
UNIT 4 THE POLITICAL SCENARIO III— CHOLAS AND CHALUKYAS¹

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4.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will learn about:

- the Cholas, their territorial expansion, administration and institutional structures;
- the Chalukyas of Kalyana and why they are also called Later-Chalukyas;
- the military achievements of the Chalukya kings; and
- the flowering of culture under the Chalukyas of Kalyana.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Cholas — the most powerful of the peninsular polities with the Kaveri valley as the nucleus of their power — succeeded in establishing the most enduring regional state in the Tamil macro-region. This Unit will introduce you to the Cholas, their kings, officials and chiefs and their administration. The latter part of the Unit will be about the Chalukyas of Kalyana. They are also known as the Later-Chalukyas owing to the fact that they came after the Chalukyas of Badami or Western Chalukyas. We will be looking at their military achievements and the flowering of culture under their reign.

¹ The Unit has been taken from BHIC 132, Unit 6.

4.2 THE CHOLAS

The Cholas as a ruling power rose to eminence in the 9th century CE when Vijayalaya seized Tanjavur from a feudatory chief of the Pallavas called Muttarayas. Henceforth, the Cholas were able to establish control over Pallava territories and subdued the Pandyan power. The Chola state stood on a firm footing deriving sustenance from the resource-pocket located in the fertile and rich area of the Kaveri valley. In the period of Rajaraja I and subsequent period, various feudatory chiefs were subjugated and the earlier category of *Nadu* was regrouped into *Valanadu* and was placed under the subdued chiefs. The landed magnates were also incorporated into the state system and were provided prestigious titles and were assigned administrative and military duties which included collection and assessment of land revenue.

4.2.1 Chola Kingship

The Cholas traced their origin to *Suryavamsha*. Mythical traditions are mentioned in the inscriptions especially in the *prashastis* containing the genealogies (Tiruvallangad Copper Plates, the Larger Leiden Plates and the Anbil Plates, Kanya Kumari inscription of Vira Rajendra etc.) and these are interspersed with information about historical personages. It appears that these served the purpose of legitimization of the rule of the Cholas. The *prashastis* of the Cholas were based on the *Itihaasa-Purana* tradition. The dominance of the Sanskrit and the Brahmanical traditions is well attested. The Cholas also ascribe to the legacy of the *Sangam* period. The genealogies of the Cholas attribute eminent and prestigious lineage to the king to legitimize his position as king. The period from the eighth year of Rajaraja onwards is marked by absence of genealogical record in the Tamil *Meykirtis*. These compositions narrate the military exploits of the kings, are inscribed on stone and address the Tamil landed magnates. The Cholas ascribe Kshatriya origin to themselves as is attested by the title *Kshatriyasikhamani* of the king Rajaraja. The *Varman* suffix (Sanskrit) added to the names of the kings was also a part of the process of claiming kshatriya status e.g. Adityavarman (871-906 CE) and Parantaka Varman (707-755 CE). The practice of assuming names during coronation also existed under the Cholas e.g. Prakesarivarman, Rajakesarivarman and Arumolivarman (Tamil name with a Sanskrit suffix). The charters of the Cholas consist of the *prashastis* and genealogies in Sanskrit and the details regarding the grant in Tamil. *Hiranyagarbha* and *Tulabhara* ceremonies were conducted by the Chola kings. The anointment ceremony was also a means to claim kshatriya position. A grant of Vira Chola points out that the king was advised by a brahmana moral preacher (*dharmopadeshta*) that bestowment of land to brahmanas would lead his forefathers to heaven. However, actual motive for making the grants was redistribution of resources in the form of land, gold, cattle etc. The gifts were bestowed for meritorious service provided by the brahmanas and also to seek legitimacy from them in political sphere. We have proper records of land-grants but the grants of gold, cattle etc. were merely stated in *prashastis*. Through the land-grants the kings tried to convert unsettled areas into agrarian settlements. These grants did not simply serve a charitable purpose. Rajaraja is regarded as *Ulakalanda Perumel* (the great one who measured the earth like *Trivikrama*) and as Shiva who established control over the land of Bhargava Rama.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- 1) Discuss briefly Chola territorial expansion.

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- 2) Trace the characteristic features of Chola kingship on the basis of *prashastis*.

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4.3 LOCAL ADMINISTRATION: *UR* AND *NADU*

The Chola copper plate evidence refers to the following while executing the land-grant:

- 1) *Nattar*
- 2) *Brahmadeyakkilavar*
- 3)
 - a) *Devadana*
 - b) *Palliccanda*
 - c) *Kanimurruttu*
 - d) *Vettapperu-Urkalilar*
- 4) *Nagarattar*

Nattars were the representatives of *nadu* (locality). The *brahmadeyakkilavars* were the brahmana donees of *brahmadeya* (lands given to the brahmanas). *Nagarattars* comprised of the trading community and belonged to the *nagaram* (settlement of a group of traders). *Devadana*, *palliccanda*, *kavimurruttu* and *vettaperu* have been identified as tax-free villages. Y. Subbarayalu has pointed out that *nattars* were analogous to the *vellanvagai urars* (peasant villages) since a number of *urs* constituted a *nadu*. Subbarayalu considers the village (*ur*) as a small component (fractional) of the *nadu*. As a constituent of administrative structure the *nadu* was important but it incorporated and represented the *urs* (*vellanvagai* villages). Thus, in the territorial sphere *nadu* comprised of *vellanvagai* villages. *Nattars* were the important members (land holders) of the *nadu* (locality). There are very few inscriptions related to the *vellanvagai* villages. It seems that the *ur* being the common populace represented the section which was not literate. However, the inscriptional evidence related to *urs* which is found in the temples is attributed to literate groups.

N. Karashima has analysed the two Tanjavur inscriptions of Rajaraja I and Gangaikondacolapuram inscription of Virarajendra. According to him, the *vellanvagai* villages comprised of agricultural lands, lands used by pastoralists, irrigation devices, funeral place, dwelling place etc. The dwelling area comprised of:

- 1) habitation sites of landholders/cultivators (*ur-nattam/ur-irukkai*),
- 2) those of the artisans (*kammanacceri*),

3) those of agricultural labour (*paraicceri*).

Karashima is of the opinion that in the *vellanvagai* villages differentiation is not noticed. Subbarayalu, however, refutes this argument and suggests the existence of a hierarchical structure in these villages comprising of:

- cultivators (*kaniyudaiyar*),
- tenant cultivators (*ulukudi*),
- artisans, and
- the agricultural labourers.

The cultivators were generally referred to as *vellalas*. The functions of the *ur* included: supervision of village lands viz. activities related to sale, purchase and gift. An important prerequisite for becoming a member of the *ur* was to be a holder of land. From the inscriptional evidence we come to know that the members of the *ur* also possessed the titles like:

- *Udaiyan*,
- *Kilan (kilavan)*,
- *Velan*, and
- *Peraraiyan*.

All these titles point to landholding. Thus, the epigraphical testimony enables us to infer that *ur* was the group/assembly of non-brahmana land holders of a village.

Karashima has argued that the land was held in common in the *ur* villages. In some other instances he refers to sale of land by members of *ur* as individuals. Subbarayalu also refers to the tendency towards 'individual holdings' in this period. *Nadus* were named after a village which formed a part of a *nadu*. Inscriptional evidence indicates that in several *nadus* the main village was *brahmadeya* (land given to brahmanas). However, many *nadus* did not have *brahmadeya*. Subbrayalu refers to increase in *nadus* from the 9th century CE. Initially, *nadus* emerged in fertile areas which had more villages and later spread to periphery (less fertile areas) where the number of villages was comparatively less. Nilakantha Shastri points out that the *nadu* comprised of many villages which were the smallest component of administration. Mahalingam suggests that *nadu* was an administrative unit and it was sub-divided into villages. There is no unanimity of opinion among scholars regarding whether *nadu* comprised of only *vellanvagai* or also consisted of *brahmadeya*, *devadana* etc. Subbrayalu points out that *nadu* and *ur* represented a locality comprising of *vellanvagai* villages and its representatives participated in the assembly of *nadu*. It is difficult to delineate the exact area over which the *nadus* were spread. *Nadus* differed in size and they did not have any natural divisions (e.g. rivers). Therefore, they could not possibly have been artificially created units or divisions. Sometimes, *nadus* covered the area beyond a river. In conventional historiography *Nattar* was regarded as a territorial assembly of a territorial unit, *nadu*, which comprised of eminent members of every village. Other assemblies such as of *brahmedeya*, *pallicandam* were also considered subordinate to *nadu* in the administrative machinery. Recently, historians have argued that *nadu* was not an administrative unit created by the Chola state but it was a natural collection of peasant settlements which was

incorporated into the state system of the Cholas as a legacy from the previous period. This is proved by the fact that these *nadus* were not of same size and were nucleated. The *valanadus* which came into existence in the period of Rajaraja I were artificially created as administrative divisions. *Nadus* initially emerged in fertile areas and later spread to comparatively less fertile zones. This is how the agrarian economy expanded. *Nadus* located in the fertile tracts were more populated than those in other areas.

There are several inscriptions which give us information about *nadus*. Kiranur inscription of 1310 refers to the ‘*urom* of villages Nanjil, Peruncevur, Viraikkudi...as qualified for the *Nadu* or Vada-chiruvayil-nadu.’ (Veluthat 1993: 184). It is clear from the evidence of the records that the *nattars* were the *vellalas* and the functions of *nattar* (*nadu*) were performed by the *vellala* who held the title of *Velan*. The main occupation of *nattar* was agriculture since *nadu* was a collection of agricultural settlements. The copper plates which basically deal with land-grants address the *nattar* and the execution of the grant made by the king was entrusted to them (deciding the limits of the lands granted by the establishment of superior rights of new grantees etc.) *Nattar* was subservient to the will of the ruler. *Nattar* also supervised irrigation works. They bestowed land on temples. They also served as stockists of donation made to temples. They also supervised the grants made by individuals and exempted the lands donated from tax and, in return, took a certain sum of money as a deposit. *Nadu* also bestowed land on temples which was tax-free (*nattiraiyili*). The tax payments exempted on lands donated to the temple were now the responsibility of *nadu* towards the state. *Nadu* seems to have levied a cess for meeting these expenses. These levies or imposts were:

- *Nadatci*,
- *Nattu viniyogan*, or
- *Nattu-vyavasthai*.

The temple lands were sold and leased out, a process in which the *nattar* played an important role. *Nadu* seems to have been engaged in tax collection and assessment. Sometimes, the *nattar* performed the revenue collection task on behalf of the state and sometimes king’s personnel (*komarravar*) were responsible for this work. *Mudaligal* and *Dandanayakam* were functionaries deputed in *nadu* and as royal officials; they were entrusted with administrative responsibility. Thus, the land holders in a locality were absorbed into the state system by the Cholas. These constituted the local landed magnates and worked on behalf of the king who exercised authority over them.

Nadu was the smallest unit for revenue administration. *Nattup-puravu*, *nattu-vari* (land revenue) and *nattukkanakku*: all refer to revenue of *nadu*. *Nattuk-kanakku* was the personnel responsible for revenue administration of *nadu*. The collection and fixation of the revenue of a village was carried out within the context of *nadu* where the village was located. When *ur* exempted taxes this got reflected in *nadu* accounts.

The king’s decision to transfer the funds of temple for a specific purpose in the temple was reflected in:

- the *Variyilarkanakku* (revenue register of royal authority) and
- the *Nattuk-kanakku* (revenue register of *nadu*).

This testifies to the relevance of *nadu* as an important part of administrative system of the Cholas in spite of its locally independent character. *Nadu-vagai-ceyvar*, *Nadu-kurk-ceyvar*, *Nadu-kankani-nayagam* and *Nadu-kankatci* were the personnel who represented royal power in *nadu*. *Nadu Kuru* is mentioned in an inscription of *Kulottunga I* (1116 CE) who managed the functioning of new *devadana*. These personnel were given the role of maintaining the accounts of temples in localities. *Nadu vagai* is mentioned as participating in the assembly of *brahmadeya* (*sabha*). In an inscription *Nadu-kankani-nayagam* is placed below *Senapati*. These posts of *nadu* officers were transferable. Some officers were entrusted with the administrative responsibility in more than one *nadu*. Thus, they worked as part of royal administrative machinery.

4.4 **BRAHMADEYA AND NAGARAM**

Brahmadeyas constituted the category of brahmanas who were landholders in the agricultural tracts and who had been endowed with land (tax-free) and had organised themselves into a distinct group. *Nagaram* comprised of traders who carried out trading and exchange activities in the pockets which had developed into commercial centres on account of the spurt in craft production and other activities carried out by artisans.

When the Cholas emerged as an important ruling power in the middle of 9th century CE in Thanjavur, there already existed many *brahmadeyas* which were densely populated and rich tracts in the Kaveri region. The Karantai plates of Rajendra I refer to 1080 brahmanas who inhabited Tribhuvanamahadevi Caturvedimangalam. The assembly of these brahmanas which inhabited agricultural tracts was called *Sabha* or *Mahasabha*. Most of the *brahmadeyas* or brahmana settlements were centred round the temple. Through the temple and the ideological focus based on the *Puranas* and *Itihasas*, *Bhakti* and *varnashramadharm* the differentiated society and monarchical polity were legitimized. Therefore, the kings endowed lands to brahmanas and created *brahmadeyas* as a means to legitimize their power.

The inscriptions inform us that many of the *brahmadeyas* in the Chola period were *taniyur* (separate village) in a *nadu*. They had a separate administrative system (revenue and justice). Many of the agricultural villages were clubbed together with a *taniyur*. Sometimes a *taniyur* was placed subordinate to a temple. Here the *Mulparusai* was the body which looked after the work of administration.

The inscriptions give the important prerequisites like age, landholding, knowledge, good behaviour for membership to an executive committee of *sabha*. The Karantai plates (1080 brahmanas) refer to *brahmadeyas* but do not inform us how the *sabha* and other committees were formed. They were not established by royal authority. Their origin may be attributed to *Dharmashastric* norms. The *sabha* and its committees supervised the temple lands, cattle and other resources. They assigned lands to tenants and levied rent. They kept a record of revenue collected and expenses incurred. They supervised the temple functionaries from priest to cleaner and organised the daily services of temples. *Sabha* acted as a group and the decisions taken were for the benefit of the organization and not individuals.

The *brahmadeya* settlements where the temple played a pivotal role lost importance in the later phase of the Chola period. After mid-11th century CE we find fewer *brahmadeya* tracts and more temples were constructed and the older ones were improved upon. Sometimes, the *mahasabha*, unable to pay the amount taken from a temple due to shortage of funds, was forced to fall back upon its income from the neighbouring village.

Nagaram settlement was a tract where traders and others (including artisans) lived. “An inscription of 1036 CE from Chidambaram distinguishes between non-brahmana inhabitants of superior status (*kudiga*) and those of inferior status (*kil kalanai*). *Kudiga* included two merchant groups: *Sankarappadiyar* (lower group) and *Vyaparin* (higher group) plus three other groups — *Vellalas* (cultivators), *Saliyar* (cloth merchants) and *Pattinavar* (fishermen). The subordinate workmen (*kil kalanai*) were *Taccar* (carpenters), *Kollar* (blacksmiths), *Tattar* (goldsmiths) and *Koliyar* (weavers)” (Stein, 1980).

Nagarattar was the representative body of traders. *Nagaram* settlement was a separate area. Committee of *nagarattar* was referred to as *nagaravariyam*. *Nagaram* also held land in common called *nagarakkani*. This they acquired through purchase but they also leased out land and performed the task of levying taxes and rendering services to the local groups. They maintained their records regarding income and expenditure. They also paid royal levies in the form of gold and paddy. They also allocated taxes to the local temples viz. *Kadamai* (tax on land), *nagaraviniyogam* (a tax for sustenance of *nagaram*) etc. In some cases *Nagaram* were independent of *nadu* (*taniyur*).

4.5 KINGS, OFFICIALS AND CHIEFS

A number of officers were responsible for the administration in the Chola kingdom. Although there is no clear evidence of a council of ministers but *Uddan-kottam* seems to have served this purpose. Upward and downward mobility is noticed in the administrative hierarchy. According to conventional historiography *Perundanan* and *Sirutaram* were higher and lower category officials respectively. *Senapatis* (commander of troops) had the middle position referred to as *Sirudanattup Perundaram*. *Nyayattar* (judges) were of both category. Recently, historians have pointed out that these divisions are not conclusively borne out by evidence. Officials were paid by allotting land rights. Tax on land was levied in cash and kind both. Officials were referred to as holders (*udaiyan*, *kilan*) of lands. They could further sub-assign land or even sell it. Communal ownership was prevalent and customary rights of villagers were recognised. The lowest unit of administration was the village. They combined to form a *nadu*. A *valanadu* comprised of a few *nadus*. *Taniyur* was a separate village or settlement site. Above *valanadu* there was *mandalam* which was equivalent to a province. *Karumigal* and *Panimpkkal* meant officers and servants. Anbil plates refer to a brahmana Manya Sachiva. He was granted land by the king. The king conveyed his orders orally (*triuvaykkelvi*) especially with regard to gift to temples. The directive was conveyed through a letter (*sri-mukham*) issued by *Anatti* (executive officer) appointed by the king. The local bodies were apprised and when the process was completed a record was prepared in the presence of the local magnates called *Nattukkon*, *Nadukilavan*, *Urudaiyan*.

Officers associated with the process of bestowment and registration of land-grants were many and some are also referred to as *Uttaramantris*. *Puravut-tinaikkalam* was the department of land revenue. *Varipottagam* was the record of land rights and *Vari-pottagak-kanakku* was the register of revenue department. Officers associated with the task of maintaining records and registers of land rights and land revenue department were *Varipottagam* and *Variyiledu*. *Kankanis* (supervisors) were the audit officers. Entry in a record was called *Variyilidu*. *Mugavettis* wrote royal letters and *Pattolais* were junior functionaries of land revenue department. Officers of *Nadu* (of the status of *adhikari*) were *Nadu kuru* (revenue assessment and settlement officer) and *Nadu vagai* (revenue official). *Mandira olai* was the officer who wrote the *Tirumugam* (letter containing the royal order). The term *Naduvirukkai* was used for *Vijnapti* (*vaykkelvi*) or petitioner and *Anatti* (executive officer) who served as a link between monarch and the persons who wished to approach the king. The king made oral orders (*truvaykkelvi*) regarding the issues brought to him by the officers. These requests transformed into orders were sent to local administration and central administration for implementation. The *Olai nayagam* were the officers who verified the letters written by *Mandira-olai*. The oral order of the king was put to writing (*eluttu*) and compared (*oppu*) and then entered (*pugunda*). *Vidaiyil adigari* got the order listed in the record. The document was called *Tittu* and the charity deed, *aravolai*.

Justice was carried out by the village assemblies through the committees comprising of *Nyayattar*. The central court of justice was the *Dharmasana* which conducted its affairs through *Dharmasana bhattas* (brahmanas proficient in law). It appears that civil and criminal offences were not dealt separately. The penalty for crime committed by a person affecting the king or ruling dynasty was decided by the king himself. Several methods of punishment prevailed viz. imposition of fines, capital punishment etc.

Adhikaris were the king's officers. They possessed the titles *Udaiyan*, *Kilan/Kilavan*, *Velan*, *Muvendavelan*, *Brahma*, *Pallavaraiyan*, *Vilupparaiyan* and other chiefly nomenclature. Sometimes, more than one nomenclature was adopted. At times the name of the Chola ruler or his epithet was used as a prefix by the *Adhikaris*. *Naduvirukkai* were mostly brahmana (held titles like *Bhatta*, *Barhmadhirajan*) officers and acted as a link between the royal authority and the bureaucracy and they are always referred to in connection with the *adhikaris*. Personnel in charge of temples were *Srikaryam* but they did not look after the ritual related aspects like worship etc. In some cases we have the evidence of *Adhikaris* holding the *Srikaryam* office. Generally, they had a distinctive position in the administrative system. The titles held by them were *Kilan/Kilavan*, *Velan*, *Muvendvelan*, *Brahma*, *Bhatta*, *Kon*, *Pallavaraiyan*, *Vilupparaiyan*, *Nadu* title, King's title. *Senapati* was in charge of military affairs. They bore the king's title/name and other titles such as *Udaiyan*, *Brahma*, *Araiyan*, *Kilans*. The office of *Dandanayakam* was probably akin to the *Senapati* (military office). The title mentioned for this office is *Pallavaaraiyans*. The titles held by *Senapatis* were:

- *udaiyan*,
- *brahma*,
- *araiyan* etc.

The office of *Tiru-mandria olai nayakam* was an important office associated with preparation of land-grant documents. The titles of these officers were *Muvendavelan*, *Brahma* etc.

Officers deputed at *Nadu* who discharged their duties at the behest of the king were *Nadu Vagai* who were revenue assessment officers. *Kottam-vagai* was deputed in *Tondaimandalam* area and performed the same function as *Nadu vagai*. *Nadukankaninayakam* had control over more than one *Nadu* and had a higher position than *Nadu vagai*. The titles which occur with the office of *Nadu vagai* were: *Araiyan* and *Udaiyan*. *Muvendavelan* was borne by *Nadu kuru* (officer of *nadu*) who was an officer of the rank of *Adhikari*.

Rajaraja I (1001 CE) adopted an elaborate land revenue fixation and assessment mechanism and thus, *Valanadus* were created and this practice was also adopted by other rulers. The land revenue department was called *Puravuvari tinaikkalam*. This department was an administrative division of the king's government and had the following personnel:

- *Puravu vari*,
- *Vari pottagan*,
- *Mugavetti*,
- *Vari pottaga*,
- *Kanakku*,
- *Variyi/idu*,
- *Pattolai* etc.

In the time of Rajendra II the administrative personnel had more elaborate designations: *Puravu-vari-tinaikkala-kanakkar* etc. The period of Kulottunga I witnessed few officers:

- *Puravu-vari-Srikanana*,
- *Nayagam* and
- *Mugavetti*.

Later, the term *Variyilar* refers to personnel of revenue department as a general terminology. These officers had the epithets: *Udaiyan*, *Muvendavelan* etc.

The titles held by the king's personnel such as *Udaiyan*, *Kilan* and *Kilavan* refer to possession. Other titles were *Velan* and *Muvendavelan*. The latter is a typical Chola title and occurs from the time of Parantaka. These titles suggest that those who bore them were land-holders or associated with land. The title *Muvendavelan* was bestowed by the Chola King and K. Veluthat points out: "...the strong association of those who bore this high title with offices of some importance is ... borne in mind, demonstrating that the major *Vellal* landed magnates were enlisted in the service of the king by which process they became an integral part of the state system." It appears that the title used by chiefs and their families viz. *Araiyan* was used by other eminent people as well. In the period of Rajaraja I the chiefly rule suffered a setback but the number of *Araiyan* title holders was on the rise. This title was more prestigious than *Muvendavelan*. It is conjectured that the chiefs were subdued to the position of landed magnates or cultivators from the period of

Rajaraja and his successors although they still held the title.

The cattle herders (*manradi*) supervised the grants for lighting lamps in the temples. Merchants held the titles of *Cetti*, *Mayilatti* and *Palan*. They even occupied the important offices like *Senapati* and accountant. *Peruntaccan* and *Perunkollan* were titles used by artisan category but at the most their important positions were confined to royal palace and the temple connected with it.

We do not get clear evidence of a council of ministers but there existed officers like:

- *Purohita (dharmopadeshta)*,
- *Rajagurus*,
- *Tirumandira olai*,
- *Adhikari*,
- *Vayilketpar* (officer who noted the king's directives) etc.

M. G. S. Narayanan points out that *Udan kuttams* were like king's companions of honour. They might have had a head because we have mention of *Adhikari* of *Udankuttam*. There are references to the court in literature (*Periyapuram* etc.). The king's court comprised of:

- brahmana advisors,
- priests,
- *Rajaguru*,
- *Adhikaris*,
- *Tirumandira olai nayagams*,
- *Vayilketpar*,
- head of the king's bodyguards, and
- *Samantas* (feudatory chiefs).

The various levies of this period were:

- *Antarayam*,
- *Eccoru*,
- *Kadamai* (produce-rent),
- *Kudimai*,
- *Muttaiyal*,
- *Vetti* (labour-rent) and
- *Tattar-pattan* (cash payment).

Most of the imposts were exacted in kind viz. paddy.

The Cholas undertook military expedition to Sri Lanka (during the time of Rajaraja I) and Sri Vijaya (during the time of Rajendra I). This shows the military strength of the Chola state. It seems that the cavalymen (*kudiraiccevarar*), *Anaiyattal* (those who fought on elephant), archers (*villigal*, *anukkar*) were names of the categories constituting the military force. *Valangai* (right hand) *Velaikkarar* were the soldiers recruited from among the peasants. Soldiers were also recruited from

the artisan groups (*idangai* - left hand). These were basically mercenary soldiers. Chola *Meykkirttis* refer to Kantalur *Salai* which has been interpreted as an educational institution in the Chera kingdom which imparted military education and training to the brahmanas which is mentioned in *Meykkirttis* was the place where Chera fleet was destroyed by the Chola king. This proves that Chola military prowess was insurmountable.

The chiefs held an important position in the state system. In the Pandyan kingdom the only category of chiefs was *Ays*. In the *Sangam* literature there is reference to many chiefs viz. *Ays*, *Vels*, *Muvas*, *Kodumbalur* and *Adigamans*. The records of the Pallavas refer to chiefs such as *Gangas* and *Adigamans*. The various other chiefs who accepted the suzerainty of Pallavas were *Banas*, *Vettuva-adiaraiyan*, *Muttaraiyar* etc. The chiefs of the Chola period were:

- *Paluvettaraiyar*,
- *Vels*,
- *Malavas*,
- *Gangas*,
- *Banas* etc.

It appears that the chiefs were assigned land and collected dues from it in return for *padi kaval* (protection of territory). In the post-Kulottunga period there is reference to *Nilamaittittu*: diplomatic agreement between two or more chiefs. These chiefs also had their soldiers and retainers. Their services were utilized by the Chola kings.²

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

- 1) Discuss the role and functions of *ur* and *nadu*.

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- 2) Define *Brahmadeya* settlements.

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- 3) What were the *nagarams*?

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- 4) Discuss briefly the Chola administrative set-up.

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² The entire section on the Cholas is adapted from MHI-04, *Political Structures in India*, Unit 15.5, pp. 14-21.

4.6 CHALUKYAS OF KALYAN³

The Chalukyas of Kalyana are also known as the Later Chalukyas owing to the fact that they came after the Chalukyas of Badami. They are also known as the Kalyani Chalukyas, though Kalyan became their capital only around the middle of the eleventh century. They trace their descent from Badami Chalukyas. However, the evidence is rather tenuous. The fortunes of the family were established by Taila II who seems to have been a subordinate of the Rashtrakutas. Taila II, who claimed to be the direct descendent of the Chalukyas of Badami, was governing the area of Melpati in 957 CE. It is found that later in 965 CE, The Rashtrakuta monarch Krishna III conferred Tardavadi 1000 on Tailaparasa (Taila II). The inscription from Muttagi, in Bijapur district, of 965 CE, describes him as *Samadhigata-Panchamashabda, Mahasamantadhipati, Ahvamalla Satyasraya Kulatikala*. From this, it is obvious that but this time, he had risen to a high and influential status. Tardavadi referred to in the epigraph is modern Tardevadi in Bijapur district. Various inscriptions of the Chalukyas of Kalyan as also an account found in the Kannada literary work *Gadayuddha* of poet Ranna trace the descent of Taila II from Bhima I who was the brother of Keertivarma II, the last ruler of the Chalukyas of Badami. Taila II is mentioned as the eighth in the line from Bhima I. Vikramaditya, who was the father of Taila II, had married Bontadevi who was a Kalachuri princess of Tripuri.

The Gangas who has matrimonial alliances with the Rashtrakutas, were hostile to the growing power of the Chalukyas. However the Chalukyas succeeded in routing the Gangas in 975 CE. The Hangas now acknowledged the sezerainty of the Chalukyas of Kalyana. In 992 CE, Rajaraja Cjola, who was intervening in Nolambavadi and in a succession struggle among the Chalukyas of Vengi, was also defeated by Taila II. Taila II continued with his successful campaigns and he won victories over the Latas of southern Gujarat, Gurjaras of northern Gujarat and the Chedis and the Paramaras of Malwa. The chief of the Sevunas (Yadavas) named Billama who became a feudatory of Taila II assisted the latter in his campaigns against the Paramaras. Taila II, who had several martial achievements to his credit, assumed the titled of *Ranaranga-Bheema, Nija-bhuja-chakravarti* (emperor by the might of his own arms) and *Ratta-gharatta* (grindmill to the Rattas). The period of his reign was occupied by ceaseless warfare for the consolidation and stabilization of the new Chalukyan power. The Rashtrakuta princess Jakabbe had borne him two sons. Irivabedanga Satyashraya and Dasavarma alias Yashovarma. Iribabedanga Satyashraya succeeded his father Taila II in 997 CE, in 1004 CE, the Cholas invaded Gangavadi, captured Talakad and subjugated the Gangas. The Cholas then marched deep into the Chalukyan territory upto Donur in Bijapur district. Irivabedanga sent expeditionary forces against the Chalukyas of Vengi, the Silharas of Konkan and the Paramaras of Malwa in order to secure the Chalukyan position in the east, west and north respectively. The next Chalukyan monarch was Vikramaditya V (1008-1014 CE). According to a literary work entitled *Ayyanavamsha-charita-kavyam*, Ayyana, a younger brother of Vikaramaditya V ascended the Chalukyan throne and ruled for a short time.

³ This Section has been written by Dr. Suchi Dayal, Academic Consultant, Faculty of History, SOSS, IGNOU.

Jadadekamalla Jayasimha II, another younger brother of Vikramaditya V was the monarch from 1015-1044 CE. Some sources indicate that there was an understanding among the Paramaras, Kalachuris and the Chalukyas of Vengi and the Cholas to encircle the Chalukyan kingdom and to launch simultaneously fierce actions against the Chalukyas of Malkhed. The Paramara king made inroads into the northern and western regions of the Chalukyan kingdom and fought a severe battle on the banks of the Godavari which ended in a victory to Jayasimha. The Paramara chief had occupied parts of the Konkan from which he was dislodged after a tough fighting. From the south, the Cholas advanced through the Banavasi region and the Raichur doab up to Kollipake (Kulpak) in the present Telangana, which was a subsidiary capital of the Chalukyas of Manyakheta. Eventually the Chola forces were driven back and to mark his success against the Chola invasion Jayasimha assumed the title of cholagra-kalanala. It was during his reign that Kalyana came into prominence.

Someshvara I (1044-1068 CE), the eldest son of Jayasimha II was crowned king in 1044 CE. In about 1048 CE, Kalyana became the metropolis of the kingdom in place of Manyakheta. During this time, Vengi had become the bone of contention between the Chalukyas and the Cholas. The Chalukyas of Vengi, despite being the cousins of the Chalukyas of Kalyana, had not acknowledged the suzerainty of the latter. Someshvara I embarked upon a campaign against Vengi. But his march was hampered by the Cholas. An inconclusive battle followed. The next year in 1045 CE, the Cholas carried their arms into the Chalukyan dominion and pillaged Kollipake which was a subsidiary capital of the Chalukyas. But very soon Someshvara I was able to reassert the Chalukya suzerainty over Vengi. An inscription of 1047 CE claims that he subdued Vengi and Kalinga. His son Bhuvanaikamalla Someshvara II is styled as *Vengipuravareshvara* in several records dating from 1049-1054 CE. The Chalukya ruler of Vengi continued to be the vassal of the Chalukyas of Kalyana to the end of his reign. It is seen that Narayana Bhatta, a noted scholar, was resident representative of Someshvara I at Vengi and he helped Vengi's court poet in composing a Telugu *Mahabharata*. In the north and west he led successful campaigns against Paramaras, Chedis, Sihararas and the Yadavas.

Bhuvanaikamalla Someshvara II, the eldest son of Someshvara I became the next sovereign in 1068 CE. During his reign he was constantly engaged in suiding the growing power of the Vengi Chalukyas and the Cholas of deep south. Vikramaditya VI the next ruler inaugurated a new era of reckoning known as the Chalukya Vikrama-Varsha from the date of his coronation (26 February, 1077 CE). He led military expeditions into Lata and Malwa thrice in order to secure the northern frontiers of his kingdom. He sent a cordial embassy to Vijayabahu, the ruler of Sri Lanka, who was an adversary of Koluttunga I. He extended his sway in the Vengi territory. He led an expedition to Kanchi and put Kulottunga I to flight and restored Chalukyan suzerainty over Vengi. As a result many of his inscriptions have been found in the Vengidesha.

In the south the Hoysalas of Dorasamudra were becoming powerful and they were waging successful wars against the Cholas and Chalukyas. However they were forced to accept the suzerainty of the Chalukyas after being defeated at Halasuru and Hosavidu in 1122 CE. Vikramaditya VI was a great patron of learning and

arts. Bilhana, who had migrated from Kashmir was an eminent scholar who wrote *Vikramankadevacharita* and Vijnaneshvara wrote *Mitakshara*, a celebrated book on Hindu law. Both sang the glory of Vikramaditya VI and his capital, Kalyana. He was succeeded by his son Someshvara II in 1127 CE. He had the epithets of *Sarvajna-Bhupa* and *Bhulokamalla*. The former appellation indicates that he was a man of deep learning. The authorship of a valuable encyclopaedic literary work called *Manosollasa* (also called *Abhilashitartha-Chintamani*) is attributed to him. He was a peace loving ruler and did not move out of the capital much.

Someshvara III was followed by his son Jagadekamalla II on the throne about 1139 CE. He was known as *Perma* and *Tribhuvanamalla Permadideva*. In his northern expeditions he was assisted by the Hoysalas. However he had to contend with the growing power of Hoysalas in south, the Kakatiyas in the east and Sevunas in the north. The Kadambas of Goa were also acting independently. However Chalukya generals were able to successfully subdue the subordinate rulers and restored the prestige of the Chalukyas.

The successor of Jagadekamalla II was his younger brother Trailokvamalla Taila III. By this time the Chalukya power was on wane. His feudatories were growing in power. Kalachuri Bijjala II, who was a nephew of king Someshvara III and cousin of Jagadekamalla II was functioning as a mahamandaleshvara by this time had become very powerful. He was able to win several of the feudatories to his side and established a firm hold on the region of the Chalukyan capital itself. An epigraph of Bijjala II found at Chikkalige dated in 1157 CE does not mention the reign of Taila III at all. In another inscription of Bijjala of the same year discovered at Haveri he is described as *Maharajadhiraja Bhujabala Chakravarti Kalachurya Bijjaladeva*. And finally Bijjala II declared himself the monarch of the whole Chalukyan kingdom in 1162 CE. The Kalachuri interregnum lasted for 22 years (1162-1184 CE). Someshvara IV who had been declared king by his father Taila III but who had to flee due to unfavourable circumstances resumed power once again and resurrected the Chalukya power. Banavasi became the chief seat of Chalukya Someshvara IV and only a few parts of the Varada was under his sway in 1183-84. By about 1200 CE, the Chalukyan power faded out in this region and Karnataka became an arena of struggle for power mainly between the Sevunas of Devagiri and Hoysalas of Dorasamudra.

4.7 CULTURE UNDER THE CHALUKYAS OF KALYANA

The Chalukya empire saw the flourishing trading activities of many guilds. The most noteworthy was the guild of *Ayyavole 500*. It originated at Aihole, the capital of the Chalukyas of Badami and spread its activities on the whole of south India by the time of the Chalukyas of Kalyana. They participated in the giving of land grants and in some of these grants the royal power was one of the donors. They had close association with the ruling kings and helped in the construction of many temples. Other guilds were Nanadesi and Veera Bananju.

The building activity initiated by the Chalukyas of Badami were developed even more by the Chalukyas of Kalyana. Narayanapur, Shivapur, Jalsangi and Mailara (present Khanapur) are some of the places in Bijapur where their temples have

survived. Itgi, Kuravatti, Lakumdi, Balligave, Gadag, Dambal, Begali and Chandanapur are notable places where beautiful temples of this dynasty have been found. The temples were adorned with many *madanike* (bracket figures), scenes from Epics and *Panchatantra*. Many images are of Siva, Virbhadr, Bhairava, Durga and Kali. Some very impressive images of Siva in *dhyanamudra* and in the posture of cosmic dance as Nataraja were also crafted.

Many *agraharas*, *brahmapuris*, *ghatika-sthanas* and monasteries emerged as places of learning in Kalyana, Bhallunke (Bhalki) and Gorta which were patronised by kings, noblemen, traders and merchant-guilds. They imparted education in various branches of learning and were equipped with libraries, feeding houses and residential facilities. Sanskrit and Kannada literature flourished under the reign of the Chalukyas of Kalyana. Some of the literary luminaries of Kannada during this period were Pampa, Ranna, Durgasimha, Nagavarma etc. Probably Machiraja, one of the *mandalikas* of Jayasimha II, patronised a brahmana poet, Chanraraja who composed *Madanatilaka*. The Kannada script was further refined and received its elegant round shape. Many people took to writing and as a result of this, there was production of a large body of *vachana* literature which came to be looked upon as *vachana-shastra*. These were not professional writers receiving royal patronage but came from all walks of life and wrote to help in the reconstruction of society.

Various sects of Saivism, which were prevalent during this period such as Pashupata, Lakulisa and Kalamukha joined the main stream of Virashaivism. Virashaivism was a socio-religious movement which was revolutionary in nature. It was a mass movement seeking to bring about radical changes and to reconstruct the society on the basis of certain new human values. This movement was led by Basavanna (also known as Basava, Basaveshvara, Basavasha, Basavaraja, and Basavadeva) and other towering personages like saint Allama Prabhu, Siddharama, Madivala Machayya. Basavanna and his companions denounced the compartmentalization of the society into castes and sub-castes and its various connotations including untouchability and threw open the portals of the treasures of wisdom to all the people by their *vachana* writings and preachings in the regional language and brought into actual practice what they taught. They used the term Siva for the absolute Supreme Being, and not in the sense of the Trimurtis or Gods. They described those who were immersed only in worldly affairs as *bhavis* (worldly) as distinguished from *bhaktas* (spiritual minded). They were opposed to priest craft and hypocrisy, exploitation and inequalities and steadfastly preached egalitarian values.

The protestant movement further developed with time, remaining within the broad framework of the Sanatana Dharma. Many Virashaiva monasteries helped in the promotion of education among the weaker sections of the society and to implement the programmes of social and religious reforms. As pointed out by K.A. Nilkantha Shastri, the reformist movements of this time prepared the way for the foundation of the Vijayanagara empire. It was the forerunner of the reformist movements of Mahanubhavis of Maharashtra in the 13th century, Ramananda and Kabir in the 14th century and of Guru Nanak in the 15th century. During the Vijayanagara period, the movement gathered momentum and there was a renaissance.

Self Check Exercise 3

1. Describe the military achievements of the Chalukyan kings.
2. Write a note on the culture under the Chalukyas of Kalyana.

4.8 SUMMARY

The Cholas re-emerged on the scene as the most powerful polity in the Tamil macro-region with the nucleus of their activities in the Kaveri delta. The practice of land grants intensified during this time. In this Unit we became familiar with some of the terms that occur in the inscriptions such as *nattar*, *brahmadeya*, *pallichandam*, *devadana* etc. We also studied their significance in the institutional framework of the agrarian economy. The chief characteristics of *nadu*, *ur* and *nagaram* were also taken into consideration. Later in the Unit we studied the military exploits of the Chalukyas of Kalyana. Under their reign and subsequently under the Kalachuries, many cultural achievements were attained. The Virashaiva movement which came into existence during the Kalachuri interregnum, attacked the caste system and promoted equality. It attracted followers from far and wide.

4.9 KEY WORDS

<i>Ur</i>	:	a south Indian village
<i>Nadu</i>	:	a locality consisting of many settlements, in early medieval south India
<i>Nagaram</i>	:	market or commercial centre in early medieval south India
<i>Nagarattar</i>	:	the corporate organization of the nagaram.
<i>Nattar</i>	:	leading men of the nadu in early medieval south India
<i>Mandapika</i>	:	a local centre of exchange, in between small periodic markets and larger trade centres.

4.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES**Check Your Progress Exercise 1**

1. See Section 4.2
2. See Section 4.2.1

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1. See Section 4.3
2. See Section 4.4
3. See Section 4.4
4. See Section 4.5

1. See Section 4.6
2. See Section 4.7

4.11 SUGGESTED READINGS

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