CHAPTER IV

ADMINISTRATION
a) King:

Monarchy on the whole was the accepted form of Government in the Tamil Country and particularly in this region. This form of Government was quite popular from as early as the Saṅgam Age and people evinced great regard to the king. During the Chōla rule, the king commanded great prestige and power. Probably the economic prosperity contributed to his royal status. He was acclaimed as the greatest warrior, embodiment of virtue, and the custodian of Dharma. The imperial status of the monarch was altered to a large extent during the Vijayanagar days. The region was ruled by the officers appointed by the emperor, who lost direct touch with the people as he was stationed at a remote place. The concept of monarchy however was not changed; the prestige and power vested with the monarch. Nevertheless the local rulers, the Nayaks or the military chiefs appointed by the imperial ruler gradually came into possession of full powers. This dichotomy of dual rulership often met with fierce conflicts, till the establishment of the Mārāṭha rule in this region. The Mārāṭha ruler exercised virtually full regal powers but it was gradually shadowed by the authority of the Britishers, who later occupied the Thanjavur region.

When the Europeans, chiefly the Britishers, occupied this area, they introduced a form of monarchy, the administration
of which was carried on through a department of officials in keeping with the British traditions. They were governed by statutes and regulatory orders of a Parliament where representation to this area was barred. The government was a kind of an invisible monarchy. The local agents of the distant monarch, however were vested with effective power, and they ruled like despots, though theoretically the people were meant to be governed by the orders of the Parliament. This independent set up in administration later introduced local bodies like Municipalities. Such local institutions like District Boards and Municipalities may be said to be a modern version of the ancient Sabha and Ur. But the really significant change was the introduction of the Rule of law, which was indeed a redeeming feature. Even more significant was the introduction of English education which ultimately trained and conditioned the people to the concepts of modern democracy, i.e. that democracy is more than a form of government, that it is primarily a mode of associated living, a conjoint communicated experience.

b) Administrative Divisions:

The Thanjavur region may be considered as an area included in the large territorial division, usually denoted as Cholamandal during the early part of the rule of the imperial Chalas.

Due to the Chōla aggrandisement, the territorial extent of the Chōla kingdom was extended to include the surrounding areas and consequently the Thanjavur region was considered as a part of this territorial unit. In the early part of the eleventh century Rājarāja I divided the Chōla kingdom into eight mandalams (political divisions) as follows:

(1) Chōla mandalam, (2) Rājarāja mandalam, (3) Jayan'goḍa Chōla-mandalam, (4) Nigariṭi Chōla mandalam, (5) Kumudichōla mandalam, (6) Mudikondachōla mandalam, (7) Vikramachōla mandalam and (8) Tādigaipūḍighōla mandalam was the new name given by Rājarāja I in 1009 A.D. to Chōlanādu. This bigger division was an important administrative unit and was subdivided into a number of Yalamādu were further sub-divided into kūram or nadu. The kūram was the ancient name given to this division. A few villages constituted a pāḍa or kūram. Apart from these, certain bigger villages called tanjūr were in existence, but were different from the ordinary villages.

In the Nāyak period, the divisions of the kingdom followed more or less the Chōla divisions with the difference

3. Ibid., pp. 98-114
4. Ibid., p.19.
that the valamāgu came to be called Rājyam and the niṅgu
probably became tīrma. The same system of administrative
divisions were followed under the Kārāṭhas also. The British
divided the Thanjavur region into two Madras districts, namely
Thanjavur and Tiruchirapalli. They formed the part of
government called the Madras Presidency.

c) Administration:

The administration of the region was probably supervised
by a council of ministers during the Chōla times. However,
the responsibility was not shared by the king among his ministers.
The ministers who assisted the king were adorned with high
regal titles. The titles Brahmadhirāja and Kuvaradvālapān
were generally bestowed upon high royal officers, chiefly
belonging to the communities of Brahmin and Vellālas, res-
pectively.

A tradition of co-rulership prevailed, which initiated
the son into monarchical nuances. The son was co-opted as
ruler while the father lived and functioned as the king. There
was thus an overlapping period of dual control. There is no
reference to queens ruling in their own right, during the Chōla
rule.

The mandalam was administered by a mandalamudali. No
Mandalamudali is mentioned in respect of Chōla mandalam. Hence,

it has been suggested by Y. Subbarayalu that it was under the direct administration of the king through the *puravan-vari* (Land Revenue) department of the Chōla maṇḍalam. There is no mention about the administrative officers of the *valanādu* in the Chōla maṇḍalam. However, it has been suggested that the officers *nādu vagai* and *nādu kanpāri* functioned as administrators of *valanādu*. The *nādu*, which was the key unit of administration was governed by the *nattār*, the assembly of the *nādu*. Officers of this *nādu* assembly functioned probably under the direction of the *nattār*.

The villages in the lowest rung were administered by a *sabba*, the village assembly. This was an elected body of the Brahmana villages. The *ur* functioned as an assembly of a mercantile village. Apart from these the *śivuś* functioned independently and were attached to *valanādu* directly.

This local government is very real, and, except in extreme cases, the king had no need to interfere in the affairs of the village. The famous inscription of Parantaka I from Uttarāmēkur, even though outside the purview of this thesis,

7. Ibid., p. 69.
8. Ibid., p. 93.
prescribes the qualifications of the voters and elaborate rules for election by lot of candidates for the membership of the sabha and the sub-committees. The autonomy of the village in the Chola period does not mean total independence, but they generally managed their affairs as best as they could and referred to the king only when the occasion warranted. The king prescribed rules and regulations for their function.

Eventually the same system prevailed after the decline of the Chola rule, the Vijayanagar and the Nayak reigns show a marked decline in the functioning of these local institutions. The change may be attributed to the fact that it was an imperialism imposed by Vijayanagar rulers who were not a benevolent monarchy as of the Cholas. With the decline of the village institutions, centralisation of the government became an indisputable fact and the Nayak rulers faithfully adhered to the administrative practices of the Vijayanagar rulers. But the village still continued to be the basic unit of administration.

The Nayak rule was essentially a military administration, for military commanders were appointed to rule the conquered territory by the Vijayanagar rulers, when they first came to power. The Marathas generally followed the administrative system which was accepted in Maharashtra, their home country.

9. ARE, No.2 of 1899
It was during Amarsingh's reign that the Britishers suppressed the so-called Marāṭṭa autonomy and the king was compelled to maintain the Company's military forces. The foreign policy and the control over the army were taken away from the king. Without marshal backing there was little power or prestige that vested with the king and without the control over a full purse there was little hope of the king ever reacquiring his status. When the British took over the full administration, they started by calling upon the collector to take the services of the military in the introduction and establishment of a new internal government and in bringing the Poligars under subjection. One of the first things they did was to transfer to themselves the sole authority for the administration of civil and criminal justice. Originally they divided the Thanjavur region for administrative purposes into Nāgapattīnām and Thanjavur in 1806. Local administrations which made Thanjavur into municipalities like Kumbakōnām, Nāyavarām etc., under the Madras Act III of 1871 and the District Boards were new arrangements in the realms of civil administration. In 1820 Thanjavur was made up of 9 taluks. In 1832 there was a proposal to divide the district into 15 taluks.

In the initial stages of British rule the Commander of the military forces, the Revenue Collector (who was also in charge of general administration) and the Resident (who was a Political agent) constituted the three limbs of British authority. But with the abolition of the Residency and the establishment of a full-fledged civil government, the collector became the Political agent also. In the course of 19th century all the essentials of modern administration were provided by the British.

d) Revenue Administration:

A scientific system of land revenue based on a proper assessment of tax prevailed during the Chola rule. The assessment of land tax was based on a complete measurement of land coupled with the nature of the crop raised and the availability of irrigational facilities. Rājarāja I was the first to institute a revenue survey for the proper assessment of tax. In 1002 he carried out this survey with the help of Sennāpati Kṛravaṇa Ulagaḷandān alīma Rājarāja Mahārāja. According to K.A. Nilakanta Sastry this survey of Rājarāja I was one of the most original and important administrative


achievements of the reign and furnished the basis for the revenue policy for many years thereafter. Revenue surveys were conducted during the reigns of Kulottunga I, Vikrama Chola and Kulottunga III.

Under the Nāyakas and the Marāṭṭas, assessment and collection of land tax continued on similar lines as before. A certain rigidity in the system must have been introduced, because the entire administration had become partly military and partly civil. With the advent of the British, the need to make uniform the revenue settlement was realised and this resulted in the Ryotwari settlement. The Thanjavur region is famous for a very large number of ināns, both service and otherwise. These inān holders were, as a class, called Mirādārs. The Patta regulation was passed along with the Permanent Settlement Regulation of 1802 for prescribing Pattas to be used between the Zamindars and the ryots.

Ryotwari system:

Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor who was the well known champion of the Ryotwari system was guided by Mr. Hodgson the

ARE., No. 59 of 1913.
18. SII., Vol. VII, No. 96; ARE., No. 87 of 1900.
ARE., 1909, para 52.
senior member in the Board of Revenue. The latter succeeded in persuading his colleagues that the village system might be made the foundation of a satisfactory land revenue system for the whole presidency. When the Guntur system was introduced, the Collector reported to the Board as follows:

"The plan of fixing a money assessment upon the average produce of given extent of land and average price of the produce appears to be on every account preferable to be pursued under the peculiar local circumstances of the District of Thanjavur; this system renders the re-measurement of lands and the tedious process of the classification and individual assessment unnecessary, the accounts are now in sufficient forwardness in many places to commence the preparation of the Pattahs." 21

But a reassessment was fully undertaken and for this purpose the district was divided into 15 taluks instead of 9.

The other sources of revenue for the government were also tapped anew. In 1809, the government felt that the new fishery, recently opened on the coast of Thanjavur and rented to Baboon should be managed by the government after the expiry of the lease, until its value is ascertained. 22

In 1875 a police tax was introduced since a reform of the police system was contemplated.

The largest revenue unit was the Vēli which was divided into smaller units like the Kāni, the Mā, the Kuli. Lands were accurately measured and the area of lands owned by land holders were registered in the concerned register with precision. Different measuring rods were used in the assessment of revenue. Jārājakol, Ulagalandakol, Tiruvulagandakol, Cīrambalakkol, Paṅgittakol and Śrīpādakkol were some of the measuring rods used during the Chōla period. In the reign of Rājendra Chōla, we hear of a Sālīgālkol. A measuring rod equal to the royal foot was also used for measuring the land in the reign of Kulottuṅga I.

Rates of Assessment:

The rates of assessment of tax on land varied from time to time. It has been believed that 1/6th of the produce was the rate of tax assessed from the land. But there are instances

29. ARE., Nos. 99 of 1914; 102 of 1925.
where the rate was modified according to the changing condition of fertility and the irrigational facilities. However, P.A. Nilakanta Sastri suggests that the standard rate of tax assessment during the period the Cholas was 100 kālam paddy per vēli of land on the basis of rates available from the Thanjavur epigraphs.

Collection of Taxes:

In the Chola period the land tax was imposed in a lump sum, probably on the whole village, and the shares of the various ryots were apportioned by the village elders. This form of tax collection generally prevailed in the Brahmadesa village. In the Vellanyerai (Ryotwari) villages the land holders were to pay the taxes individually to the royal officers in the village, who were authorised by the king.

Some considerate rulers exempted suffering ryots from certain taxes, while others levied excessively heavy taxes. Instances are not wanting, where during the later Chola period,

30. ARB., No. 151 of 1925.
32. ARB., No. 159 of 1895.
land tax was realised by the sale of the defaulter’s lands. Some Dravidian tenants of Vānavanādevi Chaturvedimangalam unable to pay the taxes had abandoned their lands and left the village and these lands were sold to a neighbouring temple in 1117, to realise the tax amount\(^{34}\). A record from Tirumāndūral mentions the migration of the residents from the street Vānavanāyaka Perundery, being unable to pay the heavy taxes and their subsequent re-settlement in it\(^{35}\).

Tax Exemption:

Every taxation system does involve occasional and justifiable exemption from taxes. Exemption from taxes when the rains failed have been reported from very early times. The instance of the exemption from certain vahala by the magnanimity of Kulottuṅga I is quite famous\(^{36}\). A record of the Nāyak king Adbhutappa Nāyaka mentions that gold-smiths were exempted from certain taxes\(^{37}\). Vijayanagar seems to have imposed a marriage tax\(^{38}\) which seemed fantastic and it was

\(^{34}\) ARE., No. 620 of 1909.

\(^{35}\) ARE., No. 234 of 1927.

\(^{36}\) ARE., No. 168 of 1923; ARE., 1923, part 11, para 29.

\(^{37}\) ARE., No. 22 of 1897.

\(^{38}\) ARE., No. 340 of 1926; Report, 1926, para 43; RO., Vol.XII WR. 64.
abolished to the great relief of the subjects. In the
days of the Imperial Chōlas\(^{39}\), Pāṇḍiyas\(^{40}\) and Vijayanagar\(^{41}\)
professional taxes were levied on sho-kēyers, weavers, oil-
mongers, and other professionals. In an inscription of the
Vijayanagar rulers there were 65 items of taxes listed\(^{42}\),
and the levy of taxes remained substantially the same\(^{43}\).

e) Law and Justice:

The Chōla rulers generally followed the principles laid
down in the Dharmaśāstras. That the kings followed the law
codes of Manus, is evident from the epithets pre-fixed to the
names of certain Chōla kings in the epigraphs. They considered
these codified laws of Manus as important guidelines in their
administration. But it cannot be asserted that these codes
were scrupulously adhered to by the Chōla monarchs. There
were certain invidious deviations from the original in actual
practice.

In these laws, there was no differentiation between
civil and criminal justice. Civil and criminal laws during

40. ARE., No. 507 of 1916; ARE., 1917, part ii, para 8 and note.
41. EI., Vol. XVIII, p. 159.
42. ARE., No. 249 of 1916; ARE., 1916, part ii, para 62.
43. A. Appadorai, *Economic Conditions in Southern India
the Chola times were discriminatory. Different punishments were ordered on different communities for the same offence. In the 23rd years of Rajaraja I, a case of misappropriation of temple property was reported and reparation was demanded by the judges. A typical case is the one against a person who went hunting, missed his aim and shot a Vellala. The assembly which met, declared that the person was guilty and ordered him to present 64 cows to a temple for burning 2 lamps. A similar case came up in the days of Kulottunga I when an identical penalty was imposed. The supposed rationale behind the kind of penal provision was that the guilty should be imposed a monetary penalty and the sin be expiated by presenting cattle to the temple. This means that to them, a guilt was not only a crime but also a sin.

Confiscation of property was also considered as a mode of punishment. Traitors had their lands confiscated which were gifted over to temples. A Chinese writer of the early 13th century gives a vivid picture of the Chola system of justice. He records, "if the offence is light, the culprit is tied to

44. ARR., No. 25 of 1918.
45. ARR., No. 67 of 1906.
46. ARR., No. 77 of 1900; II., Vol. III, p. 68.
47. ARR., No. 393 of 1918.
wooden frame and given fifty, seventy or up to an hundred blows with a stick. Heinous crimes are punished with decapi-
tation or by being trampled to death by an elephant.\textsuperscript{48}

In the Marāṭṭa Government, the judiciary consisted of
courts of which the superior was the Dharmaśabha which dealt
with cases involving more than Rs. 100/-. The highest
appellate authority was always the king. The system of
itinerant judges prevailed even during this period.

Evidence was admitted in criminal proceedings by the
well known but highly discredited system of ordeals\textsuperscript{49} that this
practice should have prevailed even during the reign of Serfoji II
is rather irreconcilable. In 1823 the British Resident in
Thanjavur remonstrated against the cruel act of the king,
in making woman to put her hand into a pot of boiling ghee\textsuperscript{51}.
The Resident remarked that the Rāja cannot be so credulous
as to believe that the hand of an innocent person will not be
burnt\textsuperscript{52}. Another case of trial by ordeal dates to 1823. In
this case the husband called upon the wife to prove her

\textsuperscript{48} K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, \textit{Foreign Notices of South India}, p.145.
\textsuperscript{49} T.V. Mahalingas, \textit{South Indian Polity}, pp. 223-25.
\textsuperscript{50} ARE., 1924, para 64.
\textsuperscript{51} ARE., No. 421 of 1924.
\textsuperscript{52} Tanjore District Records\textit{ Val. 4426 dated 28th. Oct. 1823, p. 193.}
innocence by this ordeal and she accepted this challenge. But it was not imposed on her by the court. While the king appears to have contended that the Sāstras are supposed to have allowed this, the Resident rightly disapproved of this procedure. One would rationally construe that such inhuman ordeals must have crept into the Sāstras - Unauthenticated.

The government courts of justice called Munis Sahel were established by the king Amar Singh towards the close of the 18th century at the suggestion of the guardian, the Danish missionary Schwartz. The newly constituted courts did not perpetrate the barbarity of trial by ordeal. The usual punishments were whipping, fines, imprisonment and driving the offender round the streets mounted on a donkey wearing a garland of Erukku (Calotropis) flowers. Even impalement was practised till very late in the 18th century in Thanjavur. These provisions were altered only when the penal code was drawn up in the days of William Bentinck.

54. Reports of the Tanjore Commissioners, 1799, pp. 16-17.
55. B.S. Baliga, Tanjore District Hand book, p. 91.
The Rev. Schwartz informed the Governor-in-Council in Fort St. George that for want of proper administration of justice, the people of Thanjavur were oppressed and tortured as a result of which some of them have abandoned this country and emigrated to other parts. When these courts were established on the advice of Rev. Schwartz, a situation of dual jurisdiction arose. Very often disputes arose in regard to jurisdiction and to the nature of justice vested out. In one case the Resident strongly disapproved of branding as a punishment though the king had jurisdiction, the Resident made it clear, 'no such punishment should take place in future', and called for a declaration to the effect from the king\(^57\). A correspondence with the Governor-General communicated to the Resident maintained that persons belonging to the native states but committing an offence in British territory were to be punished by British Courts, but no vice versa. It was made clear that the practice should not be reciprocal and that the distinction is a 'proper prerogative of the paramount power'\(^58\). This is an indication of how the doctrine of the Paramountcy developed.


\(^{58}\) Ibid., Vol. 4447 dated 25.10.1834, pp. 2-7.
When the British took over the judicial administration of the region, a fundamental change came over the philosophy of the state. The king belonged to a tradition which held that a king can do no wrong that he was personally not bound by any human law; but now the British government considered this view erroneous and started the tradition of the Rule of Law. The Government, with a view to enabling the natives in the provinces to make themselves acquainted with the laws and regulations, directed the Collectors and Judges to set vernacular copies of the rules and had them printed for sale at a nominal price. This was an useful procedure.

f) Police:

In the Chōla period, police duties were performed by units of the military in the urban areas and the capital city, while in the villages these duties were performed by local officers. This system was called during the Chōla times Pāthikāval. A Chōla inscription records the arrangements made by the mahājanas and the temple authorities for the prevention of robbery and theft in the locality by the grant of Pāthikāval rights to certain persons fixing the emoluments due to them. Another record registers the custom of

59. ARE, No. 244 of 1914; ARE, 1915 parat 40; IPS, 681. T.V. Mahalingam, South Indian Polity, pp. 240-245.

60. ARE, No. 70 of 1946-47.
Kavalkāra were appointed during the Nayak rule to look after the police duties of this region. These Kavalkāra distinguished themselves as police officers of a village and were responsible for the security of governmental property and peace of that area. They were allowed to keep piece of land as a fief, the income from which was considered as the remuneration. This system of village watchman grew in importance during the days of the Marāṭhas. It attained even more significance during the rule of British. A communication dated 1801 told the Board that during the Marāṭha government the Kavalkāra would easily subsist on their allowances at the present rate.

A report to the Police committee dated 30.9.1805 recommended that the distinguished Kavalkāra may be nominated as Tanādāras and Talaiyāris, retained to watch the villages. As a necessary preparatory measure to the establishment of this system, it was suggested that disarming the whole province would be desirable.

61. ARR., No. 155 of 1906.
63. Tanjore District Records.
In fact the life of rapine which they led raised them to the status of rich land owners. But the Company’s arrangement supported by military forces deprived them of their predatory profits and left to them only their scanty wages. An increase of their allowances is desirable not only as a recompense to their respectability but for the maintenance of their Talayārī and the Collector proposed to abolish the present grain māṇiyam and to grant to them land māṇiyam in lieu thereof. When the Kāvalkāra became notorious, the Government set up a special committee for the establishment of a regular system of police and upon its recommendation, the Kāval system was abolished in 1814.

g) War:

The Chōla emperors carried wars into neighbouring countries and fought winning but dreadful battles. When Rājarāja I invaded the Chāḷukya kingdom he is said to have moved with an army of 9,00,000. The Chinese traveller Chau-Ju-Kua (A.D. 1225) records that the Chōla army consisted of 60,000 war elephants. The navy which conquered Ceylon:

64. Ibid., Vol. 3202 dated 12.3.1861, p. 213.
and the Western coast of southern India (Kerala) was created by the Rājarāja I. His son Rājēndra I inherited this valuable navy and the great and efficient army of his father consisting of chosen archers known as terindavilligal. The conquered territories were controlled probably by military establishments serving as occupation forces. A cavalry regiment functioned as the king's armou. The Vēlaiikkāra forces must have been the bodyguards of the king. The Chōla army recruited the kaikōlas (weavers) in large numbers. Even Brahmins and Sūdras were enlisted who occasionally held high offices. There was a Brahmin military officer called Krishnanarāman under Rājarāja I.

The king was the head of the army and navy and probably led the army to battle personally. Chōla warfare in the north and west spared neither the honour of women nor the innocence of children. The burning of towns and villages was a common practice. The capture of the capital cities of the Pāṇḍyas and the Chālukyas are narrated in the epigraphs. Destruction of capitals was a common common practice.

68. ARE., No. 394 of 1921.


70. T.V. Mahalingam, South Indian Politics, pp. 255-256. ARE., Nos. 255 of 1907; 67 of 1909.

71. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, The Āḷ猎, p. 188; T.V. Mahalingam, South Indian Politics; p. 137. SII., vol.II.

The capture of booty from the defeated cities was considered as an important source of revenue of the state.

The army consisted of the usual four-fold divisions, namely infantry, cavalry, elephantry and chariotry. The number in each division is not known. However, the infantry and cavalry accounted for more than the other two. Bows and arrows, spears and swords were the most potent weapons used in the army. During the British rule various types of guns found a place in the royal armoury. However, the ancient forms of armaments did not lose their importance and splendour.

Military activities were not to be construed as an unpleasant necessity but as an inevitable and essential function of the state according to Krishṇadēvarāya. He thought that expenditure on the army was a first charge on kings revenue. Dharma-yuddha is very much in the moral books, but the practice of warfare was very realistic. The enemy's economy was attempted to be destroyed by demolishing dams and flooding his country. Contaminating water sources and destroying standing crops were also indulged in. Even women were not spared and were taken as prisoners.

73. T.B. Rangamathas Davy, 'The Historical Geography of Cavery Delta', in JSA, Vol. XII, p. 89.
The Nāyak army consisted of fighters drawn from many quarters. Raghunātha's army included Muslims and the Yavanas who were perhaps Sinhalese troops. The Nāyaks and the Nāṭṭas however did not bestow much attention on the Navy. The Nāṭṭa army was modelled on the Moghul system, women were enrolled to play a part in the army. The kings depended on the Europeans for the artillery wing.

b) Economy

The economic conditions of this region may be determined by its natural resources as well as the creative and technical skills of the people. The deltaic fertility of the soil made cultivation of paddy, the most important occupation of the people. Throughout ages this region has been considered a surplus area.

The Kāviri delta system is a very ancient one and confirms to what is called the 'direct flow system'. The construction of Nettur dam improves it into a 'storage system'. The Thanjavur soil is generally unfavourable to pasture owing to its lowness and its liability to dampness. Consequently the cattle which are an integral part of agriculture, lack adequate fodder and their annual mortality is very high.

74. V. Vridhagiri, The Nāyaks of Tanjore, pp. 74. and 85.
It must be said to the credit of the British that in the very first year of the 19th century, the Collector suggested that an area to the extent of 3 Valis of high level land in every village may be earmarked for pastoral purposes.

The Kāviri carried a large amount of silt much of which is deposited in this large delta. This fertile soil with river irrigation solves the problem of rice economy. Since a great area traversed by the Kāviri receives only 30-50 inches of rainfall which also is undependable and variable, recourse to river irrigation is a blessing. Since the 4th century A.D. and possibly before that there has been an irrigation system on the lower Kāviri. During the British period the Kollīqām was dammed and used for irrigation and a total of about a millions acres of land came under irrigation along the mouth of this river. The drainage pattern also is interesting with its bundle of streams packed into 8-10 miles between Tiruchirisalai and Thanjavur but fanning out into a quadrant 75 miles across. The whole area has been under intense cultivation for over ten centuries.

Plantain cultivation is of secondary importance and it is grown as a money crop. Betel trade is a flourishing business in this region. Ayyampattai, Pandaluravādai and Pāpanāsun are among the centres well known for their betel leaves. Many Muslims employ themselves in this lucratative business. More than ever Rs. 1200/- worth of this commodity
is sent to other places everyday from Thanjavur. Sugarcane, tobacco and vegetables and other wet crops are also grown but as rotation crops cereals like Aamu, Varagu, Maize and Phul are also cultivated.

Temple economy:

The temple differentiated Chola public life of that period sharply from the economy of other societies. The temple, ostensibly a religious institution was designed to become the centre of social activity. It also contributed to its economy and in turn was sustained by the munificence of the devout society. The temple controlled the economic life of the society around it. The massive lithic structures of Chola temples could be least expected in a region totally devoid of even small hillocks. The temple may be deemed as monumental of the Chola imperialism. The growth of the Chola Empire synchronised with the growth of the temples. The decline of the Cholas led to the decline of the prosperity of the temples. It may be surmised that the temples served as clearing house of imperial wealth.

The gifts of temple utensils and ornaments by the public give an idea of the industries which flourished in this land of temples. In the 11th and 12th centuries, the art of making

75. K.S. Gopalan, 'A Note on the Agricultural Geography of the Environs of Tanjore' in JINDA, Vol. XII, p. 158.
ornaments of gold and precious stones reached a stout
flourishment. Caesar Fredrick, who visited Nagarapatam about
A.D. 1570, alludes to Thanjavur as a country of small
traders dealing only in rice and cloth. “It was a very
plentiful country of victuals but now it hath a great deal
less; and that abundance of victuals cause many Portugals to
go thither and build houses and dwell there with small charge.”

The economic potential of the empire was augmented
from the resources got by military conquests. In the Imperial
Ahola period, foreign conquests like the victory over Sri Vijaya
and the occupation of Ceylon contributed in no small measure
to the economic prosperity of this region, generating a
spurt in its industrial and religious progress. The country
was subject to famines, floods and storms. Of these, floods
at least were attempted to be averted by engineering works,
which began as early as Karikal in of the Sangam age and
continued during the British period. But even great public
works like the Grand Anicut or the Mettur dam had not comple-
tely solved the problem. Floods are caused in Kaviri not
only by a rise in the headwaters but also when its channels
are engorged by heavy rains. In 1679 Kaviri flooded the
delta in an unprecedented manner. Many villages in Tiruchirapalli

76. Hakluyt’s Voyages (Glasgow, 1914), V.400.
F.R. Hovingway, Tanjore District Gazetteer, p. 266.
and Thanjavur districts were submerged causing loss to human life, cattle and standing crops. The floods were followed by an epidemic resulting in pestilence and disease.

The economy of the Thanjavur region was considerably affected by such periodical floods in this river. Such merciless devastation by nature can offset the policies of even a considerate ruler. The Cholas constructed embankments on the sides of the river Kāviri\textsuperscript{77} and even levied a tax for the proper upkeep of its bunds. But in the days of Akōji, due to the change in his attitude cultivators died of starvation and were always in debts. In 1781 the ravages caused by civil and foreign invasions, in addition to the failure of the monsoon, resulted in gruesome famine\textsuperscript{78} in the Tiruchirappalli–Thanjavur area. In its wake it brought starvation, disease and misery. These eroded into the economy of the region which is admired traditionally for its prosperity and self-sufficiency.

The Thanjavur region does not produce raw materials for any big industry. A few cash crops are cultivated. The mineral resources of this region is rather meagre. So trade

\textsuperscript{77} T.B. Ramanatha Dakey, 'Historical Geography of the Cavery Delta' in EMGA, Vol. XII, pp. 86-97.

\textsuperscript{78} C.K. Srinivasan, \textit{Maratha Rule in the Carnatic}, p. 512.
has taken the place of manufacture. The existence of many merchant guilds trading in a variety of merchandise is recorded. Padinervishayattar and Nagarattar are two mercantile communities mentioned in inscriptions. Agreement among them were drawn for fixing the rate of tolls payable by them on several articles of merchandise.

The Kannigrama, the Anjuvanam and Nānādūra are some of the guilds we hear of in medieval inscriptions. Kannigrama was a semi-independent trading corporation. The heads of Kannigrama were granted some extraordinary privileges. Another inscription registers a grant of Nāgai daius on merchandise by the merchant guilds of 56 countries to the Goddess Sivakāsaṇandari of Perumbavappuliyur (Chidambaram) in the Rājarāja Vālanaṭu.

The existence of these organised guilds should not mislead one to conclude that there was a centralised cash economy supported by a currency and a banking system. There was only a rudimentary banking tradition in the country.

79. ARE, No. 405 of 1912; III, Vol. VIII, 68.

    ARE, No. 46 of 1930-31; ARE 1931, part II, part 3.

81. ARE, 1927, part II, para 46, 47 and 48.
    [49], Vol. XII, pp. 67 and 69.

82. [46], V. Arkalgud, 60-1357 A.D.
but trade was mostly by barter. At the beginning of the
11th century in Thanjavur, pepper, pulses, dhél, mustard,
ghee, tamarind, plantains, salt, betel leaves and arecanuts
could be exchanged for paddy. Commodities like Cardamom, sugar
and camphor were sold for money. Foreign trade passed through
eleven major parts on the Coromandal coast like Nagapatnam,
Tuticorin, Adirampatnam etc. Though the anchorage is good
at all the ports, big ships have to be anchored at a distance
on the sea and communication with the shore was through small
boats.

Thanjavur is one of the oldest centres of manufacture
of luxury goods. Apart from weaving and metal works,
it produced botanical dyes, bangles, shoes, scents, rose
water and garlands. In the city of Thanjavur itself flourished
its famous indigenous industry of very elegant pith works, which
even to this day enjoy a national and international market.

Till the middle of the 19th century the people of
Thanjavur like the rest of India did not know how to manufacture
ice which was imported from Europe and America. A letter
from Babaji to Kamaji Pandithar dated 9th April, 1843
recommended the import of ice blocks of suitable sizes from
the United States. Kumbakonam is famous for the manufacture

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84. SII., Vol. II, p.6, Venkayya. Introduction in the same
volume.

85. K. Aravamudan 'The Economic Geography of Tanjore
District' JNIA, vol. XIII, p.190
of time-honoured metal utensils. Manufacture of salt in Adirampattinam was a profitable business. Fishing attracted more merchants in the 19th century.

The economic condition of the times necessitated the unwholesome practice of serfdom and slavery i.e., sale of persons for public institutions. The redeeming feature in this was that the people dedicated themselves to temple and god which could be attributed to their cultural tradition. An inscription of Kulottunga I speaks of the sale of a vellāla and his two daughters to the temple of Tirupparamkudi-yār. It is mentioned that a severe famine reduced the people to sell their personal liberty due to poverty and hunger. Whatever be the cause for such sales, it cannot be denied, that society was no stranger to the institutions of slavery and serfdom. The sale of men and women as agricultural servants (adimai) for cultivating lands set apart from the maintenance of a mathā was very much in vogue. A medieval inscription mentions the sale of seven persons to a temple for 30 kāsu by a lady called Amalay Perunagadi with her husband as her agent.

86. ARR., No. 217 of 1925.
87. ARR., No. 218 of 1925.
1) Coins and Currency:

The Chōla emperors issued coins of copper, silver and gold. The epigraphs of the Chōla kings refer to coins current in this area by different names. The kasu was the generally known coin; it was equivalent to ten kalamū in the days of Āditya II. The Ādai, a standard gold coin was also current in the Chōla country. One Nādurantakaṇ Nādai was equivalent to one kalamū of the fineness of ā naru or two kasus. However it is difficult to identify these coins with the actual specimens available to us. Uttama Chōla issued the first gold coin and this tradition was followed by his successors. The Rājāraja coins were fairly good ones, of superior gold. After Rājāraja I the quality of the Chōla coinage deteriorated. This is evident from the available coin specimens. The coins are of very base gold or rather silver washed with gold.

When the Rāyakas, the Sētapatīs and other Poligars became independent they issued their own coins. For sometime the coins bore legends, acknowledging the suzerainty of the emperor.

88. ARE., No. 241 of 1923

89. ARE., No. 90 of 1928.

But later copper coins bearing Telugu legends were to be issued. With the decline of the Vijayanagar empire, the number of petty states minting their own coins rapidly increased.

The Marattas issued coins called Chakram, Panam etc. There was a mint at Tirumarugal. Since the mint was called Thangasalai, the coins minted must have been of gold. Arab and French coins also were in circulation. There is evidence to believe that in 1777 government servants in Maratta employ were paid salaries in gold. When the British took over, silver panams were in circulation, being minted at Nagapattinam, Thanjavur and Kumbakonam. Copper coins were also current in this period. The coinage of local kings was irregular and so the collector suggested the abolition of local currency and its substitution by a uniform silver currency, with a strict control over the shroffs. The gold pagoda which was the standard coin in Thanjavur from the days of the Nayaks was replaced in 1818 by the silver rupee of Madras. In 1835 the uniform rupee standard was adopted for the whole of India.

the silver rupee was to be the standard coin of the Presidency and that all government transactions were to be initiated.

j) Weights and Measures:

During the Chola rule there existed a large variety of weights. The kalanju was apparently a unit of bullion weight and considered equal to 72 grains. Sometimes pan was also considered as an unit of weight equivalent to one kalanju. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri suggests that pan was coined gold of the full weight of one kalanju. Vidhividugukal was used during the time of Aditya I for weighing gold at Kumbharavayalur in Tiruchirapalli district. From the Thanjavur inscription of Rajaraja I, it may be suggested that two different weight units were used for weighing gold and jewels. Adavallap and Dakshinamuruvitanka were used for weighing gold and jewels respectively. The actual weight of these weights are not easily determinable, but kalanju was divided into 20 sajadi each, one sajadi being equivalent to two kunris.

94. ARB., No. 49 of 1888; 54 of 1893. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, The Olas, p. 615.
97. Ibid., p. 620.
Liquid and grain measures of different kinds were used during the Chōla period; ṇālī and marakkāl were considered as standard grain measures. A grain measure Ḍāvallān, equal to Ṛaṅkājāri, was adopted as a standard measure in Thanjavur, perhaps in the time of Rājarāja I. Another measure, Viḍvidāngan was also used in this area.

Little efforts were made by the rulers to standardise the system of weights and measures, which resulted in regional variations. At the commencement of their administration, the British realised the necessity to standardise weights and measures. The Board was appraised of the fraud and the inconvenience suffered by the people and the government, from undefined and variable weights and measures. So the introduction of the system of Madras weights and measures became highly desirable. It was further realised that such a measure could contribute to the prosperity and peace of the country.

k) Public Works:

The major public works undertaken by the Chōlas in the Thanjavur region were the construction of roads, embankments.

98. Ibid., p. 622
99. Ibid., p. 623
100. Tanjore District Records Vol. 3200, p. 985.
and culverts. The most important constructions of public utility were the endless irrigation channels. This has been the greatest concern of the rulers who had excavated a good number of them in this area. The abundant and practically unlimited wet cultivation in this region is supported by these innumerable channels which branch off from many main branches of the river Kāviri and the Kollidam. Floods in the river and the consequent damage to crops and life were a permanent danger which this region had to guard against. The Grand Ancient constructed by the ingenuity of the famous Karikāla-chōla, in the 2nd century A.D. is rightly acclaimed as the key to the irrigation of Thanjavur region. It was designed to prevent the waters of the river Kāviri being wholly drawn off by the Kollidam. Such an achievement of Karikāla facilitated the regulation and diversion of waters of this river, mitigating it from the fury of the floods to a good extent, while ensuring an uninterrupted irrigation. The Grand Ancient has rightly won international admiration as an engineering strategy of the early Chōlas.

In spite of the large network of irrigation canals in the district, none of them is useful for purposes of transport. However, in modern times canals were excavated to serve the needs of transport as well. The Nāgappattīnām-Vēdāranyum canal (36 miles southwards from Nāgappattīnām to the south end) was
designed to bring the salt pans of Vedaranyam into touch with the railway terminus of Nagapattinam. This canal still carries goods and passengers. To improve the irrigation facilities of the neighbourhood, Achyutappa Naya constructed a dam across the river Kaviri near Tiruvayaru and this was the most beneficial act of public utility created by that ruler. In the early part of the 19th century it was realised that Kolli dam branch, due to its more rapid fall and more direct course to the sea, was draining off an unduly large quantity of water, while the Kaviri branch was deteriorating by the formation of deposits at its head. This defect was remedied by the construction across the Kolli dam branch in 1835 of the masonry dam, the Upper Anicut, which has contributed for the agricultural prosperity of Thanjavur.

This has been associated with the name of the reputed Sir Arthur Cotton of the Madras Engineers. Almost simultaneously with this there was another work undertaken on the Kolli dam, about 70 miles lower down called Lower Anicut. A dam with suitable vents for the passage of boats as well as the escape of sand was constructed across the two branches of the
dam.

102. Act., 426 of 1924.
104. Ibid., p. 331.
Kollidam and a channel was taken up from each, one for South Arcot called North Raja Vaykal and other for Thanjavur called South Raja Vaykal. The Thanjavur district is abundantly provided with good roadways as well as a thick network of railways.  

1) Public Health:

The Tamil country has its own public health problems depending on its environment and climate. This is axiomatically true of any country. It has been observed more than once that the Thanjavur region is a vast plain, where water stands in the cultivated fields during most months of the year. This naturally leads to the breeding of mosquitoes which is the chief cause for malaria and Filaria. Kumbakonam enjoyed a notoriety in this regard. Unlike as at present, there were no effective mosquito eradication projects of the stature of the National Malaria Eradication Programme (NMEP). It is opined, 'there is no place in the district which could be said to be particularly malarial, and Thanjavur is less liable to fever than any other district.'  

But filarial diseases like elephantiasis are quite common. Modern public health devices have improved sanitation and public hygiene, to a good extent that such an epidemiology is on the wane.

105. [Reference]

From early times, organised medical assistance is thought of and hospitals though of poor standard have existed. An inscription of Panduravag at Kurkankam speaks of the endowment of nine and of tax free land made by Parantaka Kundaraipitam for the maintenance of a free dispensary founded by her.  

A house site was gifted to Princess Kundaraipitam by a villager to make up a deficit caused to her finances. The villager's gift was intended to maintain the hospital. At Tirumukkudal there was another hospital, which was maintained by a free assignment of land. The hospital was called Athulasalai. Virarajendra Chola diverted the funds assigned to the temple to run a hospital, a school and a hostel. It must be recorded to the credit of this Chola king, that he had a vision of the modern times, to divert temple funds for the betterment of the society. This enlightened attitude conceived as early as the 11th century, is remarkably in tune with the modern trends of a welfare society. The ancillary provision of a hospital and a hostel in the neighbourhood of a school is deemed a modern idea by S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar. The need was felt and some kind

107. ARE, No. 249 of 1923.
109. Ibid., p. 587.
of provision was made for it so early is to the credit of the organisers of these institutions in that comparatively early period.

In the reign of Vikramachōla a remission of taxes was granted by the assembly of Kshatriyanātha chaturvediāṅgalam on the land sold for the maintenance of a hospital. This hospital was instituted at Tirupukulur for tending the sick and the destitute. In the āhōla days, medical science was deemed an important discipline and its votaries were much encouraged. The system of appointing medical men in hospitals and stocking adequate medicines was in vogue. Devoted attention to the needs of his subjects, characterised Rāja Serfōji II's rule. He constructed a hall called Dāvantri vahāl for the discussion and solution of the problems relating to medicine and public health. Medicine seems to have been more than a hobby to him. Sarabhendrā vaidhya māraigal, a book of medicine, is said to have been written by him. In 1799 Serfōji wrote to Mr. Gerrick of Fort St. George acknowledging the arrival and appointment of a

110. ARE, No. 97 of 1927-28.
German Surgeon in the palace. This shows his interest and faith in other systems of medicine too.

Serfoji instituted a free boarding house, a hospital and a free school. It is on such tradition of medical education and hospital services that by the end of the 19th century, the British government provided the people of Thanjavur 16 hospitals and 20 dispensaries with accommodation for nearly 400 inpatients.

Thus one may see that the administration in the Thanjavur region is fairly comprehensive, despite many lacunae. Many of its rulers, though scholars, were lacking insight into the nuances of state administration. Though monarchy was the accepted form of government it failed due to a dual rulership, with the king in his capital and his aggressive military chiefs at the periphery who were despots. This resulted in a failure of monarchy and suppression of democracy.

The British, with nominal monarchy had a tradition of Parliamentary democracy, diplomacy and political sagacity. The British period highlights a comparatively efficient administration, by the collector reaching the village through the village officers. Justice was meted out benefit of the illegal concepts that had crept into the système, like the inhuman 'ordeal's discriminating justice based on communities etc.

Rule of law and the doctrine of Paramountcy came to be instituted.

The economy of this region was based mainly on the cultivation of paddy and other cash crops, which were dependent on the vagaries of the monsoon and the fury of the floods. There were no major industries which contributed to its wealth. No country could long sustain itself by the booty of the plunder of its neighbours. Temple funds utilized for education, hospitals and boarding houses had their limitations. The recurrent famines, disease and poverty paved the way for slavery and serfdom.

Ryotwari system with remission of taxes was an improvement to that of Rājarāja I, the standardisation of weights and measures, and the introduction of the rupee as the state currency etc., made considerable changes in administration.