CHAPTER FOUR

TOWARDS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MODEL FOR THE STUDY OF
THE AGRARIAN SYSTEM OF JAYANQNDACOLOMANDALAM

The construction of a theoretical model in historical research has been met with opposition from both the positivistic and the vulgar materialist historians. While the former sees events as 'data' standing outside of theory, like 'facts' outside of the perceiving 'mind', the latter has already a ready-made 'theory' which has only got to be applied to the 'facts'. We hope to have shown above that 'facts' are not independent of 'theory'; that it is necessary to determine the historical 'laws' that are applicable to each epoch; and that abstract laws do not exist in history. ¹

Let us agree then, that historical investigation requires a model, a theoretical formulation against which events can be interpreted. Ideally, such a model must explain the laws governing the volume and allocation of the surplus and the laws by which these change, both in the short and in the long-term; it should explain too,

¹ Supra, pp. 6-9, 46-52; see also Jairus Banaji, 'Modes of Production and Materialist Conception of History', Capital and Class, Vol. (Feb. 1974), (pp. 1-3). The citation in brackets refer to the cyclostyled copy of the article circulated by the author in February 1978.
the nature of the operation of market phenomenon 'in a non-market milieu'; and it must attempt to clarify the social and ideological forms in, and the political mechanism by, which class relations are expressed.

The difficulties in attempting the construction of a model for the study of the agrarian system of medieval Jayaṅkoṇḍacōlaṇaḍālam will be apparent from the nature of our sources, which are primarily epigraphical. Such sources do not lend themselves readily, if at all, to the study of trends, both long-term and short-term. Moreover, these inscriptions have been classified by the Epigraphical Department not chronologically but by the year in which they have been noticed by the surveyors of the department. Thus, what can be attempted here is a formulation of the relations between significant elements of the social reality of Jayaṅkoṇḍacōlaṇaḍālam during the period under consideration.

Such an endeavour, if it is to be successful, must not represent any particular area or year, but the

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entire region and period - a sort of 'average'. Here, of course, our attempt has a major drawback in that it is unduly biased in favour of Tirupati, because of the extra-ordinary richness of the epigraphical material available there. Tirupati, being the most important centre of pilgrimage, is surely a town that is unrepresentative of Jayakondacolamandalam as a whole - but it is because of this, that it offers the best opportunity for 'quantification' - and starved as we are for such data, may we be forgiven our bias?

It is perhaps best to adopt a working definition of an agrarian system before we proceed to consider the elements of a model, for the study of such a system since there are agrarian systems and agrarian systems. Here we mean by 'an agrarian system' a social formation which is characterised by a preponderance of small peasant plots and a low degree of productive forces, and in this system the peasant plots are linked together by a state machinery which extracts the surplus both directly and indirectly.

The most important element then, is the fact that agriculture was the predominant economic activity during the period under consideration. It assured everyday livelihood to the people, provided goods for the domestic and foreign markets and was the foundation of the industrial activities of the epoch. Since these aspects of the importance of agriculture appear throughout this study, we shall not consider them in detail here.

A consequence of the significance of agriculture in the economic life of the times is the importance of examining the notion of ownership of land. Fernão Nuniz maintained that only the king could own land in the Vijayanagara Empire. This has however been disputed

".....all the land belong to the King, and from his hand and captains hold it. They make it over to the husbandmen who pay nine-tenths to their lord; and they have no land of their own, for the kingdom belongs entirely to the king; only the captains are put to charges on account of troops for whom the king makes them responsible, and from whom they are obliged to provide in the way of service." Chronicle of Fernão Nuniz (written probably A.D. 1535-37), Tr. by Robert Sewell, Forgotten Empire – Vijayanagar: A Contribution to the History of India, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1970, p. 360.
by historians. Thus N. Venkataramanayya mentions that the śrṭhavāna or the śīmamūla department of the state maintained records, in registers called the Gudi or Āyakut, dealing with the boundaries and areas of villages, the names of landholders and the extent of land held by them, the crops raised in their plots, the amount of land granted to temples, etc. Burton Stein had initially distinguished several types of land tenure — the bhandāraravāda or crown lands under the direct revenue administration of the imperial government, the amaram or lands held on military service tenure by the nayaka-s who sent a part of the income to the imperial government and retained a part of it to maintain soldiers, lands held on eleemosynary tenure (ārōtriṇam) by brāhmaṇe-s, temples, māha-s (brahmādeva, dēvadāna, māṭhāpura), and

lands held under peasant proprietorship. Stein appears to have got himself thoroughly confused here between the ownership of land and land as a source of revenue. We have already seen that one of the donors at Tirupati had obtained from the rājabhandārām the half-share of Siddhakuṭṭai village and the other half-share from the athānattār. Further, an inscription of 5th December 1429 recorded that Dēvarāya II, after his visit to Tirupati had granted the 1200 honnu (pon) from the rāja-bhandārām at Chandragiri and the villages of Vikramādityamangalam, and Elamanḍiya belonging to the Chandragiri-bhandāravāda to the temple, and that from this endowment the sri-bhandārām was to supply the articles required for the performance of certain specified services on stipulated days in the donor's name. From these inscriptions it appears that the bhandāravāda was a revenue district - areas belonging to the jurisdiction


7 Supra, pp. 146-8.

8 TTDER/1/192.
of a rāja-bhandāram - and not a form of land tenure.

Further, there are instances of donors holding nāyakatana-śīrmai-s granting lands and villages to temples.⁹ It is also recorded that donors granted villages which had been previously granted to them.¹⁰ Tax-free villages and lands were also granted to temples.¹¹ In all these cases the land so granted does not appear to have lost its status - that is to say the śīrmai continued to be the 'donor's own śīrmai'; the sarvamāṇya lands continued to be tax-free.

This would indicate that the śīrmai-s were territorial areas from which the revenue, or a part of the revenue goes to the nayaka. This does not imply that the nayaka owned the land - he may merely have been collecting the taxes due to the state, or he may have had the niyatchi right which would have entitled him to the mēlvārem or major share of the produce of the land, or both. Burton Stein had seen that the produce from the land had been divided into two shares, the mēlvārem and the kīlvārem or minor share which was appropriated by the

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⁹ e.g. TTDES/II/87, 126; III/90, 213; NDl/II/N/34A, 104; III/G/108; ARE, 238, 249 of 1916; 169 of 1929-30; 64, 159 of 1933-34.

¹⁰ e.g. TTDES/III/1, 147.

¹¹ e.g. TTDES/III/119, 142.
actual cultivators. The terms referring to the right to enjoy these shares were niyatchi and kaniyatchi respectively.\(^{12}\) In addition to the mēlvāram, taxes were also imposed on the cultivators. The most important of these taxes were the taxes paid in gold coin (ponvargam)\(^{13}\) and the taxes paid in grain (nelvargam).\(^{14}\) It is likely, therefore, that the royal treasury collected the taxes except in cases where the right to collect the taxes had been granted to the navaka-s, brāhmaṇa-s, temples, matha-s or private individuals, or when the land had been made exempt from taxes as saṃvāna land. The niyatchi right may have also been vested in the state, and this right too may have been granted in the same way as the right to collect taxes.

That the niyatchi right does not carry with it the ownership of land may be seen from the fact that there are instances of alienation of land. Thus, in

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12 Stein, op. cit., pp. 80-1.
13 e.g. TTDES/I/200; II/18; III/66-68, 70-75, 91, 217; Ponvari, TTDES/II/53-55, 133; svarnadāyam, TTDES/III/159.
14 e.g. TTDES/II/18; III/66-68, 70-75, 91, 217; dhānvavargam, TTDES/II/4.
1496 A.D., Kandādai Appāchchiyar Appā purchased two share of sarvamānya land in Kaḍappēri village in Kalavai parru, in Paḍaiividū-rajyam for 1460 paṇam and handed over the documents to the ēri-bhandārem, in lieu of which the ēthaṇattār agreed to conduct certain services in the name of the donor's kinsman, Kandādai Rāmanujayyaṅ-gār. Kandādai Rāmanujayyaṅgār, himself had agreed to supply the produce from the 400 kuḷi of achchkkāṭṭu land situated in the kilai-puṭṭai-parru in the tiruvidaiyāṭṭam village of Avilāḷi, so that certain offerings can be made in his name. This land had been sold to the donor earlier by the ēri-bhandārem for 700 paṇam and a sale deed had been executed. These instances highlight the

15 TTDES/II/136. For other instances of gifts of land, after purchase to temples see e.g. IMP/I/Cg./195-B, 193-H and p. 342; TTDES/IV/161; V/66; ARE, 73, 76 of 1887; 163 of 1915; 124 of 1918; 482, 653, 659, 660 of 1919; 48, 49, 105 of 1921, 1920-21, para 50; 179, 245 of 1922; 486 of 1926; 195, 206 of 1929-30; 98, 102 of 1932-33; 72, 127 of 1933-34, para 27; 49 of 1935-36; 184 of 1936-37; 36 of 1944-45; 107 of 1946-47; 350 of 1954-55.

16 TTDES/II/40. For other instances of sales of land by private individuals see e.g. Cp. 148 of Sewell's List of Inscriptions, Madras, 1884; IMP/I/Cg. 12, 193-c; SII/I/52, pp. 77-8; TTDES/I/191; 229, 231, 232; II/73, 135, 136; III/7; IV/13, 18; ARE, 87 of 1887; 28 of 1888; 386, 390, 454 of 1905; 213, 373 of 1912; 217 of 1917; 202, 373, 446 of 1921; 23, 45, 223, 225 of 1922.

fn. continues...
fact that even lands granted as tax-free (सर्वमानव्य) can be sold, and that all land even in those villages that had been granted to temples as तिरुविदायत्तम were not owned by the temple. From this it follows that the state itself did not own all the land.

Further, it is inscribed in a record of the Śaka year 1372 (i.e. 1450-51 A.D.) that a private individual had proposed to excavate, at his own expense, a channel with its fountain-head within the limits of the village of Payindipalli passing through Siddakkuṭṭai, Pērūr... to Tirupati, to irrigate the Pallī lands and to extend the irrigation channel further to fill the tank of Avilālī and to draw water from there for irrigation purposes. Towards this end the prospective donor had bought the land required from Ālvārmudalī... and Ulaguḍaiyaperumāḷ Mudaliyār. The Appan śrī-bhaṇḍāram was to supply the articles required for offering one tirupponakam daily to Vīra Narasiṅgapperumāḷ in Śrīnivāsapuram (a suburb of Tirupati) in lieu of the additional income

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derived from these lands as a consequence of the irrigation programme. The residents of Payindippalli (Payindippalliyaar)\(^{17}\) however protested against the proposed channel on the grounds that would adversely affect a number of plots\(^{18}\) and many channels in their village and this claim was upheld by the ethanattar and adhikari, Yagharasar. Thereupon the villagers of Payindippalli bought on payment of 1000 panam the land that had been sold for the proposed channel to the prospective donor who, in turn, agreed to excavate another channel.

There are also references to sales of lands\(^{19}\) to the sales of house-sites,\(^{20}\) to confiscation of land,\(^{21}\) to disputes on the right of succession to lands,\(^{22}\) and to lease of lands. An inscription from

\(^{17}\) This word has been translated in TTDES/I/224, line 5, as 'the tenants of Payindippalli'.

\(^{18}\) TTDES/I/224, line 6 - enkal urilai eneka nilamum.

\(^{19}\) e.g. ARE, 61, 335 of 1908; 224, 277 of 1910; 7, 10, 356 of 1911; 157, 209 of 1929-30; 301 of 1954-55.

\(^{20}\) e.g. TTDES/I/204A-D, 205 A-D, 217, 230 A-E; ARE, 318 of 1911; 210, 240 of 1912; 110 of 1921; 137 of 1924; 30, 171 of 1932-33.

\(^{21}\) e.g. TTDES/III/157, 158; ARE, 29 of 1893.

\(^{22}\) e.g. ARE, 378 of 1923.
Valūvūr (Wandiwash Tk., NA Dt.) refers to a purchase of land for the temple by the sthānattār and the kaikkōlar of the village at a public auction proclaimed by "tomtom". We also learn from an inscription of A.D. 1506 from Tirukkōyilūr that certain lands "of the twelve banks in Tirukkōvalūr village was sold at a loss to the temple of Tiruvidiyaikali-Nāyanār by the tenants (?) owing to their inability to pay the taxes and that when Immādi Narasa-Nayaka visited the temple he made the lands tax-free and ordered the profits thereon to be utilized for offerings." Some records also speak of the mortgage of temple lands. Most importantly, we have some epigraphical references from Perunagar (Kanchipuram Tk., Cg. Dt.) of speculation on land. Thus two inscriptions of 31st January A.D. 1383 refer to the purchases by Sirāma-Bhaṭṭan of Mutṭaippuram.

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23 ARE, 62 of 1903, 1908-09, para 67, p. 115. See also ARE, 280 of 1955-56 from Kañcipuram.

24 ARE, 33 of 1921; see also ARE, 313 of 1914 and 50 of 1916, 1915-16, p. 141 from Tiruvarangulam (Pudukkottai state) and Tirukkalakkudi, (Sannavannam Tk., Ramnad Dt.)

25 ARE, 193 of 1916, 1915-16, p. 139; 408 of 1922; 28, 176 of 1932-33; 245, 251 of 1938-39. TTD/1/204 D (Line 6) refers to a right of "mortgage, exchange, division or inheritance and gift and for every kind of disposal."

26 ARE, 350 of 1923.
and Ödumukkil-Nārāyana-Bhaṭṭaṇ 27 of two-thirds and one-third share respectively of the villages of Elayirachcheri and Tiruppullittāṅgal from the assembly of Ukkal in Kaliyur-kōṭṭam for 400 panam and 200 panam. The two purchasers subsequently sold their shares to a private individual in Vēlūr in Tirukkāṭṭu-kōṭṭam for 500 panam and 250 panam respectively.

There are a number of instances of leases of lands also. Some of them specify that the tenants should not be disturbed by the lease holder (kudininga-dēvadāna) and such leases are normally made by the temples. 28 Some of the leases were given under the ulavu-kāniyākshi lease, which according to an inscription from Dēvikāpuram Arni Tk., NA Dt.) permitted the lease holder "to grow crops that suited him, wet or dry, including plantain, sugarcane, turmeric, ginger, areca and cocoanut and after doing this to pay taxes in gold and in grain such as vāsāl-kadai, pēr-kadai, tarikkadai, ēkkōttu, eruttusammadam, māḍārikam, talaiyārikam, āsvakkadai, pattādai-nūḷāvam, idatturai, vettivari, palavari, puduvari (that may be imposed by the palace) (?),

27 ARE, 359 of 1923.
28 e.g. ARE, 45, 321 of 1922, 1921-22, para 41; 300, 305 of 1928-29; 61, 235 of 1934-35.
nallerdū, (good bull), narpaśū (good cow), nallerrumai (good buffalo), narkidā (good ewe), königai, virimuthu, edakkat-
tāvam, viruttuppādu, udugarai and mugampārvai.... To
this list the other cognate inscriptions add palataţi,
kanikkai, śandai, ēriminivilai, malaiamanji, madil-amanji,
eduttaluvu, viruttu-mādu, ēāttu-kaṣamai and vīrvai."²⁹
Another type of lease was known as kānipparru³⁰ but we
have no information about the rights and privileges that
went along with it.³¹ A few inscriptions also record
that a donor granted one or more villages to the temple
but reserved the right of cultivation for himself and his
heirs and undertook instead to pay the temple a specified
sum of money or grain. Thus an inscription from Tirumalai
of A.D. 1552 records the grant of attimalaippattu village
on the northern bank of Ṣeyyāru in Tachchur-nādu in
Gaṇḍagopalan-narru, in Rājagambhirā-rājyam in Palkunra-

²⁹ ARE, 353 of 1912, 1912-13, para 56; for similar
inscriptions see also e.g. SII/XVII/754/pp. 359-
60; ARE, 299, 354, 367, 369, 372, 375, 386, 387,
389 of 1912; 658 of 1919; 321, 32 5, 333, 443 of
1921; 40 of 1922; 39 of 1933-34; 59, 61, 209,
252 of 1934-35; 326, 327 of 1954-55; 127; 135 of

³⁰ e.g. ARE 31, 46 of 1933-34; 52, 164 of 1934-35;
127 of 1956-57.

³¹ For other inscriptive references to leases see,
e.g. TTD/II/13; ARE, 352 of 1912; 193 of 1916,
1915-16, p. 139; 237 of 1921; 11, 13, 31, 66 of
1922; 376, 381 of 1923; 67, 70, 194, 219 of 1934-
35; 208 of 1936-37; 250 of 1938-39; 262 of 1960-
61.
kkōttam in Jayakondacola-mandalam in Padaividu-raiyam yielding an annual income of 80 rekai-pon by Tirumalai Nayakkar,32 who was empowered to reserve the right of cultivation for himself and his descendants, of the granted village and that he was required to pay 80 rekai-pon every year into the temple treasury.33 If further proof was necessary about the existence of private property in land, we may cite also an inscription from Māṅgādu (Saidapet Tk., Cg. Dt.) which registers an agreement among the villagers prohibiting the sale of lands to those who are not land-holders within the village or to the gift of them as dowry to outsiders.34

Agricultural land, therefore, during the Vijayanagara period was not owned by the state, nor was all of it held by the warriors, temples, brāhmaṇa-s, et cetera. It appears from the inscriptions at Tirupati,

32 TTDES/V/138.

33 TTDES/V1/139. See also TTDES/V/83 of A.D. 1546 which mentions cantirāttitavarai ulavadai-kāni-yakshi yakatam anumavittukkondu itil vilanda mudalil (kondu).... (line 5). Also see TTDES/II/24, 97 and ARE, 368 of 1912. The last record mentioned is from Dēvikāpuram.

34 ARE, 354 of 1908; see also an inscription from the Tirumurthi Hills (Udumapet Tk., Cōmbatore Dt.) ARE 186 of 1922.
that income from land was divided into two shares — the mélvāram and the kīlvāram. These shares were alienable. When the State alienated its niyatchi right, it bestowed it as amaram, śrōtriya, and sōnu. Thus when Stein defines śrōtriya tenure as "the lands granted only a fixed income of specified revenue with no other rights over the income of the village nor power to interfere with the occupants," he is actually describing the general character of the alienation of the niyatchi right by the State. The cultivators could alienate their kāniyatchi right and it is to this transaction that most of the references to the sale of land that we have noted above apply. The alienation of the rights by the state and its appointees, and by the actual cultivators was recorded in the palm-leaf registers that the villages maintained, as Dr N. Venkataramanayya observed. It was these transactions that also required an Āvanakkalari or registration office and the detailed clauses specifying the liabilities of the vendor and the purchaser. In his recent book, Stein appears to have veered around to

35 Burton Stein, op. cit., p. 83.
36 TTDES/I/204 B/205 B, 205 D, 231.
37 TTDES/I/204 D, 205 A, 205 D, 230 D.
this view as he says,

the 'rights in land' always refer to shares of income, not 'dominion in land', and that in many cases such shares have always existed but were not before given the public and formal status achieved in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. 38

Thus, it may be argued that what was important in medieval Jayankondacolanadal was not so much the question of ownership of land but rights to the produce of land. 39

38 Burton Stein, Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1980, p. 421. See also ibid., p. 434.

39 "In case of alienation of villages under cultivation, the presumption is that the State intends to convey only its rights to the grantee, which is the right to receive the royal share of the produce, and the rights of the persons in the soil such as village land-holders, permanent tenants, district and village officers and of persons holding by previous grants under it remain unaffected by the grant, even though their rights are not expressly reserved.... But where the king wanted to make a complete gift of such occupied villages including full ownership, these were either purchased and made over to the grantee or provision was made in the deed of the grant providing for such purchase." A. Appadorai, Economic Conditions in Southern India (1000-1500 A.D.), Madras University Historical Series, No. 12, University of Madras, Madras 1936, Vol. I. pp. 111-12.
If the respective proportions of the mēlvarām and the kīlvāram could be determined, we would have a reasonably reliable indicator of the rate of appropriation of surplus. Unfortunately, we have only an inscription from Kaṅcipuram which records that

the mēlvarām on areca, coconut, mango and other trees grown on the tiruvidaivaṭṭam lands of the temple was formerly three-fourths of the yield, the remaining one-fourth going to the cultivator and that when in a severe drought the above trees withered the tenants were asked to plant fresh trees and pay up mēlvarām in the reduced ratio of two-thirds and that, in the case of sesamum, green-gram and sugarcane, the rates obtaining in adjacent villages were adopted and in cases were betel, plantain and other quick-yielding crops were reared side by side in newly planted areca and coconut groves, the mēlvarām was fixed at three-fourths of the old rates.40

Since we have no reason to believe that these rates prevailed all over Jayakondacōlamanḍal, we cannot generalise from this solitary record.

Apart from the peasant plots, there is also the possibility of the existence of large estates. The existence of these estates — with the pavaṇa-s, jīvar-s, brāhmaṇa-s and even private persons is implied by the grants of large areas of land to the temple and particularly by the references to the cultivators employed on them (especially in the gardens, the nandavanam-s).41

40 ARE, 655 of 1919, 1919-20, para 48, dated Saka 1457.

41 e.g. TTD/S/II/24, 97.
Inscriptions at Tirupati record, for example, instances of grants of land ranging from 20 kuli\textsuperscript{42} to 10,000 kuli\textsuperscript{43} in area. Further, did those donors who donated villages to temples while reserving the right of cultivation for themselves do so to eliminate obstacles to the practice of large-scale farming like the scattered nature of holdings (which may have been belonged to the temple before the grant)? If it was a method of consolidate land holdings it would signify a tendency towards extensive commodity production during the reign of the Tuluva dynasty of Vijayanagara which was cut short by the defeat of the forces of the Empire at Rakshasi-Taingadi with the consequent period of political instability and by the arrival of the European colonizers. Consolidation of land at this time could also have meant the partitioning of common lands in a village among the landholders. We have very few references to communal property, unfortunately. Thus, an inscription from Edayarpakkam (Kancipuram Tk., Cg. Dt.) records that at the request of the trustees of the Siva temple villagers had to take away one Vēli of land originally granted to the

\textsuperscript{42} TTDES/IV/107. \\
\textsuperscript{43} TTDES/V/85-A.
temple for a lamp and give a number of cows in exchange. The land was at Purisaila, a dēvadāna village of Tiruppaḍakkāḍuḍaiyar and was granted by a brāhmaṇa lady of Iḍaiyarṛupakkam alias Rājavidyādhara chaturvedimangalam. The reason for the transaction was that the land was in the corner of the village and had no irrigation facilities and so none would cultivate it. The land thus became village property. An inscription from Tirupati also mentions the irrigation of cattle herding land (māndaiikkollai) in the tiruvidaivāṭam village of Tiruvenkaṭanallūr. Further, an inscription from Elavānāsūr which we had noticed when dealing with the question of the protests by the iḍaiyar and vatai classes during the reign of Devarāya in A.D. 1429, stipulated that "Anyone purchasing as mānya or jīvita the service lands other than (of) their own (group) and those collecting taxes other than what is due to be paid as rājakāram should also be considered (as) nāṭtu-drōhi-s... (and) The jīvitakkārār should not cultivate lands other than those assigned to them by ūravar" (people of the village).

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44 ARE, 253 of 1910.
45 TTDES/II/38.
46 ARE, 490 of 1937, 1937-38, para 64.
inscription of Tiruppukkuli (Kanchipuram Tk., Cg. Dt.) which is dated beyond the temporal limits of this study, but which, nevertheless is too important to be ignored on such technicalities -- after all the march of history is not subject to the logical schematas of historians of a later age. Thus, we are told, that there was an equal distribution (pagurru) of land among themselves by the landholders of Tiruppukkuli at the instance of the agent of Kumāra Tirumalai Tāṭācharya of Eṭṭūr. Does the presence of the agent of Kumāra Tirumalai Tāṭācharya signify that this was a part of the process of consolidation of holdings in land? What happened to the lands owned by the villagers as a whole, if any such did exist? Or was it merely a social mechanism to ensure economic equality by occasional redistribution of land? The last alternative seems unlikely due to the fact that such social measures have been mentioned nowhere else. Hence, the division of productive forces in agriculture would appear to have been between the temples (which were the chief beneficiary of land grants), the large land-owners and the villagers.

Another element to be considered in the construction of a model for the study of the agrarian

47 ARE, 176 of 1916.
system of medieval Jayan Kong Ootamandalam is the nature of the caste system as an institutional barrier to social mobility. In this role the caste system strictly defined the hierarchical positions of the several social groups, and as we have seen, Burton Stein had argued that this is perhaps one of the aspects of the brahmanical religion which appealed strongly to the emergent peasant societies of the Pallava period as it enabled them to absorb peasant people without threatening the ascendancy of the leading cultivators. Appadorai had noticed explicit prohibitions against carpenters taking up services outside the village in an inscription of A.D. 1113 from Tribhuvan. This was perhaps because corporate migration was often a means to achieve upward social mobility in ancient and medieval India. The prohibitions were

The carpenters "should take up such services in the village only. Those who engage themselves in these services beyond this village will be considered to have transgressed the law, to have committed a fault against the great assembly and to have ruined the village." ARE, 205 of 1911 cited in A. Appadorai, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 475. Appadorai is also cited in B. N. S. Yadav, 'Immobility and Subjection of Indian Peasantry in Early Medieval Complex', Indian Historical Review, Vol. I, No. 1, March 1974, p. 23. Yadav however cites the page number in Appadorai Vol. I, p. 273, for the same evidence.
perhaps also made because the taking up of services beyond the village by artisans also threatened the self-sufficiency of the villages. As village self-sufficiency was non-existent by the time of the Rāya-s of Vijayanagara, it is hardly a matter of surprise that we have no evidence of such prohibitions during the period under consideration here. We do have, however, an inscription from Māṅgāḍu, which we have already noticed, prohibiting both the sale of land in the village to those who are not already landowners there and the gift of lands in the village to outsiders as dowry. This is likely, to be aimed at the preservation of the economic structure of the village. In this connection, it should also be noted that in medieval Jayaṅkoṇḍacōḷamāṇḍalam, the growth in the economic strength of social groups enabled them to move upward on the social scale. This best exemplified, as we shall see, in the case of the Kaikkōḷa-s.

49 "The existence of a rule in a village that the juice of the sugar-cane grown there should be pressed out in the same place (103 of 1918, ARE, 1918, part ii, para 69, 1482 A.D.) certainly points to a time when the villages were largely self-sufficient." A. Appadorai, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 323. Appadorai however, cautions against the over-emphasis of village self-sufficiency, ibid., pp. 323-6.

50 ARE, 354 of 1908; see also supra, fn. 36.

One of the most crucial aspects of any economic system is the method by which labour is extracted by the ruling class from other sections of society. In this connection we have already seen that a passage in the Amukta-mālyada refers to labour services being due from poor cultivators and that inscriptions mention vettivari or labour rents. In all these instances it appears that the labour-dues were paid to the state. But what was the purpose for which such dues were required by the state? No mention has been made in our sources to the existence of a 'department of public works' which might have required forced labour. Indeed, the practice of setting apart a portion of the revenue for keeping the irrigation works in good repair perhaps indicates that forced labour was not used for this purpose. We also do not have any reference to state-run agricultural enterprises. Moreover, we have no definite idea as to whether labour-services were demanded from all the

52 Supra. pp. 179-80, fn. 67
53 Supra. pp. 203-05. 250
54 Supra. pp. 181-82.
cultivators or only from certain sections of the cultivators. From inscriptions of the seventeenth century, wherein it is said that anyone who obstructed the utilization of specified taxes for the maintenance of irrigation tanks would "be considered to have been born to the vetti of this village and to have given his wife to the vetti," it would appear that vetti services were not required from a large section of the village community. Furthermore, we do not know if the persons from whom labour services were due also possessed or rented plots on which they worked for themselves. Another alternative could have been that they were two classes of people from whom vetti was due: the first being those who performed forced labour all through the year and the second being those who performed only a certain quantum of forced labour.

There are also instances of the dedication of families to the temples to perform services like looking after the lamps and carrying the idols in processions. In such cases, it appears that the donors provided for the upkeep of these families. Thus,

55 NDI/II/N/1; Supra p.152
56 e.g. ARE, 313 of 1919; 374 of 1912.
for example, an inscription of the reign of Viruppaṇa-Udaiyār from the Kachchappēvara temple of Tirukkachchur (Chingleput Tk., Cg. Dt.) records that two families were free from all assessments according to a declaration to this effect by the villagers.57

From extant epigraphical evidence however, it would appear that such examples of non-wage labour were only of marginal significance. This is due to the large number of inscriptive evidence that has come down to us of payments made to cultivators, of sales and leases of land, of the degree of monetization of the economy, et cetera.58

Industrial activities appear to have been carried out mainly in connection with the temple. The temple itself employed artisans - sippiyār (masons),

57 ARE, 312 of 1909, 1909-10, para 53.
58 Infra, pp. 173-8; Wage-labour here is used as a simple-category present in several epochs of production and not as value-posing labour. Jairus Banaji had argued correctly that the laws of motion of an epoch of production must be defined before the nature of productive relations prevailing within that epoch can be determined. J. Banaji, op. cit., pp. 4-7.
mantappakkolar (repairer to the mantapam), panimurai (basket-maker), āchāri (carpenter), vāsal-kollai, kušeyar (potter), tattain (goldsmith) et cetera. In addition, it is likely that the craftsmen worked privately in response to the market that the enormous number of pilgrims (as indicated by the numerous food offerings daily at the temple) who came to Tirupati, the large population of the region (as suggested by the extent of the irrigation programmes) and the numerous employees of the temple must have provided. Among the employees of the temple mentioned in the inscriptions are the purāna-bhattar (brāhmaṇa-s chanting the vedas and prabandam-s), the kaṅgānippān (supervisor), the kövil-kanakku tiruninra-ūr-udaiyān (temple accountant), the adhikāri (manager), the tirunpanipillai (public works officer), the temple architect, the dēśantāri, the suppliers of water to water-sheds, the dāsanambiyar (supplier of garlands), the tirumānd-śeyyān (ringer of bells), the brāhmaṇa-s who deliver prasādam (consecrated food) to the satram-s (feeding houses), those who tie the pavitram, the dyers of the blue-colour, the ilachchinaikkārār, the kudikkuttukkārān, the lachchinaikkārār, the bearers of torches and of vāhanam-s, the tiruvēṅkaṭa-pichchan (lamp-lighter), the kaikkolai, the tirupaniyāl (workmen),
the *tiruvidhisani* and the *emperamânâdiyar* (dancing girls), the *uvachchan* (drummers), the *dola-nâgasvara-kârâr* (drummers and pipers), the *pâduvâr* (songsters), the *nâttuvâr* (dance-master), the *muttukkârâr* (time-keeper), the *vinnapân-âseyvâr* and the *tiruvettuvagai* (proclaimers), the *âchârva*, *ritvik*, *purûhitâr* and the *sattada-ekañki Srîvaisnavas* (all priests), the *têvaiyâl* (temple cooks), the *ânigamurai* (fuel-supplier), and the *pachchadikkârâr* (distributors). The *tiruppanipillai* had their own treasury, the *tiruppani-bhandiram*, and villages and even *ârmai-s* were endowed to the temple to provide funds for the upkeep of the temple and the irrigation projects under its control. 59 This implies that the *tiruppanipillai* (also called *tirupanibhandârattâr*) had relative financial autonomy and that being charged with the construction and maintenance of the temple and the irrigation projects under the management of the temple, they organised the artisans employed by the temple. They also are the only group other than the *sthânattâr* to issue a *sîlâsàsanam* at the Tirupati temple. 60

59 e.g. TTDES/II/49, 87; III/167.
60 TTDES/III/167. This, however, should not perhaps be taken as the basis for a generalisation as it is a solitary instance.
There is no evidence on whether there was an absence of juridical restrictions on the liberty of the nobility in the economic area. It is possible that this was the case, however, as the caste-system, which was probably the only institutional check, would not have placed any restrictions on the activities of the nayaka-s in the economic sphere since they did not actually do the work themselves. On the other hand, there was active state intervention in the economic sphere, as we shall see below.

Burton Stein, rightly argues that authority in medieval South India originated from the relationship between the king and the brāhmaṇa-s. This was the general pattern all over India where there were Hindu princes. However, it was stronger in South India due to 'the absence of the estate legitimacy of kṣatriya lineages'. This was manifested in the widely shared South Indian conception that authoritative human leaders (kings, both large and small, imperial and local) and the deities installed in temples share sovereignty. This is to say, powerful human leaders, whether they rule empires or sub-castes, in their ritual transactions with temple deities, actualize a model or rule in which neither (king or deity) is in any simple sense dispensable or dependent.61

This is also reflected in the statues of Krishnadēvarāya and his chief consort at the Tirupati temple. However, the absence of the long eulogistic commentaries, found in the Cōla inscriptions of the preceding epoch, in the inscriptions of the Vijayanagara period shows a declining tendency in this conception. Stein has also shown that the Tirupati temple was a place to record political loyalties during the Vijayanagara period. In this situation, it is only natural to expect that the members of the ruling class - the imperial family, the chief officers of state and the nayaka-s - would try to emphasize their separation from the common masses by luxury consumption, and in support of this contention we may cite the gifts of gold and other valuable objects to the deity, made by these persons. Krishnadēvarāya, who made seven visits to Tirupati during his reign of 25 years (1504-29) was certainly the most extravagant in this regard.


63 TTDAS/III/32-65, 76-78, 80, 83-86. Some of the other instances of such gifts were as follows: The earliest dated Vijayanagara inscription at Tirupati (6th July 1359 A.D.) records the fixing of a golden sikhara (vase)
A further factor that must be taken into account in the construction of a model for the examination of an agrarian structure of a region is whether there existed more economically advanced countries or regions at distances accessible by the available means of transportation. In the present case, the best example of this phenomenon is the trade between the Vijayanagar Empire and the Portuguese who had established a settlement at Mylapūr which was attacked in A.D. 1558 by the Vijayanagara forces under Rāma Rāya. And Caesar Fredrick observed about Mylapūr, "It is a marvellous thing to them which have not seen the lading and unlading of men

Previous fn.

over the vimāna (dome) of Tirumaladēva by Mahāmandalēsvara Misaraganda Maṅga-dēva Mahārāja (TTDES/I/179, 180); in 1430, Śrīgirisvāra, the son of Dēvarāya II, presented a pattam, newly made of gold and gems to Śrī Veṅkaṭēsvāra (TTDES/I/193); in 1443, Teppada Nāgeya Nayakkara, presented 3000 honnu for making and presenting gold plates to Śrī Veṅkaṭēsvāra (TTDES/I/209).

and merchants in Saint Tome as they doe". 65 Mālapūr traded in gold and sealing wax with Pegu and in edible commodities especially sugar, with Bengal. Coromandel textiles were also sent in large quantities to Portugal.

The importance of Portugese to the mercantile activity of Jayakeśacolamanḍalam however, derived, not from the export of textiles to Portugal, but from their domination of the Western trade and from their carrying trade to Southeast Asia. The absence of European competitors and the superiority of European ship-borne artillery enabled them to dominate the trade between the West and India. Arabs and 'Moplaha's were compelled to pay duties to the Portugeseand the ports on the West Coast had to pay tribute in grain. Horses were undoubtedly the most important import into the Vijayanagara Empire from the West due to the constant wars that the Empire fought with the sultanates of the Deccan, and the kingdoms of Orissa and those of the Far South and because the horses bred in the 'Carnatic' were weak. 66 Speaking of king Sundhara

65 Ibid.
Pandi Devar (Sundhara Pāṇḍya Devar), Marco Polo says

You must know that the merchants of KISH, ORMUZ, DHAFAR and ADEN collect great numbers of chargers and other horses, and these they bring to the territories of this king and of his four brothers, who are kings likewise as I told you. For a horse will fetch 500 saggi of gold, worth more than 100 marks of silver, and vast numbers are sold there every year. Indeed this king wants to buy more than 2000 horses every year and so do his four brothers who are kings likewise. The reason why they want so many horses every year is that by the end of the year there shall not be one hundred of them remaining... for these people do not know in the least how to treat a horse; and besides they have no farriers.67

This trade which was controlled by the Arabs till the mid-fifteenth century shifted to the Portugese, not merely due to the stronger naval power of the latter but also due to the massacre of the Arab and Moorish traders at 'Batecal' (Bhaṭkal) in A.D. 1469, which has already been mentioned above.68 However, a partial revival of the Vijayanagara trade with the Arabs took place with the conquest of the Tul̄k̄ kingdom by Sāłuva Narasiṅha and the opening of the ports of Honāvari, Bhaṭkal, Bakkanūr and Maṅgalāpuram.69 Later, with the establishment of the

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68 Supra, pp. 23-4.

Portugese ascendancy in the western trade, the Arab traders were mainly but not entirely routed through Portugese ports, especially after the treaty signed by the Vijayanagar Emperor, Śādāśīvadēvarāya and Dom Joao de Castro the Captain-General and governor of Goa on the 19th of September 1547.

Foreign travellers had a tendency to exaggerate the volume of this trade and the quantum of its profits. Thus, for example, Nuniz says, of Ācyutadēvarāya

He causes horses to be brought from Oromuz and Aden (Persia (Ormuz) and Aden. The latter were Arabs) into his kingdom and thereby gave great profit to the merchants, paying them for the horses just as they asked. He took them dead or alive at three for a thousand pardac and of those that died at sea they brought him the tail only, and he paid for it just as if it had been alive.\textsuperscript{70}

This brings us then to the second important aspect of the trade with Portugal - the carrying trade conducted by the Portugese in the East. "From the point of view of the 'grocer king', the Portugese organization in East had but one main function: the regular shipment to Lisbon of oriental spices, chiefly pepper, but also cinnamon from Ceylon, nutmeg from Celebes, camphor from Borneo and - most valuable of all - cloves from the Moluccas and the

\textsuperscript{70} Nuniz, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 294.
Banda Islands. To pay for these cargoes, however, a whole network of ancillary trades had to be developed, since Portugal had little of its own to offer, and little trading capital. 71 Thus local commerce was based on the export of textiles from ports in Gujarat and the Coromandel to Indonesia where they were exchanged for spices and to east Africa where they were exchanged for gold and ivory. The Portuguese also exploited the large Japanese demand for Chinese manufactured goods transporting such good in the annual Macao carracks built chiefly in India from Malabar teak. These ships recorded only one ship-wreck in their entire history of sixty years! Among other local trades were the import to India of Arabian copper and the export from India to China and Japan of hawks, peacocks, and even occasionally, a caged tiger. 72 Indeed, "Portuguese was the lingua franca of Asiatic maritime trade. Pidgin English was derived from Pidgin Portuguese. " 73

The significance of this trade with the Portuguese, especially in horses, is apparent when we

72 Ibid., pp. 192-3.
73 Ibid., p. 193.
consider the importance of the horse in warfare. Indeed, "It has been suggested that the Vijayanagara kings were as famed as 'lords of the horse' (aśvapati) as the Imperial Gaṅgas of Orissa were famed as 'lords of the elephant' (gajapati)." Further, in order to pay for these horses, the Emperor demanded revenues from the nayaka-s as Nuniz tells us that

The horses which [the chief master of the horse] gives to horsemen, royal guards, on the death of one of their mounts, are mostly country-breds which the king buys, twelve or fifteen for a thousand pardaos. The king every year buys thirteen thousand horses of Ormuz, and country-breds, of which he chooses the best for his own stables, and he gives the rest to his captains, and gains much money by them, because after taking out the good Persian horses, he sells those which are country-bred, and gives five for a thousand pardaos, and they are obliged to pay him the money for them within the month of September, and with the money so obtained he pays for the Arabs that he buys of the Portugese, in such a way that his captains pay the cost of the whole without anything going out of the treasury.

It is interesting to note in this connection that ships arrived at Goa in September after having left Lisbon in

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74 See Stein, Peasant State and Society, pp. 400-03.
76 Nuniz, op. cit., p. 362.
March, and hence the requirement by the Portuguese for money to buy the highly priced products of the East. Consequently it may be inferred that this process of trade led to the siphoning of the surplus from Jayankondaolamandalam.

From this it follows that state intervention was an integral part of economic life and this intervention can be divided into three analytically distinct categories. As we have already discussed two of these three ways above - the investment in irrigation projects and the appropriation of surplus through the imposition of taxes and the exercise of the niyatchi right - we shall consider here only the third form of state intervention— the explicit regulation of economic activity. For instance, Robert Sewell, Parry, op. cit., p. 193. For difficulties of the sea-route to Goa see Braudel, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 378, fn. 96. For tonnages of the Portuguese ships see ibid., p. 298, fn. 102, pp. 301-3; J.H. Parry, op. cit., pp. 194-5. For the organizational set up of the Portuguese trade and its nationalization see E.L.J. Coornaert, 'European Economic Institutions and the New World; the Chartered Companies', in E.E. Rich and C.H. Wilson (eds.), The Cambridge Economic History of Europe: Volume IV - The Economy of Expanding Europe in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1967, pp. 220-274.

basing himself on the accounts of Fernão Nuniz and Domingoes Paes tells us that in 1514 A.D. Krishnadēvarāya offered Albuquerque, the Portuguese Governor of Goa, £20,000 for the exclusive right for the trade in horses. Although this offer was refused by Albuquerque, it was renewed when the Emperor planned to wage war against Ādil Shah, who also made a similar proposal. Albuquerque, shrewdly, replied to Vijayanagara agreeing to the proposal if the payment was fixed at 30,000 cruzados, while also writing to Bijapūr offering the exclusive right to buy horses, if a part of the mainland opposite the island was ceded to the Portuguese. However, before the matter could be settled Albuquerque died. Later, in 1547 a treaty was signed by Sadāśivarāya and Dom Joao de Castro, the details of which were as follows:

The contracting parties are stated to be the king of Portugal, by his deputy, the Captain-General and governor of Goa, Dom Joao de Castro, and the great and powerful king, Sādasiva, King of Bīsanna: (a) Each party to be friend of the friends, and enemy of the enemies of the other, and when called on to help the other with all their forces against all kings and lords of India, the Nizam Shah always exempted the Sultan of Ahmadnagar with whom the Portuguese had a treaty; (b) The governor of Goa will allow all Arab and Persian horses landed at Goa to be purchased by the king of Vijayanagar on due notice and proper payment, none being permitted to be sent to Bijapūr; (c) The king of Vijayanagar will compel all merchants in his kingdom trading with the coast to send their goods through ports where the Portuguese have factors, permitting none to proceed to Bijapūr ports; (d) The king of Vijayanagar will forbid the importation of saltpetre and iron into his kingdom from any Bijapūr
port and will compel its purchase from Portuguese ports; (e) The same with cloths, copper, tin, China silk, etc.; (f) The king of Vijayanagar will allow no Moorish ship or fleet to stop in his ports, and if any such should come he will capture them and send them to Goa. Both parties agree to wage war on Adil Shah, and all territory taken from the latter shall belong to Vijayanagar except lands on the West of the Ghats from Banda on the north to Cintacora on the South which lands shall belong to the king of Portugal. 79

In the context of active state intervention in the economic life of the times, it is important to recognise that the centre of political power was located outside Jayanagadacolamandalam and consequently important decisions were perhaps made without specific regard to the effects of these on the region. Here, we may also mention two other factors - the frequent occurrence of war between the Empire and the Sultanates of the Deccan and the nayakara system. We have already seen that the nayaka-s had to bear a heavy burden of the costs of the wars of the Empire, as they had to remit a portion of their revenues to the Imperial treasury and were perhaps also required to contribute levies to the army. This would again amount to a drain of the surplus away from Jaya-

Finally, we must recognise the fact that the 'idiom of ideology in pre-modern India was religious.'

Here, it should be realised that in the absence of modern-day scientific knowledge, religious doctrines provided the medieval mind with an explanation of reality which was practically all encompassing. Indeed, Lucien Febvre once demonstrated that in sixteenth century France, man had necessarily to have strong religious beliefs; that atheism was an inconceivable doctrine at that time. And it is this aspect of Febvre's work that led Pierre Vilar to say of his Le Problème de l'Incroyance au XIVe Siècle that Febvre's 16th century is not closed: Luther, Lefevre, Marguerite, Rabelais, de Periers: all appear there within the exact limits which the cohesion of the 'over-determining' totality imposes on them. But the latter is in movement. 'One cannot judge a revolutionary epoch by the consciousness which it has of itself.' The historian had to demonstrate this against the ideology of his own time, of the rulers. If he could do it, it was because he had first of all made the 16th century 'his own', at all levels, and held it 'present' through a process of research which was concrete but empirical. His research was systematized by his struggle to determine its problematic, against the historical positivism of the age, his struggle for the massive fact against the minute and precise fact, for true scrupulousness against false erudition.

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In medieval South India, the fact that the ideology of the time was expressed in a religious idiom is clear from the role played by the brāhmaṇa-s and the temples in territorial integration - a role that we have examined in some detail in a preceding chapter. The temples were also instruments of agricultural development and centres of artisanal production as we shall see in our following chapter.

The elements, then, of our model for the study of the agrarian system of Jayāṅkoṇḍacōḷamaṇḍalām under Vijayanagara rule are as follows:

(1) Agriculture was the most important economic activity;

(2) There was an absence of the concept of ownership of land. What was significant was the notion of differing rights to land and to the produce of land and these rights were transferrable;

(3) The division of all the forces of agricultural production between the peasants, large landed estates and the temple;

(4) The caste system was an institutional barrier to social mobility;

(5) The obligation of the cultivators to pay taxes in money and in grain in addition to yielding the major share of the produce (mēlvāram);
(6) The existence of wage-labour;
(7) Industrial and artisanal activities were carried on mainly in association with the temples;
(8) An absence of juridical restrictions on the liberty of the brāhmaṇa-s and the nāyaka-s in the economic arena;
(9) A strong tendency on the part of the upper sections of the people towards luxury consumption;
(10) The existence of economically more advanced regions at distances accessible by the available means of transportation;
(11) The constant intervention by the State in the economic life;
(12) The location of centres of political power outside of Jayaṅkondaḻolamandalam;
(13) The nāyikara system;
(14) The frequent occurrence of wars; and
(15) The fact ideological expression was in a religious idiom.

The choice of elements in our model may be questioned. It may be asked, for example, why we have left out of our formulation the evidences that have come down to us of communal land holdings.\(^\text{83}\) We can only

\(^{83}\) e.g. TTDES/II/38, mentions the irrigation of cattle-herding land (mandaikollai) in the tiruvidaivattam village of Tiruvenkaṭanallur; TTDES/II/40, refers to caliyam tōtām or weaver’s garden.
answer thus: models of this sort are crucially necessary if we are to pose new questions about medieval South India. In an endeavour to construct such a model we have chosen what in our opinion, were the significant elements and discarded those of marginal significance—like communal land-holdings. Most or all of the hypothesis advanced in the present study are certain to be modified considerably by further research, if not to be demolished in their entirety. And these are developments that we shall welcome, for that is how historical knowledge advances and must advance.

It remains, now, to fix the temporal and spatial limits of the model that we have sketched above. It is of course a truism to say that there is an inverse relationship between the number of elements included in a model and its range of applicability. Without examination of evidence from other areas, encompassed within the Vijayanagara Empire, we would not advocate the extension of our model to areas outside Jayakondacolamandalam, though there is perhaps some *prime facie* grounds to extend it to some other areas of the Tamil country. Moreover, Braudel once said,

I have sometimes compared models to ships. For me, once the ship has been made, the whole interest lies in launching it, seeing whether it floats and then
sending it out on the waters of time. Shipwreck is always the most significant moment... In my view, research must constantly move between social reality and the model, in a succession of readjustments and journeys ever patiently reviewed. Thus, the model is both an attempt to explain a given structure, and an instrument with which one can examine it, and compare it, and test its solidity and its very life. 84

Thus, if we attempt to move our model backwards through time, we shall find that it is inapplicable in the period prior to A.D. 1360 due to the absence of important elements like the navahkara system and due to the presence in the earlier time of powerful locality and 'supra-locality' institutions, to the emergence of small regional kingdoms, to the decline of the trade network, to the process of decommercialization and de-urbanization and so on. And if our model is floated forwards in time after A.D. 1565, we encounter the consequences of the rapid decline of the Vijayanagara Empire after the fatal battle of Rakshasa-Tangadi perhaps best exemplified in the decline of grants to the Tirupati temple. Thus the temporal limit of this model may be fixed at A.D. 1360 and 1565.

One of the major drawbacks of the present attempt at model-construction lies in the fact that the long-term tendencies are treated very inadequately. This is primarily because we have only been able to concentrate on the historical sources from Jayaṅkōḍacōḷamaṇḍalam. However, as Jayaṅkōḍacōḷamaṇḍalam was an integral part of the Vijayanagara Empire, a satisfactory explanation of the agrarian system cannot be attempted without taking into account the history of the Empire as a whole. It has not been possible to do this due to the paucity of relevant secondary sources and because of the sheer impossibility of consulting all the primary sources. For similar reasons it has not been possible to study the post-1565 phase of Jayaṅkōḍacōḷamaṇḍalam adequately and this undoubtedly affects our interpretation of the period under study. It is to be hoped that in the years to come more historians would dedicate their energies to the study of the Vijayanagara Empire and attempt to unravel the long-term social and economic trends.