.
9. On the same day (*he*) gave one sacred diadem of gold, weighing four hundred and ninety-one *karanju* and a half and two *manjadi* by the same stone.
10. On the twenty-seventh day (*of his twenty-sixth year*), the lord Sri-Rajarajadeva gave out of (*his*) minor treasure (*sirudanam*) one gold plate (*taligai*), weighing six hundred and fifty-two *karanju* and eight *manjadi* by the stone called (*after*) Adavallan.
11. On the same (*he*) gave one gold plate, weighing four hundred and ninety-three *karanju* and a quarter by the same stone.
12. On the same (*he*) gave one gold bowl, (*mandai*) weighing three hundred and ninety-seven *karanju* and six *manjadi* by the same stone.
13. On the same (*he*) gave one gold bowl, weighing three hundred and ninety-three *karanju* and (*one*) *manjadi* by the same stone.
14. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold bowl, weighing three hundred and ninety-eight *karanju* and (*one*) *kunri* by the same stone.
15. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold bowl, weighing three hundred and ninety-six *karanju* by the same stone.
16. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold pitcher (*kendi*), weighing two hundred and eighty-four *karanju* and a half by the same stone.
17. On the thirty-fourth day (*of his twenty-sixth year*), the lord Sri-Rajarajadeva gave out of (*his*) minor treasure (*sirudanam*) one gold salver (*tattam*), weighing forty *karanju* and a quarter by the stone called (*after*) Adavallan.
18. On the two-hundred-and-seventy-fifth day of the twenty-fifth year (*of his reign*), the lord Sri-Rajarajadeva gave one copper water-pot (*kuta*), to be placed on the copper pinnacle (*stupittari*)⁴⁶⁴ of the sacred shrine (*sri-vimana*) of the lord of the Sri-

⁴⁶⁴ According to Winslow, *dupi* or *suthpi* is a synonym of *sikhara*, the upper pinnacle of a temple.

Rajarajesvara (*temple*), weighing three thousand and eighty-three *pala*.⁴⁶⁵ The various gold plates (*tagadu*), which were laid over it, weighed two thousand nine hundred and twenty-six *karanju* and a half by the stone called (*after*) Adavallan.

19. On the one-hundred-and fourth day of the twenty-sixth year (*of his reign*), the lord Sri-Rajarajadeva gave to the lord of the Sri-Rajarajesvara (*temple*) one gold kettle (*kidaram*), weighing eleven thousand seven hundred and forty-two *karanju* by the stone called (*after*) Advallan.

20. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold *ottu-vattil*,⁴⁶⁶ weighing four hundred and eighty-eight *karanju* by the same stone.

21. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold pot (*kalasa*), weighing five hundred and seven *karanju* by the same stone.

22. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold pot, weighing four hundred and eighty-three *karanju* by the same stone.

23. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold pot, weighing four hundred and ninety-two *karanju* by the same stone.

24. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold pot, weighing four hundred and ninety-two *karanju* and a quarter by the same stone.

25. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold pot, weighing five hundred and twelve *karanju* and a half by the same stone.

26. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold spittoon (*padikkam*), weighing eight hundred and two *karanju* and a half by the same stone,— including the three legs and the two rings (*valaiyil*).

27. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold salver (*tattam*) weighing forty-nine *karanju* and three quarters by the same stone.

28. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold salver, weighing forty-nine *karanju* and three quarters by the same stone.

⁴⁶⁵ “a weight, thirteen of which make a trifle over a pound;” Winslow.

⁴⁶⁶ This word signifies perhaps “a cup (*resembling*) a shell (*odu*).”

29. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold salver, weighing fifty *karanju* by the same stone.
30. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold salver, weighing forty-nine *karanju* and three quarter, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* by the same stone.
31. On the same day (*he*) gave one small receptacle for sacred ashes (*kuru-madal*) of gold, weighing ninety-seven *karanju* by the same stone.
32. On the same day (*he*) gave one gold measuring-cup (*mana-vattil*), weighing twenty *karanju* by the same stone.
33. On the three-hundred-and-eighteenth day of the twenty-sixth year (*of his reign*), (*he*) gave a gold (*image of*) Kshetrapaladeva, (*which measured*) by the cubit-measure (*muram*), (*preserved*) in the temple (*koyil*) of the lord, three fingers (*viral*) and three *tora*⁴⁶⁷ in height from the feet to the hair, which had a sacred foot-stool (*sripadapitha*) of silver, (*measuring*) six torai in height and four fingers and six torai in circumference, and which weighed seventy-two *karanju* and a half,— including the spear (*sula*), the skull (*kapala*), the noose (*pasa*) and the drum (*damaruka*), which (*the image*) held in its four divine hands, and the sacred foot-stool, of silver.
34. Out of the treasures (*bhandara*), which he seized after having defeated the Chera king (*Seraman*) and the Pandyas in Malainadu, the lord Sri-Rajarajadeva gave on the three-hundred-and-nineteenth day of the twenty-sixth year (*of his reign*) to the supreme lord (*paramasvamin*) of the Sri-Rajaraja-Isvara (*temple*) the following gold emblems (*chihna*), which were weighed by the stone called (*after*) Adavallan and engraved on stone:—
35. One betel-pot (*kalanji*), (*consisting of*) five hundred and eighty-six *karanju* of gold.
36. One betel-pot, (*consisting of*) six hundred and twenty-two *karanju* and a half of gold.
37. One water-pot (*kuta*), (*consisting of*) three hundred and eighty-two *karanju* and a half of gold.
38. One water-pot, (*consisting of*) three hundred and sixty-seven *karanju* of gold.

⁴⁶⁷ 1 *muzham* cubit consists of 2 *saan* or spans, 1 *saan* of 12 *viral* or finger`s breadths, and 1 *viral* of 8 rice corns, which are here called *torai*.

39. One water-pot, (*consisting of*) three hundred and fifty-two *karanju* of gold.
40. One water-pot, (*consisting of*) two hundred and ninety-four *karanju* of gold.
41. One Chunnam box (*karandigaichcheppu*), (*consisting of*) one hundred and twenty-one *karanju* and a half of gold,— including the stand (*adi*) and the lid.⁴⁶⁸
42. One betel-leaf box (*ilaichcheppu*), (*consisting of*) one hundred and eighty-five *karanju* and three quarters of gold,— including four lion`s feet (*yalikkal*) and the lid.
43. One betel-leaf box, (*consisting of*) one hundred and forty-seven *karanju* of gold, including four lion`s feet and the lid.
44. One plate (*taligai*), (*consisting of*) one thousand one hundred and thirty-five *karanju* and a half of gold,— including the stand.
45. One censer (*kalasappanai*), (*consisting of*) four hundred and seventy *karanju* of gold,— including the spout (*mukku*) and the sand.
46. One censer, (*consisting of*) four hundred and thirty-eight *karanju* of gold,— including the spout and the stand.
47. Eight gold chains (*kodi*), consisting of seventy-eight *karanju* and three quarters of gold,— including sixteen flowers, (*two of*) which were attached to the hanging part (*tukkam*) (*and*) to the top part (*talai*) (*respectively, of each chain*).
48. One *taruittal-vattil*, (*consisting of*) four hundred and forty-eight *karanju* of gold,— including two bass-relief`s (*karukku*) and two lion`s feet (*simhapada*).
49. One sacred crown (*tiru-mudi*), (*consisting of*) two hundred and seventy-three *karanju* of gold.
50. One handle (*kai*) for a flywhisk (*ichchoppi*) (*consisting of*) two hundred and four *karanju* of gold.

Second Part.

51. From the twenty-third year to the twenty-ninth year (*of his reign*), the lord Sri-Rajarajadeva gave to the supreme lord of the Sri-Rajarajesvara (*temple*) out of his own treasures and out of the treasures, which he seized after having defeated the Chera king and the Pandyas in Malainadu, the following emblems (*chihna*) of gold,

⁴⁶⁸ *Muzhal* is probably the same as *mudal* or *mudi*.

sacred ornaments (*abharna*) of gold, etc., which were weighed by the stone called (*after*) Adavallan and engraved on stone, excluding those (*gifts of*) the twenty-fifth year and the twenty-sixth year, which had been engraved on the adjacent stones before this (*part of the inscription*) on the east of this upper tier (*jagatippadai*):—⁴⁶⁹

52. Out of the treasures, which he seized after having defeated the Chera king and the Pandyas in Malainadu, (*he*) gave:—

53. One handle for a flywhisk, (*consisting of*) thirty-four *karanju* of gold.

54. One handle for a flywhisk, (*consisting of*) thirty-three *karanju* of gold.

55. Having obtained the illustrious names of Sivapadasekhara⁴⁷⁰ and Sri-Rajaraja,⁴⁷¹ (*he gave the following*) gold trumpets (*kalam*), which had one *kangil* (?), two pipes (*kural*) and five rings (*modiram*):—

56. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) two hundred and ninety-four *karanju* and a half of gold.

57. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) two hundred and ninety-five *karanju* and a quarter of gold.

58. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) two hundred and ninety-six *karanju* and three quarters and two *manjadi* of gold.

59. Two trumpets, consisting of five hundred and ninety-three *karanju* of gold,— each (*consisting of*) two hundred and ninety-six *karanju* and a half of gold.

60. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) two hundred and ninety-four *karanju*, nine *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.

61. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) two hundred and ninety *karanju* and three quarters of gold.

62. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) two hundred and eighty-six *karanju*, three *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.

⁴⁶⁹ This clause refers to the first part of the present inscription, which precedes the second part on the upper tier of the north wall and is consequently, with respect to it, situated in the east. On *jagatippadai* see page 35, note 2 (of the SII).

⁴⁷⁰ *I.e.*, “he whose diadem are Siva’s feet,” “the devotee of Siva.”

⁴⁷¹ *I.e.*, “the illustrious king of kings.”

63. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) two hundred and ninety-eight *karanju* and a half and two *manjadi* of gold.
64. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) two hundred and eighty-seven *karanju* and three quarters, four *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.
65. Out of (*his own*) treasures (*he*) gave:–
66. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) one hundred and sixty-eight *karanju* and a quarter of gold.
67. One trumpet, (*consisting of*) one hundred and sixty-eight *karanju* of gold.
68. A single (*trumpet*), (*consisting of*) one hundred and forty-nine *karanju* and a half and three *manjadi* of gold,– including one *kangil* and one pipe (*kural*).
69. (*The following*) tops (*makuta*) for temple-parasols (*tiruppallittongal*), including a knob (*mottu*) and a plate (*paralai*) soldered together:–
70. Three tops for temple-parasols, consisting of one hundred and forty-eight *karanju* and three quarters, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold,– each (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju* and a half, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.
71. Five tops for temple-parasols, consisting of two hundred and forty-eight *karanju* and three quarters of gold,– each (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju* and three quarters of gold.
72. Two tops for temple-parasols, consisting of one hundred *karanju* of gold,– each (*consisting of*) fifty *karanju* of gold.
73. Two tops for temple-parasols, consisting of ninety-eight *karanju* of gold,– each (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju* of gold.
73. Two tops for temple-parasols, consisting of ninety-eight *karanju* of gold,– each (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju* of gold.
74. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) fifty-one *karanju* of gold.
75. Two tops for temple-parasols, consisting of ninety-eight *karanju* and three quarters of gold,– each (*consisting of*) fifty *karanju*, two *manadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.
76. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) fifty *karanju*, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.

77. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) forty-eight *karanju* and three quarters of gold.
78. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) fifty *karanju* and three quarters, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.
79. Two tops for temple-parasols, consisting of one hundred and one *karanju* and a half of gold,— each (*consisting of*) fifty *karanju* and three quarters of gold.
80. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju* and a half of gold.
81. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju* and six *manjadi* of gold.
82. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju* and a quarter of gold.
83. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) forty-eight *karanju* and a half of gold.
84. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju*, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.
85. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) forty-eight *karanju* and three quarters, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.
86. One top for a temple-parasol, (*consisting of*) fifty *karanju* and (*one*) *manjadi* of gold.
87. Three top for a temple-parasol, consisting of one hundred and forty-nine *karanju* and a half, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold,— each (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju* and three quarters, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.
88. Five tops for white parasols (*dhavalachchhatra*), consisting of fifty *karanju* of gold,— including a plate (*paralai*) soldered together with the knob (*mottu*).
89. One top for a colored sacred parasol of victory (*vannigai-tiru-korra-kudai*), (*consisting of*) fifteen *karanju* and a half two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold,— including a plate soldered together with a knob.
90. One betel-leaf salver (*ilaitattu*), (*consisting of*) nine hundred and ninety-five *karanju* of gold.
91. One betel-leaf salver, (*consisting of*) nine hundred and eighty-eight *karanju* of gold.

92. Having returned from the conquest of Satyasraya, (*he*) poured out as flowers at the sacred feet (*sripadapushpa*) and worshipped the feet of the god (*with the following gold flowers*):–

93. Two sacred gold flowers (*tirupporpu*) consisting of twenty *karanju* of gold,– each (*consisting of*) ten *karanju* of gold.

94. Twelve sacred gold flowers, consisting of one hundred and nineteen *karanju* and a half and four *manjadi* of gold,– each (*consisting of*) nine *karanju* and three quarters, four *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.

95. Ten sacred gold flowers, consisting of ninety-nine *karanju* and a half of gold,– each sacred gold flower (*consisting of*) nine *karanju* and three quarters and four *manjadi* of gold.

96. One sacred gold flower, (*consisting of*) nine *karanju* and three quarters, three *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.

97. One sacred gold flower, (*consisting of*) (*one*) *karanju* and three quarters and (*one*) *manjadi* of gold.

98. One sacred gold flower, shaped like a lotus (*tamarai*), (*consisting of*) thirteen *karanju* and six *manjadi* of gold.

99. To Dakshina-Meru-Vitankar (*her*) gave (*the following ornaments*), to be worn (*by this god*):–

100. One string of rounds beads (*tiral-mani-vadam*), (*consisting of*) five (*strings*) soldered together, (*and containing*) forty-nine *karanju*, seven *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.

101. One polished⁴⁷² ring for the arm of the god (*tirukkaikkarai*), (*consisting of*) fifty-one *karanju* and a half of gold.

102. One polished ring for the arm of the god, (*consisting of*) forty-five *karanju* and a half and two *manjadi* of gold.

103. One polished ring for the arm of the god, (*consisting of*) forty-nine *karanju* and three quarters, two *manjadi* and (*one*) *kunri* of gold.

⁴⁷² Opan seems to be another form of oppam, “polish”; compare *aran, kalan, nilan, pathan, belan* for *uram, kalam, nilam, patham, balam*.

104. One polished ring for the arm of the god, (*consisting of*) forty-five *karanju* and three quarters of gold.

105. One pair of polished rings for the feet of the god (*tiruvadikkarai*), (*consisting of*) ninety-six *karanju* and a half of gold.

106. One sacred girdle (*tiruppattigai*), (*consisting of*) one hundred and forty-nine *karanju* and a quarter of gold.

107. (*Finally, he*) gave one sacred diadem (*tiruppattam*), (*consisting of*) nine hundred and eighty-one *karanju* and a quarter of gold, which was made of gold taken from the treasures, which he seized after having defeated the Chera king and the Pandyas in Malainadu.

3. King Rajendra I (1014-1044): An inscription on the south wall, first and second tiers, on the walls of the central shrine of the Thanjavur temple

- *Date*: the 242nd day of the 19th year of this reign
- *References*: SII, Vol. II: No. 20 (pp. 105-109)
- *Summary*: This inscription records that Rajendra-Choladeva granted a annual allowance of paddy to a Saiva priest of the Rajarajesvara temple. He issued this order from his palace at Gangaikonda-Sorapuram. The most important part of the inscription is the end of its historical introduction, which adds a number of names of places, which the king had conquered between his 12th and 19th year, to those mentioned in two Tirumalai inscriptions of the 12th year.⁴⁷³ As the historical passage at their beginning adds nothing new to that of the subjoined inscription, they serve at least to prove, that Rajendra-Chola did not make any further conquests after the 19th year of his reign.

TRANSLATION

Hail! Prosperity! On the two-hundred-and-forty-second day of the 19th year (*of the reign*) of Ko-Parakesarivarman, *alias* the lord Sri-Rajendra-Soradeva, who,— in (*his*) life of high prosperity, (*during which he*) rejoiced that, while Fortune, having become constant, was increasing, the goddess of the great earth, the goddess of victory in battle, and the matchless goddess of fame had become his great queens,— conquered with (*his*) great and warlike army Idaiturai-nadu; Vanavasi, whose warriors (*were protected by*) walls of continuous forests; Kollippakkai, whose walls were surrounded

⁴⁷³ SII, Vol. I, No. 67-68.

by sulli (*trees*); Mannaikkadakkam of unapproachable strength; the crown of the king of Iram, (*who was as impetuous as*) the sea in fighting;⁴⁷⁴ the exceedingly beautiful crown of the queen of the king of that (*country*); the crown of Sundara and the pearl-necklace of Indra, which the king of the South had previously given up to that (*king of Iram*); the whole Ira-mandalam on the transparent sea; the crown praised by many and the garland of the sun, family-treasures, which the arrow-shooting (*king of*) Kerala rightfully wore; many ancient islands, whose old and great guard was the sea, which resounds with conches; the crown of pure gold, worthy of Lakshmi, which Parasurama, having considered the fortifications of Sandimattivu impregnable, had deposited (*there*), when, raging with anger, (*he*) bound the kings twenty-one times; the seven and a half lakshas of Iratta-padi, (*which was*) strong by nature, (*through the conquest of which*) immeasurable fame arose,⁴⁷⁵ (*and which he took from*) Jayasimha, who, out of fear (*and*) full of vengeance, turned his back at Muyangi and hid himself; the principal great mountains, (*which contained*) the nine treasures; Sakkara-kottam, whose warriors were brave;⁴⁷⁶ Madura-mandalam, whose forts (*bore*) banners (*which touched*) the clouds; the fertile Namanaikkonai, which was full of groves;⁴⁷⁷ Panchappalli, whose warriors were hot with rage;⁴⁷⁸ Masuni-desam, whose paddy-fields were green;⁴⁷⁹ a large heap of family-treasures, together with many (*other treasures*), (*which he carried away*) after having seized Indiradan⁴⁸⁰ of the old race of the moon together with (*his*) family, in a fight which took place in a hall (*at*) Adinagar, (*a city*) which was famous for its unceasing abundance; Odda-vishayam, which was difficult to approach, (*and which he subdued in*) close fights; the good Kosalai-nadu, where Brahmanas assembled; Tandabutti (*i.e.*, Danda-bhukti), in whose gardens bees abounded, (*and which he acquired*) after having destroyed Dharmapala (*in*) a hot battle; Takkanaladam (*i.e.*, Dakshina-Lata), whose fame reached (*all*) directions, (*and*

⁴⁷⁴ Like the Tirumalai inscriptions, this inscription reads *porukadal* while Nos. 9 to 19 have *poruthadar*.

⁴⁷⁵ Instead of *pukalodu* the reading of Nos. 10 to 19 (SII, Vol. II), this inscription has *pukalodum* like the Tirumalai inscriptions.

⁴⁷⁶ In SII, Vol. I: pp. 99 *vikramaveerar* was taken as a proper name. From the analogy of other items in the list of conquests, I now consider it more probable that a general descriptive epithet is intended.

⁴⁷⁷ The Tirumalai inscriptions read "Namanaikkonam, which was surrounded by dense groves."

⁴⁷⁸ The Tirumalai inscriptions read *venjilaiveerar* which I took to be a proper name, but now prefer to translate by "whose warriors possessed cruel bows;" compare note 3, above.

⁴⁷⁹ *Pasadai* comes to the same as *pasudai*, the reading of the Tirumalai inscriptions.

⁴⁸⁰ This doubtful name might be a corruption of Indraratha. If the reading of the Tirumalai inscriptions, *kulathirathanai* instead of *kulathirathanai* should turn out to be the correct one, the king's name would be either Dhiratara or Iradaran (?)

which he occupied) after having attacked Ranasura, (whose) strength departed,⁴⁸¹ Vangala-desam, where the rain did not cease, (and from which) Govindachandra, (whose) fortune diminished, fled; elephants of rare strength and treasures of women, (which he seized) after having been pleased to frighten on a hot battle-field Mahipala, who was deprived (even) of his slippers, bracelets and ear-rings;⁴⁸² Uttiraladam (i.e., Uttara-Lata) on the vast sea of pearls; the Ganga, whose waters sprinkled tirthas, which were full flowers;⁴⁸³ and (who),– having dispatched many ships in the midst of the rolling sea and having caught Samgramavijayottungavarman, the king of Kadaram, along with (his) vehicles, (viz.) rutting elephants, (which were as impetuous as) the sea in fighting,– (took) the large heap of treasures,⁴⁸⁴ which (that king) had rightfully accumulated; the (arch called) Vidyadhara-torana at the “war-gate” of the extensive city of the enemy; the “jewel-gate,” adorned with great splendour; the “gate of large jewels;” Vijayam, of great fame; Pannai, watered by the river; the ancient Malaiyur (with) a fort situated on a high hill; Mayirudingam, surrounded by the deep sea (as) a moat; Ilangasogam (i.e., Lankasoka), undaunted (in) fierce battles; Mappappalam, having abundant high waters as defense; Mevilimbangam, having fine walls as defence; Valaippanduru, possessing (both) cultivated land (?) and jungle; Talaitakkolam, praised by great men (versed in) the sciences; Madamalingam, firm in great and fierce battles; Ilamuri-desam, whose fierce strength was subdued by a vehement (attack); Manakkavaram, whose flower-gardens (resembled) the girdle (of the nymph) of the southern region; and Kadaram, of fierce strength, which was protected by the neighboring sea;– having been pleased to make gifts in the college (kalluri), which surrounds the king’s flower-garden (aram) on the northern side of the royal hall (tiru-maligai) of Mudikonda-Soran within the palace (koyil) at Gangaikonda-Sorapuram, the lord Sri-Rajendra-Sora-deva vouchsafed to order, that two thousand kalam of paddy, fully measured by the marakkal (preserved) in the temple of this god (and) called (after) Adavallan, should be supplied every year, as long as the moon and the sun endure, to the treasury in the city, to be enjoyed (bhoga) by the priests (acharya) of the temple of the lord Sri-Rajaraja-Isvara, (viz.) by our lord, the

⁴⁸¹ Instead of *muranusa* a Chidambaram inscription reads *muranara*, which comes to the same.

⁴⁸² The readings of the Tirumalai inscriptions, *thodaukadarsangu kottan* and *sanguvodan*, seem to be mere corruptions of the reading in the text.

⁴⁸³ Instead of *malar*, “a flower”, the Tirumalai inscriptions read *manal* “sand”.

⁴⁸⁴ Nethi seems to be used for nithi; compare page 95, note 1 (of SII, Vol. II).

[Sai]vacharya Sarvasiva-pandita,⁴⁸⁵ and by those who shall deserve it among the pupils (*sisya*) of this lord and the pupils of his pupils (*prasishya*), who are natives of Aryadesa, Madhyadesa or Gaudadesa. (*The above order*) was written by the royal minister (*who writes the king`s*) orders,⁴⁸⁶ Sembiyan Virupparaiyan, (*and*) engraved on stone, as heard from the mouth of the king. Let the saiva-acharyas of this (*spiritual*) line (*vamsa*) protect this charity (*dharma*)!

4. King Kulottunga I (1070-1120): An Inscription in the Pandava-Perumal Temple, Conjeeveram

– *Date*: The date is the 5th year of the king, who is now styled Kulottunga-Choladeva (I), while in the inscriptions of his 2nd, 3rd and 4th years (Nos. 64 to 67 and 77) he still bears the name Rajendra-Choladeva (II).

– *References*: (No. 17 of 1893) ARE; SII, Vol. III, No. 68

– *Summary*: This inscription is engraved on the north wall of the Pandava-Perumal temple, with the ancient name Tiruppadagam. It mentions the king's victories at Sakkarakottam (in present-day Madhya Pradesh) and Vayiragaram (i.e. Wairagarh, in present-day Maharashtra). It also claimed that the king, also known as Rajendra Choladeva II, defeated the king of Kuntala and the king of Western Chalukya and ascended the Chola throne himself, beheading an unnamed king of Pandya in the south. The next story is about a businessman of Kanchipuram donating a flower garden to the temple and buying land for the gardeners. The inscription is also notable for mentioning the order of administrative units: Orirukkai (village) in Kaliyur-nadu (a subdivision) of Kaliyur-kottam, (a district) of Jayangonda-Sola-mandalam. Here, Nadu is a unit under kottam whereas normally they are equal.

TRANSLATION

(Line 1.) Hail ! Prosperity ! Having made the wheel of his (*authority*) to go as far as the golden circle (*i.e.*, Mount Meru) on the earth, which was surrounded by the moat of the sea, that was (*again*) surrounded by (*his*) fame, (*the king*) newly wedded, in the time (*when he was still*) heir-apparent (*Ilango*), the brilliant goddess of victory at

⁴⁸⁵ As Sarva and Isana are synonymous, this person is perhaps identical with the guru Isanasiva-pandita, who is mentioned in No. 9, paragraphs 1 and 2 (of SII, Vol. II).

⁴⁸⁶ *Tiru-mantri olai* is an abbreviation for *tiru-mantri olai erudum* which occurs in the inscription No. 27, paragraph 1 (of SII, Vol. II) In the large Leyden grant, the words *nam olai yazhuthum*, "who writes our orders," and *mandira-olai* are prefixed to the name of one and the same person at two different places (lines 123 and 161 f.).

Sakkarakottam by deeds of valour and seized a herd of strong elephants at Vayiragaram. (*He*) unsheathed (*his*) sword, showed the strength of (*his*) arm, and spurred (*his*) war-steed, so that the king of Kondala (*Kuntala*), (*whose spear had*) a sharp point, lost his wealth. Having established (*his*) fame, having put on the garland of (*the victory over*) the Northern region, and having stopped the prostitution of the goddess with the sweet and excellent lotus-flower (*i.e.*, Lakshmi) of the Southern region, and the loneliness of the goddess of the good country whose garment is the Ponni (Kaveri), (*he*) put on by right (*of inheritance*) the pure royal crown of jewels, while the kings of the old earth bore this two feet (*on their heads*) as a large crown. (L. 2.) The sweet river Ponni swelled, (*and*) the river (*of the sins*) of the Kali (*age*) dried up. (*His*) sceptre swayed over every region; the heavenly white light of (*his*) white parasol shone everywhere on the circle of the great earth; (*and his*) tiger (-banner) fluttered unrivalled on the Meru (*mountain*). (Before him) stood a row of elephants showering jewels, which were presented (*as*) tribute by the kings of remote islands of the deep sea. The excellent head of the brilliant king of the South (*i.e.*, the Pandya) lay being pecked by kites. While his valour and liberality shone like (*his*) necklace of precious stones and (*like*) the flower-garland on (*his*) royal shoulders, (*and*) while (*all his*) enemies prostrated themselves on the ground, (*he*) was pleased to take his seat on the throne of heroes together with (*his queen*), the mistress of the whole world.

(L. 3.) In the fifth year (*of the reign*) of this king Rajakesarivarman, alias the lord Sri-Kulottunga-Soladeva, - we, the inhabitants of Orirukkai in Kaliyur-nadu (*a subdivision*) of Kaliyur-kottam,⁴⁸⁷ (*a district*) of Jayangonda-Sola-mandalam, made and gave the following writing on stone:- Kumara-Peruvaniyan⁴⁸⁸ Devan Erinjodi, *alias* Arulaladasan,⁴⁸⁹ a merchant (*residing*) in the great street of Arumolideva⁴⁹⁰ at Kanchipuram, a city of Eyil-nadu, (*a subdivision*) of Eyirkottam,⁴⁹¹ had made for the god who is pleased to reside in the Tiruppadagam (*temple*) a flower-garden, called the flower-garden of Arulaladasan (*and situated*) on the outside of the temple. In

⁴⁸⁷ See above, p. 138, note 8 (of the SII, Vol. III).

⁴⁸⁸ This title means "the great merchant of the heir-apparent." Compare Seraman-loka-pperun-jetti, EI, Vol. IV: pp. 292 and note 6.

⁴⁸⁹ This name is derived from Arulala-Perumal, the name of the great Vishnu temple in Little Kanchi. Compare EI, Vol. III: pp. 71 and 118, Vol. IV: pp. 145, and Vol. V: pp. 72.

⁴⁹⁰ See above, pp. 8, note 3 (of SII, Vol. III).

⁴⁹¹ See above, SII, Vol. II: pp. 390.

order to provide for the cost (*mudal*) of the clothing of those who work (*in this garden*) and of (*their*) families, we sold the following land in our village free from taxes.

(L. 4.) The eastern boundary (*is*) to the west of the road of the inhabitants of Uttiramelur; the southern boundary (*is*) to the north of the Alichchiyaru (*river*); the western boundary (*is*) to the east of the land which we have sold to (*the temple of*) Tiruve[h]kavalvan⁴⁹² and of the field of sattamangalam-Udaiyan Kadagan; and the northern boundary (*is*) to the south of the small field of Sattamangalam-Udaiyan Kadichchan. Having sold the two thousand kuli, (*measured*) by the rod of sixteen spans,⁴⁹³ enclosed in these four boundaries, not excluding the cultivated land, (*we*) received from him⁴⁹⁴ as purchase-money for this land eleven kalanju of gold, weighed by the true standard of the city (*kudinar-kal*) (*and*) equal (*in fineness*) to the Madurantakan-madai.⁴⁹⁵ Having received (this amount) in full and having made (*the land*) a tax-free devadana, we shall not be able to claim on his land velikkasu,⁴⁹⁶ water-cess (*nir-vilai*), petty taxes,⁴⁹⁷ sorumattu⁴⁹⁸ and any other (*tax*).

(L. 5.) We have to measure into the treasury of the temple the paddy which comes from the land harvested to Anaikkarukku, (*a portion of ?*) this land. It shall be lawful to irrigate the land lying to the east (*of the land sold*), from the channels included in this land.

(L. 6.) Having thus agreed, we, the inhabitants of Orirukkai, made and gave (*this*) writing on stone to continue as long as the moon and the sun. At the bidding of these, I, Sattamangalam-Udaiyan Velan Kayilayati[an], a cultivator of this village, wrote (*this*). This is my writing. (*This is placed under*) the protection of the Sri-Vaishnavas.

5. King Kulottunga III (1178-1216): An inscription on the left of the entrance to the north wall of the fourth *prakara* of the Ranganatha temple on the island of Srirangam near Trichinopoly.

⁴⁹² According to the Nalayiraprabandham, Vehka was one of the Vishnu temples in Kanchi. Besides, Vehka or Vegavati is the name of a river which passes Conjeeveram and joins the Palaru near Villivalam; see above SII, Vol. II: pp. 345 and note 9.

⁴⁹³ See above, p. 106 and note 3, and p. 109 (of SII, Vol. III).

⁴⁹⁴ Viz. from Arulaladasan (1. 3).

⁴⁹⁵ On kudi-nar-kal and Madurantakan-madai see EI, Vol. V: pp. 106, notes 1 and 3.

⁴⁹⁶ The same term occurs in No. 57 above, text line 9 (of SII, Vol. III).

⁴⁹⁷ Sill irai is the same as sil-vari, on which see above, p. 122, note 6 (of SII, Vol. III).

⁴⁹⁸ With this obscure term compare eracl choru, above, No. 24, text line 7, and No. 27, text line 8 (of SII, Vol. III).

- *Date*: It is dated in the 19th year of Kulottunga-Chola III on a day which corresponds to Tuesday, the 12th November A.D. 1196⁴⁹⁹.
- *References*: SII, Vol. III: No. 88.
- *Summary*: It recorded an order of the king, the contents of which are lost.
- *Translation*:

(Line 1.) (*Obeisance to*) Hari (*i.e.* Vishnu)! Hail Prosperity! (*The king*) put on the crown of the race of the Sun, while clouds were abundant and (hence) the land was fertile; while the commands (*sealed with the crest*) of the tiger, the discus, the rules of Manu, (*by*) which (*good*) conduct prospered, and the sceptre ruled (*every*) region; while the goddess of Fortune rejoiced (*to be united*) with the king; while the cruel Kali (*age*) perished; (*and*) while the cool white parasol (*of the king*) overshadowed the earth to the end of the world.

(L. 2.) (*He*) dispatched matchless elephants, performed heroic deeds, prostrated to the ground the kings to the North, entered Kachchi when (*his*) anger abated, and levied tribute from the whole (*northern*) region.

(L. 3.) By a single army (*he*) cut off the nose of the son of the Valudi (*i.e.* the Pandya king), took the Madurai of the Tamil (*country*) and gave (*it*) to Vikrama-Pandya. (*He*) took the crowned head of Vira-Pandya, who, after (*the Chola king*) had returned, started because (*he felt his*) disgrace and faced (*him*) at Nettur. (*He*) put an end to the war and caused his (*viz.* the Pandya's) young wife to enter (*his*) harem (?).

(L. 4.) When the Tennavan (*i.e.*, the Pandya king), who had lost (*his*) fortune, and the Seralan (*i.e.*, the Chera king) came (*to the Chola king*), bowed (*to him*) and sat down at the foot of (*his*) throne, (*he*) placed (*his*) feet on the crown of the former, granted (*him*) land, granted (*him*) a crown, and gave the Pandya permission (*to go*); and to the Villavan (*i.e.*, the Chera king), who (*formerly had*) distributed crores, (*he*) granted a fortune which (*other*) kings could not obtain.

(L. 5.) (*He*) cut off a finger of Vira-Kerala and saw (*his*) back (*i.e.*, put him to flight) ; (*but*), when (*the latter*) came and bowed (*to him*), (*he*) bestowed riches (on him) in public⁵⁰⁰ and gave (*him*) to eat from the (royal) plates.

(L. 6.) To the Pandya who bore the glorious name of "chief of the family of the Sun" (*he*) granted great treasures, robes, and vessels (*set with*) brilliant jewels. (*He*) raised

⁴⁹⁹ See *Ep. Ind.* Vol. IV. P. 219, No. 17 (EI, Vol. IV, No. 17: pp. 219).

⁵⁰⁰ Literally, "so that the (*whole*) earth knew (*it*)".

the banner of liberality and heroism and put on the vagai⁵⁰¹ (garland) (*and*) the ankle-rings of heroes. The eight quarters obeyed (*his*) orders, (*and his*) fame shone on the mountain surrounding (*the earth*).⁵⁰²

(L. 7.) In the 19th year of (*this*) king Parakesarivarman, who was pleased to be seated together with (*his queen*) Bhuvanamulududaiyar on the throne of heroes (*which consisted of*) pure gold, alias the emperor of the three worlds, Sri-Kulottunga-Soladeva, who, having taken Madurai, was pleased to take the crowned head of the Pandya,⁵⁰³ - on the day of Pushya, which corresponded to a Tuesday and to the fifth tithi of the second fortnight of the month Vrischika, - the following order was issued (by the king).

(L. 9.) This (*is*) the everlasting great order of the holy Sriranganatha (*who is*) the cause⁵⁰⁴ of the creation protection and destruction of the three worlds.⁵⁰⁵

To our revenue officers⁵⁰⁶

6. King Rajaraja III (1216-1246) : An inscription in the second gopura of the temple, right of entrance, Thanjavur temple.

- *Date*: in the 3rd year of the reign of Tribhuvanachakravartin Rajarajadeva, *i.e.*, Rajaraja III.
- *References*: SII, Vol. II, part IV: No. 96; ARE: No. 23 of 1897.
- *Summary*: This inscription was carved in the third year of the reign of King Rajaraja III. Although it does not record any gifts, it does mention that three local Chola chiefs agreed to a political agreement that they were loyal to the king and respected each other. The agreement shows that the Chola kingdom fell into internal turmoil, spreading to the capital Thanjavur and this situation seems to have originated at the end of the Kulottunga III period.

TRANSLATION

⁵⁰¹ The tree *Mimosa flexuosa*. Garlands of the flowers of this tree are worn by conquerors.

⁵⁰² Instead of the two last sentences, No. 170 of 1902 (ARE) has : - "(He) placed (his) pair of feet - may (they) prosper long ! - (on) the crown of the king of Ilam."

⁵⁰³ See above, p. 215, note 4 (SII, Vol. III, No. 4: pp. 215).

⁵⁰⁴ Karanam is meant for karanasya, which would, however, offend against the metre.

⁵⁰⁵ In this Sanskrit verse the king's order is represented as emanating from the god of Srirangam himself.

⁵⁰⁶ See above, p. 44 (SII, Vol. III: pp. 44).

Hail! Prosperity! In the 3rd year⁵⁰⁷ (*of the reign*) of the emperor of the three world, the [glorious Rajjarajadeva, we two,– (*viz.*) Kallikkudaiyan⁵⁰⁸ Va Periyān *alias* Kulottunga-So[ra-Mara]yan of Kallikkudi in Purakkiliyur-nadu, (*a subdivision*) of Pan[dyakula[sani-valanadu and [Kiliman]galamudaiyan Karunakaran *alias* Kulottunga-Sora nma-marayan of Kilimangalam in [Ki]rar-kurram, (*a subdivision*) of Nittavinoda-valanadu,– engraved the following (*agreement*) on stone in the temple of the lord Rajaraja-I[svaramu]daiyar:– [We] of both parties and Sirumangala[mandai]yn Vanni-Kolari *alias* Kulottun[ga-So]ra-Perayan of Sirumangalam in Ven[ni-ku]rram, (*a subdivision*) of Suttamali-valanadu– these three of us will not disobey His Majesty Ulagudaiya-Na[yanar]⁵⁰⁹

(LI. 19– 23) our enemies one who becomes an enemy of (*any*) one of us shall be the enemy of (*all*) three of us; and one who becomes a friend of (*any*) one (*of us*) shall be the friend of (*all*) three (*of us*).

[The rest of the inscription is too fragmentary to be translated.]

⁵⁰⁷ The syllable ill added after the figure na has probably to be taken as an abbreviation of the word naal which must mean “time”, as the number of the day of the year is not specified.

⁵⁰⁸ The terms *Kallikkudaiyan*, *Kilimangalamudaiyan* and *Sirumangalamudaiyan* which occur in this inscription confirm my remarks on p. 459 above note 1 (SII, Vo. II).

⁵⁰⁹ The words *ulagudaiya nayanar sripadam* are repeated unnecessarily in l. 17 f. What remains of ll. 18 and 19 does not furnish any complete sentence.

B. SELECTED INSCRIPTIONS UNDER VIJAYANAGARA RULERS

1. Harihara I. (1336-1356) of Sangama

1a. On a rock to the proper right of the Maruti temple in the locality called *Tattikote*, Badami village, Badami taluk, in Bijapur district.

Date: 1340 AD.

References: IA, Vol. X: No. LXXXVII (pp. 62-63); IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 2.

Summary: It states that by the direction of the king Hariyappa Odeya, the supreme chief (*mahanayakacarya*) Cameyanayaka) granted the villages Badami and Mundanuru to the two thousand *mahajanas* in the presence of the god Bhutanatha. It is also states that Camaraja constructed the fort and probaly the eastern parapet wall.

This is one of the earliest inscriptions from the Vijayanagara period, mentions King Harihara I at the beginning of his reign. The epitaph uses the title maha-mandalesvara and lord of the east and west seas. During this period, Vijayanagara's territory was not as large as when they conquered the Tamil region and the northeast later, but the territory also reached the east and west coasts, as confirmed by inscriptions.

Translation: "Hail victory and glory! On Thursday the first day of the bright fortnight of (the month) Chaitra of the Vikrama *sarṁvatsara* which was the 1261st year of the Śaka era-by the appointment of the lord, the brave Śrī-Hariyappa, the glorious *Mahā-maṇḍalēśvara*, the ... of hostile king, the punisher of the kings who break their promises, the supreme lord of (*the country which is included between*) the eastern and the western oceans;-

(L.7).-The glorious Chāmenāyaka,-the *Mahānāyaka*, the *Ācharya*, the hero, he who was very lion to the elephants ... , he who was terrible ... , in the presence of (*the god*) Śrī-bhuta-nātha, gave, with libations of water, and as a *sarvamānya* grant (*the village of*) Bādāvi and (*the village of*) Muṇḍanūr to the glorious Two- thousand of Bādāvi; and-

(L.13).-Chāmarāja constructed the fort and the eastern parapet⁵¹⁰ of that same Bādāvi. May there be auspicious and great good fortune".

⁵¹⁰ Pāraṭavanu-parapet, noted by the translator: "This letter (pā) is doubtful, and might be *vā*, or *shā* as much as *pā*. I am inclined, however to read *pāraṭa*, as a corrupion of *paraṭe*, "the coping of a wall", IA, Vol. X: pp.63.

1b. An inscription in Sringeri Jagir, Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka

Date: 1346 AD⁵¹¹.

References: EC, Vol. VI, Sringeri Jagir: No. 1; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 5.

Summary: The inscription states that Hariyappa-odeya (Harihara I) along with his four brothers (named), son-in-law Ballappa-dandanayaka and Kumara Sovanna-odeya, made a gift of 9 villages, along with the hamlets attached, situated in Kela-nadu, with an income of 150 *gadyanas* (gold coin). Vira Kikkayi-tayi is said to have been the actual donor. This inscription is interesting because it mentions the names of all the five sangama brothers, the conquering warriors who founded the kingdom of Vijayanagara.

Translation: "Obeisance to Vidyātīrtha-guru, with his form of celestial glory; whose friendship gained in never lost. Praise of Śambhu.

Harihara having conquered the earth from the eastern to the western ocean, in order to celebrate the festival of his victory, made an excellent grant.

Be it well. (On the date specified), the mahā-maṇḍalēśvara, subduer of hostile kings, champion over kings who break their world, vīra-Hariyapoḍeyar, Kampanṇoḍeyar, Bukanṇoḍeyar, Mārapoḍeyar, Muddapoḍeyar, son-in-law Ballappa-dannāyaka, Kumāra Sōvanṇoḍeyar and others, made, to Bhārati-tīrtha-śrīpāda, his disciples and others, and the forty Brahmans residing in that tīrtha of Singēri, for the performance of rites and service, a grant on a stone śāsana as follows:-Nine villages (named) belonging to Kela-nāḍ in Sāntalige-nāḍ, after deducting 150 ga for the cultivators of Sāntalige-nāḍ for various taxes (specified), we, of our own will, have given (to the donees above named), with pouring of water. The cultivators of the Mēlubhāgi Thousand of the Sāntalige-nāḍ have also been deducted.

(The grant repeated)

This śāsana⁵¹² was engraved by Lingōja, son of Chinna Mallōja".

1c. Stone near the Hariharesvara temple to the north of Hariharapura, Pavugada taluk, Tumkur district.

⁵¹¹ Filliozat (1973: pp. 10).

⁵¹² Sanskrit word, a Buddhist and Shaivite term for their philosophy and practice: Keown (2004: pp. 215).

Date: 1357 AD⁵¹³

References: EC, Vol. XII, Pavugada: No. 33; IVR, Vol I, Part I: No. 17.

Traslation: “May it be prosperous. Be it well, (On the date specified), the mahārājādhirāja rāja-paramēśvara vīra-Harihara-mahārāya (?made a grant for) the god Hariharēśvara. (Rest illegible)”.

Summary: King Harihara I and God Hariharesvarasvami are called in the inscription. The date is late beyond the reign of Harihara I (1336-1355) and after that there is no more inscriptions which refer to him with certain date. All other details of the inscription are lost.

2. Bukka I (1356-1377) of Sangama: selected inscriptions

Bukka I succeeded his brother Harihara I after the year of 1356 A.D. but many of his inscriptions bear much earlier dates (from 1341 A.D.) because he was associated in the governance of the kingdom even during the rule of Harihara I (1336A.D.-1356 A.D.).

2b. Slap set up in the land of Sanubhoga to the north-east of the village.

Date: 1346 A.D.

References: EC, Vol. X, Kolar: No. 201; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 24.

Translation: “Be it well. (On the date specified), when the mahā-maṇḍalēśvara rājādhirāja rāja-paramēśvara vīra-Bukka-Rāya was ruling the kingdom of the world,- by the order of his son, pratāpa-Harihara-Rāya, the minister Mallarasa granted this śāsana,- to Irigi-setti, prabhu of Kōlāla-nād in the Nikarilichōḷa-maṇḍala, we formerly granted as a kodage the Nukkanahalli village, belonging to,;and (now) we grant the high lands belonging to that village, together with the wells, with all the usual rights”.

Summary: Bukka I was mentioned as the ruling king. It seems that his son Pratapa-Harihararaya (Harihara II), was enjoying some position in the kingdom even in the early years of the rule of his father. It registers a gift of the village Nukkanahalli to Yirigi-Setti, the chief of Kolala-nadu in Nikarili-Cholamandala, by the minister (*pradhāni*) Mallarasa, at the instance of Harihara.

⁵¹³ Lewis Rice gave the date 1537 A.D.: E.C. Vol. XII, Pavugada: No. 33. However, “the date is too late for either of the Hariharas” and “it is assigned to Harihara I on the basis of the proximity of the date”: Ritti, Shrinivas and B.R. Gopal (eds.), IVR, Vol I, Part I, No. 17: pp. 29.

2c. Slab set up to the north of the Ganapati-Vagesvari temple, Sringeri Taluk, Chikkamagalur District.

Date: 1356 A.D.

References: EC, Vol. XI, Sringeri: No. 9; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 36.

Translation: “LL.1-2. Vidyātīrtha, the lord of ascetics surpasses the sun as he removes both the internal and external darkness of men both day and night.

LL.3-14. Be it well. During the auspicious and prosperous Śaka year 1277 being the year Manmatha, in the month of Phālguaṇa, on the 1st lunar day of the bright half corresponding to Tuesday:-

The illustrious mahāmaṇḍalēśvara, champion over hostile kings, vanquisher of kings who break their word, lord of both oceans (eastern and western) Vīra Bukaṇṇoḍeyar, on the occasion of a visit to Vidyātīrtha-śrīprāda at Śringēri made a grant with pouring of water of lands of the revenue value of 300 gadyāṇas in order to provide for ever for the livelihood of the servants of the maṭha and for the *bhikshe* (food) of the ascetics.

Of these, the village Keluvalli (and its hamlets?) Sātaḷgenāḍu would bring to the matt annual revenue of 240 gadyāṇas excluding grant previously made to Brahmans and gods but including a duty on cocoanut (*tengina-teru*). For the remaining 60 gadyāṇas, was given the two village Haravari and Giḷikallu in Kinkundanāḍu yielding annually 440 salages of paddy and 4 gadyāṇas in cash (*mēlu-honnu*) and the village Bōḷūru (in the same Kinkundanāḍ) yielding 110 salages of paddy and 2 gadyāṇas and 6 paṇas in cash. Thus the lands bringing a total revenue of 300 gadyāṇas have been separated? (*kuḷava kaḍidu*) and given way as charity to last as long as the moon and sun endure...

In the ballages of Kuluvali, the following are the details for 68 gadyāṇas and 2 paṇas being the original tax or dues (modala kuḷa) as entered into accounts by the people of the nāḍ after deducting grants formerly made. Maḍavu (viallge: original tax) 13 gadyāṇas; Hebase, 3 gadyāṇas; Kammaravalli ... Goḷigōḍu, 10 gadyāṇas and 3 paṇas; Keluvalli, 3 gadyāṇas and 3 paṇas; Uḷave and Hosakoppa 4 gadyāṇas each; Haḷugalu, 3 gadyāṇas and paṇas; Sindavali 10 gadyāṇas and 2 paṇas; Chidruvalli, 12 gadyāṇas; cocoanut tax (*tengina-teru*) 3 gadyāṇas; This cocoanut tax originally amounted to 3 varahas tax (modala-kuḷa) ... and has now become equivalent to (risen to) 12 varahas: balance of the former tax 65 varahas and 2 paṇas multiplied by 3 ½ varahas and 1 bēḷe becomes equivalent to 228 varahas and 2 paṇas: Thus, the

original tax of 68 gadyāṇas and 2 paṇas with cocconut tax now amounts to 240 gadyāṇas and 2 paṇas. Good fortune.

LL. 22-27. Details of the former dues (modala-kuḷa) in Kellanāḍu after deducting previous grants as entered into accounts by the people of the nāḍ: Honnahole (should pay) 11 gadyāṇas: Ambalūru 4 gadyāṇas and 2 paṇas: Hemmānī Mēlu Beḷandūru 6 gadyāṇas and 2 paṇas: Keḷa Beḷandūru, 2 gadyāṇas and 3 paṇas; Kānagōḍ Sulligodu, 2 paṇas; All together out of 34 gadyāṇas of Hemmāni division, deducting 8 paṇas there remains the balance of 33 gadyāṇas and 2 paṇas. Hebase, gadyāṇas 9, Haravari 8, gadyāṇas; Boḷaguḍe Toravalli, gadyāṇas 3, Beḷlūru, 13 gadyāṇas, 2 paṇas: All together for Hebase division (original tax amounted to) 33 gadyāṇas and 2 paṇas: Total for both division (original tax) 66 gadyāṇas and 4 paṇas: multiplying this at the rate of 5 gadyāṇas and 4 paṇas per each gadyāṇa (hadike), the sum (present tax) amounts to 360 gadyāṇas: Good fortune.”

Summary: It mentions that Bukka I visited to Srinigeri and met the ascetic Vidyatirtha and made perpetual grant of money for the maintenance of the *matha* (monastery, religious establishment⁵¹⁴) This year is considered as the first year of his ruling as the only king after his brother Harihara I's reign.

2d. Stone lying in rathamakki in the Attigaru village, Tirthahalli Taluk, Shivamogga District.

Date: 1377 A.D.

References: EC, Vol. VIII, Tirthahalli: No. 28; IVR, Vol. I, Part I: No. 134.

Summary: The record refers to the rule of Virupanna (Virupaksa), son of Bukka I over Araga-rajya. He is called herein Udayagiriya Virupanna since he was in charge of Udayagiri-rajya (around Nellore in Andhra Pradesh) for a long time. This epigraph states that all the nadu and prabhus of Nasavanda-nadu-sime within Muduvanka-nadu made a gift of lands in the village Attigara of that nadu to Goyimdeva (Govindadeva), son of Becarasa of Kausika-gotra.

Translation: “Obeisance to Gauṇādhipati. Obeisance to Śambhu &cetera. be it well. (on the date specified), when tha mah-maṇḍalēśvara, subduer of hostile kings, champion over kings who break their word, vīra-Bukka-Rāya's son vīra-udagiri-

⁵¹⁴ Dallapiccola (2003; p. 160).

virupaṇṇa-oḍeyar was ruling the Āraga kingdom in peace and wisdom:-all the nāḍ prabhū in the Nāsavandu-nāḍ-śīme of Muḍtivanka-nāḍ gave to Bēcharasa's son Gōyindēva, a śāsana of a gift as follows;-here come details of the Attigāra village given with all usual rights, at the time of an eclipse of the sun, after offerings to Śiva. Imprecations. (Witnesses)-sun and moon &cetera.”.

3. Narasimha I (1486-1491) of Saluva dynasty: On a stone, Chikka Maralavadi, Kanakapura taluk, Bangalore district.

Date: 1481 A. D.

Reference: EC, Vol. IX, Kanakapura: No. 8; VI, Vol. I: KN 182.

Summary: Records the grant of the village Chikka Manalavadi and its hamlet Habbuhalli in Hommalige-nadu belonging to Chennapattana-rajya as *saryamanya* to Domma-nayaka, son of Madiraja of Mumgandihalli. The donee was to enjoy not only the income from lands but also income from several taxes, hereditarily and was endowed with the right of sale, purchase, gift etc. The record, written by Basavayya, the sculptor, has the sign-manual *Tirumalayya*.

The record refers to Narasingaraja (Saluva Narasimha) as the donor but does not refer to his rule. On the date of the record, however, Virupaksha III (1465-1485) of the Sangama dynasty was ruling.

Translation: “Be it well (On the date specified), the mahā-mandalika, champion over the moustaches of the world, Kaṭhāri-Sāḷuva, Sāḷuva-Narasinga-Rāja-Oḍeyar granted, under the hands of Maugāṇḍihalli Mādirāja's son Domma, a pura dharma-sasana as follows:-Chikka-Maṇalavāḍi and its hamlet Habbuhalli, in the Hommalige-nāḍ belonging to our Channapaṭṭaṇa kingdom, have we granted to you, with all rights (specified). Usual final verses”.

4. Narasimha II (1491-1505) of Saluva

4a. On a stone in the Putta Channayya's field, Gongadipura, Bangalore taluk, Bangalore district.

Date: 1495 A.D.

References: EC, Vol. IX, Bangalore: No. 123; VI, Vol. I: KN 50.

Summary: Mahamandalesvara Anantayyadeva-maha-arasu, son of Huliya Samayyadeva-maha-arasu, described as Goderaya-rupanarayana made a grant of the village Gongadihalli in Kukkala-nadu, belonging to his chieftaincy (*nayakatana*) renaming it as Timmannarajapura, as an agrahara to two sons and two grandsons of Timmarasa, the stanapati of Jallimangala and another (named) for the merit of the king (Narasimha II Saluva).

Translation:

“May it be prosperous. Be it well. (On the date specified), when the mahā-mandalēśvara, chainpion over the mustaches of the world, Kaṭhāri-Sālva, Sālva Immaḍi-Narasinga-Rāya-mahārāya was ruling the kingdom of the world :-the mahā-mandalēśvara Gōḍe-Rāya (with various epithets) made, to the sons of Timmarasa, the temple priest of Vakkejallimangala and others (named), at the time of an eclipse of the sun, a grant of the Gangaḍihalli village in Kukkala-nāḍ belonging to his Nāyakship, giving it another name Timmaṇṇarājapura, as an agrahāra,-in order that merit might be to Immaḍi-Narasinga-Rāya-mahārāya,-with all rights”.

4b. On the stone near the Rajabidi south of the Malalesvara temple, Kodamballi, Kanakapura taluk, Bangalore district.

Date: 1499 A.D.

Reference: EC, Vol. IX, Channapattana: No. 52; VI, Vol. I: KN 91.

Summary: It states that Narasanna-nayaka-vodeya, the agent for the affairs of Immadi Narasingaraya (Narasimha II) was ruling the kingdom. The record mentions Timmarasa of Penugonde, son of Mummaḍi Devaraya of Asvalayana-sutra and Bharadvaja-gotra, made a grant of the village Elasinge situated in the *bhatavrtti-sthala* of Nitturu in Kodamballi-sime which Viraammarasa had received for his *nayakatana* (*nayakkattanam*, chieftaincy) for god Malalesvara of Kodamballi belonging to Channapattana in the Poysana-nadu. The latter portion of the record is damaged.

Translation:

“Be it well. (on the date specified), when the maha-maṇḍalēśvara, champion over the moustaches of the world, Kaṭhāri Sālva Immaḍi-Naraisinga-Rāya-mahārāya's agent Narasaṇṇa-Nāyaka-Vaḍeyar was ruling the kingdom of the world:-Penugonḍe

Ha...dere Mā...rasa's Mummaḍi-Dēva's son Timmarasa, for the god Maḷalēśvara of Kōḍambalḷi belonging to Channapaṭṭaṇa in the Poysaṇanāḍ, granted the elasige village of the Niṭṭur-bhaṭavritti-sthala, belonging to the Kōḷambalḷi-sīme which our Virammarasa...had received for the office of Nāyaka...”.

4c. On the boulder near the Muslim tombs in the proximity of Kadirampura.

Date: 1505 A.D.

References: Devaraj, D.V. and Channabasappa S. Patil (1991; No. 149, pp.60-61);

Summary: Refers to the construction (?) of a tomb (*gurṃata*) in the locality of the hillock called Haralutippegudda, near Kannekate in Kaderamapura in Hastinavati-*valita*. It also refers to the construction of a well in a garden, and individuals by name Saidupiru Ali, Abu and Hasadhasami. It is interesting to note that the present village Kadirampura, near which the inscription is located, is referred to as Kaderamapura, meaning Ramapura at the end, i.e., outskirts of Vijayanagara.

5. Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529) of Tuluva: On a slab set up in front of the maharangamantapa in the Virupaksha temple.

Date: 1510 A.D.

References: EI, Vol. I: pp. 361 ff; SII, IV: No. 258.

Summary: It gives genealogical account of the Vijayanagara dynasty down to Krishnaraya. It records that the king gave the village of Singanayakahalli to the Viruparksha temple, built a *maharangamantapa* and a *gopura* in its front and renovated the big *gopura* in the front. He also gave a gold lotus set with nine gems, a *nagabharana* (snake ornament), a gold vessel, and 24 silver lamps on the occasion of his coronation ceremony.

Translation:

A. Sanskrit portion.

(*This is an edict of*) the illustrious Krishnadevaraya.

Hail ! Let there be prosperity!

(*Verse 1.*) Adoration to Sambhu (*Siva*), who is adorned, as with a *chamara*, with the moon that kisses his lofty head, and who is the principal pillar at the building of the city of the three worlds!

(2.) May that lustre (*Ganesa*),- which dispels the darkness of obstacles, and which, though (*it has the head of*) an elephant (*gaja*), was born from the mountain- daughter (*Agaja*), and is worshipped even by Hari (*Vishnu*),- produce happiness!

(3.) There was produced, like fresh butter, from the great ocean of milk, when it was churned by the gods, the luminary which dispels darkness (*i.e.*, the moon).

(4.) The son of this (*moon*) was Budha, whose name (*was made*) true to its meaning by his unequalled austerities. In consequence of his pious deeds (*he obtained a son*), Pururavas. (*The son*) of him, who destroyed the life (*ayus*) of his enemies by the strength of his arm, was Ayus. His (*son*) was Nahusha. His (*son*) was Yayati, who was fierce in battle (*and*) famed on earth. (*The son*) of this husband of the glorious Devayani was Turvasu, who resembled the Vasus.

(V. 5.) In his race shone king Timma, whose wife was Devaki, (*and*) who was famous among the princes of Tuluva, just as Krishna (*shone*) in the race of Yadu.

(6.) From him was born king Isvara, whose wife was Bukkama (*and*) who was the fearless and virtuous crest-jewel of kings.

(7.) Oh wonder! Though (*like Krishna*) he was the son of the glorious Devaki, though (*like Vishnu*) he had lotus eyes, though he acquired tribute (*ball*) by his valour which was able to subdue the three worlds, (*just as Vishnu in his Vamanavatara acquired the three worlds from Bali by his three steps*), and though he bore (*the auspicious marks of*) the conch and the discus in his hand,- he became still more famous by the name of Isvara, as he obtained prosperity (*bhuti*), universal worship, and the daughter of a king, (*just as the god Isvara wears ashes [bhuti], is universally worshipped, and is the husband of the daughter of the mountain*).

(8.) Like another sun, who always dwelt on earth, he,- who was continually rising, who was surrounded by poets and wise men, who never fled from war (*and*) who was highly famed from the eastern to the western ocean (*and*) from (*Rama's*) Bridge to the golden mountain (*Meru*),- killed the enemies, (*as the sun conquers*) the Mandehas, and shone, surpassing the trees of heaven by his gifts.

(9.) From this lovely son of Devaki was born king Narasa, just as Kama from (*Krishna*) the son of Devaki.

(10.) Resplendent was he, who quickly bridged the Kaveri, (*though*) it consisted of a rapid current of copious water, crossed over it, straightway captured alive in battle with the strength of his arm the enemy, brought his kingdom and (*the city of*) Srirangapattana under his power and set up a pillar of fame,- his heroic deeds being praised in the three worlds, (*which appeared to be*) the palace (*of his glory*).

(11.) Having conquered the Chera, the Chola, the proud Pandya (*who was*) the lord of Madhura, the brave Turushka, the Gajapati king and others, he, who was exceedingly famed from the banks of the Gariga to Lanka and from the slopes of the eastern to those of the western mountain, spread his command like a garland on the heads of kings.

(12.) At Ramesvara and every other shrine on earth which abounds in sacredness, he, with joyful heart, surrounded by wise men, repeatedly performed the sixteen kinds of gifts according to rule, (*thus*) making superfluous (*his previously acquired*) great fame, which was sung by the inhabitants of the three worlds.

(Vv. 13 and 14.) Just as Rama and Lakshmana (*were born*) to Dasaratha by his queens Kausalya and the glorious Suniti, (*thus*) two brave (*but*) modest sons, prince Vira-Nrisimha and prince Krishnaraya, were born to king Nrisimha by his queens Tuppai and Nagala (*respectively*).

(15.) The illustrious Vira- Narasimha,- seated on a jewelled throne at Vijayanagara, surpassing in fame (*and*) wisdom Ravana, Nala, Kahusha and (*all*) other (*kings*) on earth, being voluntarily praised by the Brahmanas (*and*) winning all hearts,- ruled the kingdom from (*Rama's*) Bridge to (*Mount*) Sumeni and from the mountain of the east to the western mountain.

(16.) He performed various gifts at the Golden Hall, at the shrine of the holy Virupakshadeva, at the town of the holy lord of Kalahasti, on Venkatadri, at Kanchi, at Srisaile, at Sonasaile, at the sacred (*city of*) Harihara, at Ahobala, at Sangama, at Sriranga, at Kumbhaghona, at the sinless tirtha of Mahanandi (*and*) at Nivritti.

(17.) The streams of water (*poured out*) at copious great gifts of various kinds, which he performed at Gokarna, at Rama's Bridge, and at all other sacred places in the world, frustrated the eagerness of (*Indra*) the bearer of the thunderbolt, who was ardently rising to clip the wings of the mountains, which were immersed in the ocean, that was being dried up by the dust of the hoofs of the troops of his prancing horses.

(18.) He performed (*the gifts of*) a mundane egg, a wheel of the universe, a pot containing the (*five*) elements, a jewelled cow, the seven oceans, a tree and a creeper of paradise, a celestial cow of gold, an earth of gold, a horse-chariot of gold, the weight of a man (*in gold*), a thousand cows, a horse of gold, a (*golden vessel called*) hemagarbha, an elephant-car of gold, and five ploughs.

(Vv. 19 and 20.) When, having ruled his great kingdom without obstacles, this Indra of the earth, who was famed for virtue, had gone to heaven, as if it were in order to rule heaven (*too*), the illustrious king Krishnaraya, whose valour was irresistible, bore the earth on his arm like a bracelet of jewels.

(21.) It was probably through fear, lest everything should assume an identity of lustre from his fame, which was spread everywhere, that, of old, Siva adopted a (*third*) eye on his forehead (*as a distinguishing mark*), Vishnu four arms, Brahman four faces, Kali a sword, Rama a lotus, and Vani a lute in her hand.

(22.) Was it through anger, because they gave refuge to his enemies, that he dried up the seven oceans with the clouds of the dust of the earth, which was split by the horses of his numerous armies, and of his own accord created in their stead masses of oceans by the immeasurable waters (*poured out*) at his great gifts, which consisted of a mundane egg, a Meru of gold, &c.?

(23.) It was probably in order to obstruct the path of the chariot of the sun in the sky, with the view that the crowds of suppliants should enjoy as long as possible the riches given by him, that this lord of the earth set up in every part of the earth firmly fixed pillars, which were marked with (*an account of*) his expeditions for conquering each quarter and with (*his*) surnames (*biruda*), and the tops of which touched the clouds.

(24.) Again and again, for the sake of supreme happiness, he performed according to rule those various gifts which are prescribed in the holy books, viz., the weight of a man in gold, &c. , together with all minor gifts, at Kanchi, at Srisaila, at Sonachala, at the Golden Hall, on Venkatadri and at all other temples and bathing-places.

(25 to 27.) Some of his surnames (*biruda*) were:- The angry punisher of rival kings; he whose arms resemble (*the coils of the serpent*) Sesa; he who is versed in protecting the earth; the destroyer of those kings who break their word; he who satisfies suppliants; he who is fierce in war; the king of kings and the supreme lord of kings; the destroyer of the three kings (*of the South*); he who terrifies hostile kings; the Sultan

among Hindu kings; he who crushes the wicked like tigers ; and the double- headed eagle which splits the temples of troops of elephants!

(28.) He is served by the Anga, Vanga, Kalinga and other kings, who speak thus:- "Look (*upon me*), Oh great king! Be victorious! Live (*long*)!"

(29.) Seated on a jewelled throne at Vijayanagara, king Krishnaraya, whose liberality was worthy to be praised by the learned, having surpassed Nriga and other kings in wisdom, and having bestowed abundant riches on all suppliants on earth, was resplendent with fame from the eastern mountain to the slopes of the mountain of the west and from the mountain of gold (*Meru*) to (*Rama's*) Bridge.

He, who filled the world, as a box with camphor, with the flood of his fame, which arose from liberality, firmness, valour and other (*virtues*), that were being praised by the crowd of all poets in this world; who was fierce in battle; who surpassed the deeds of Nriga, Nala, Nahusha, Nabhaga, Dhundhumara, Mandhatri, Bharata. Bhagiratha, Dasaratha, Rama and other (*kings*); who protected Brahmanas; who subdued Sultans; who was (*like*) the fever to the elephants of the Gajapati (*king*); who knew many arts; whose face surpassed the lotus; who, (*like*) a second Bhoja, knew the mysteries of poetry, of the drama and of rhetoric; who knew the law; who, every year, performed a sacrifice to (*Kama*) the lord of the golden festival of spring; who fulfilled the desires of the crowd of Brahmanas; who was rich; who was the chief of all princes; who was fortunate; who was the son of Nagambika and of king Narasa; who delighted all hearts; who was victorious at the head of battles; who conquered (*all*) quarters; who, having ascended the throne at Vijayanagara, was ruling the whole earth; who won battles by (*the strength of*) his arm:- Krishnadeva-maharaya gave a village, which was famed by the name of Singenayakanahalli and which was adorned with its four boundaries, for (*providing*) pleasant oblations (*naivedya*), (*consisting of*) sweec fruits, cakes, &c., to Sulin (*Siva*), called the holy Virupaksha, to whom pious people have presented heaps of gold, who abides on the Hemakuta, and who is diligent in protecting the world. The same (*king*), who assisted (*others*) with his wealth like (*Karna*) the son of the sun, and who was Kama manifest in a human birth, built an assembly-hall (*ranga-mandapa*) (*for the use*) of the same god.

(Verse 30.) This is the edict of the heroic Krishnaraya, whose path on earth was praised by the beggars of the earth, and the gifts of whose hand surpassed (*those of*) the tree of Indra.

B. Kanarese (Kannada) portion.

Hail ! On the 14th day of the bright half (*of the month*) of Magha of the Suklasamvatsara, which was current, after the 1430th year of the illustrious, victorious and prosperous Salivahana-Saka had passed, the illustrious maharajadhiraja and rajapamesvara, the illustrious Virapratapa, the illustrious Vira-Krishnaraya-maharaya, gave, at the auspicious time of the festival of his coronation (*pattabhisheka*), for (*providing*) daily oblations of food (*amrita-padi-naivedya*), to the holy Virupakshadeva (the village of) Singinayakanahalli, caused to be built in front of the shrine a large assembly-hall (*ranga-mantapa*) and a gopura before it, caused to be repaired the great gopura in front of that, and gave to the holy Virupakshadeva a golden lotus, set with the nine (*kinds of*) gems, and a snake ornament (*nagabharana*). For eating the oblations (*naivedya*), he gave to the god- 1 golden vessel, 2 drums (*to be used*) during the ceremony of waving lamps, (*and*) 24 silver lamps. Those who injure this meritorious gift (*dharma*), shall incur the sin (*of those*) who have committed the slaughter of a cow, the murder of a Brahmana, and the other great crimes.