CHAPTER I

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The distinctive character of Indian culture is in the maxim, 'unity in diversity'. This maxim draws attention to the inter and intra-regional variations in a broader historical, political and social context. Kosambi (1956) is of the opinion that the Indian sub-continent does not possess a universal history, for, different regions within the sub-continent attained different stages of development at different periods of time. Hence, the study of regional history is essential for understanding the cultural developments in India. The topic chosen for study in this thesis aims to bring out the role of regional power structures in the broader framework of the Andhra region. The region of Cuddapah, in the present state of Andhra Pradesh is selected for this purpose to evaluate the historical process during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

The history of the major powers of this region has been dealt with in great detail by scholars, but much attention has not been paid to trace the history of the feudatories and local chiefs or local powers. The history of Andhra as well as south India remains incomplete without a detailed study of the local powers. The local chiefs like nayamkara, amaranayamkaras, and palegars in the Kakatiya, Vijayanagara and in the post-Vijayanagara
periods played a dominant role in this region. The political events taking place in a micro-region have their repercussions on the fortunes of a macro-region. Similarly, the history and nature of the local powers constitutes the history of the major powers. Hence, an attempt is made in this thesis to examine the part played by the local powers, who dominated this region from A.D. 1300 to 1800.

No in depth studies have been carried out so far on the Cuddapah region during the period under consideration. Most of the works that appeared in Andhra history on medieval, post-medieval and pre-colonial periods covered larger segments of power, variously called empires, kingdoms and dynasties in which the Cuddapah region is also a part. The period between A.D. 1300 to 1336 is generally termed post-Kakatiyan phase in the history of Andhra. From A.D. 1336 to 1565 is the period of Rayas of Vijayanagara. From A.D. 1565 to 1800 that is the advent of the Nawabs of Cuddapah and the reign of pallegars, can be termed post-medieval or pre-colonial in the history of Andhra.

The post-Kakatiyan history was dealt with by historians like Ramesan (1970), Yasodadevi (1950-52) Somashekhar Sarma (1948), Venkata Ramaiah (1942), Sundaram (1968) Narasimha Rao (1967), Yazdani and Shervani (1960). In all these works concentration is more on the dynastic
history. However, the works of Soma Sekhara Sarma, Narasimha Rao, and Sundaram brought to light the economic conditions of the post-Kakatiyan period.

The historiography of the Vijayanagara times can broadly be divided into three categories. The first category argues in favour of 'non-centrally oriented popular institutions' as the prime nature of the state wherein patrimonial or heritable and ownership rights and properties prevailed. The second supports the 'centralised bureaucratic nature of the state' wherein the prebendal form of rights and properties existed. The third advocates in favour of 'segmentary state' in which the sovereignty is dual in nature; the one 'actual political' and the other 'ritual' sovereignty. In the light of above cited works, the present study aims at the state and society in the Cuddapah region covering the period A.D.1300 to 1800. Several works are available on the history of Vijayanagara empire. Most of them are political histories. Ayyangar's Sources of Vijayanagara history (1919) gives contemporary literary and epigraphical sources, apart from the accounts of foreign travellers in an elaborate manner. Robert Sewell's A forgotten Empire (1924) is the foremost work on the history of Vijayanagara. This work is based mainly on the accounts of the foreign travellers such as Domingo Paes, Nuniz, Barbosa, Abdul Razzak, etc. The contemporary travellers viewed the Vi-
Jayaganagara time from their own points of view. Hence, their accounts, though valuable, do not construct completely the history of Vijayanagara. Robert Sewell compiled most of these accounts in chronological order, and called it A Forgotten Empire because, the foreign accounts on the empire are totally forgotten by the scholars of those times, especially orientalists. Sale-tore's two volume work, Social and political life in the Vijayanagara Empire (1934) is mostly based on the epigraphical sources and the ancient law books. The author appears to have been interested in finding the proprietor of the soil during the Vijayanagara times and every class in the society is looked from this point of view.

Appadurai, in his Economic conditions in South India 1000-1500 A.D. (1936) surveyed the entire economic conditions from A.D.1000 to 1500. His work provides useful information on the economy. Sastry and Venkataramanayya's Further sources of Vijayanagara (1946) is also very valuable. But the trend in Ayyangar and Sastry's show the nationalist approach to the study. They glorified the Vijayanagara times.

Mahalingam's Administration and Social life under Vijayanagara (1940); Economic Life in the Vijayanagara Empire, (1951) and South Indian Polity, (1955), dealt in
detail the different aspects of the empire. He seems to have given importance to the feudal formation under Vijayanagara. But the material appears to be controversial with reference to the local assemblies. He has seen them both as separate identities and hardly linked up the village communities to the feudal formation under the Vijayanagara.

Vasundara Pilliozat's Vijayanagara Empire (1977) deals with the political and socio-economic life under the Rayas of Vijayanagara as seen by Domingo Paes and Fernao Nuniz, the famous Portuguese chroniclers, who visited the Vijayanagara empire.

Among the Marxian writers of Andhra History, Satyanarayana19 deserves a mention. In his two volumes entitled A study of the History and culture of Andhra (1983), he dealt with the history of the Vijayanagara period from the people's point of view and tried to see feudal set up in the polity and socio-economic life of the people during the Vijayanagara period.

There are few other works which are made as micro studies on Vijayanagara. Rev.Henry Heras Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagara (1927), Venkataramanayya's21 studies in the History of the Third Dynasty of Vijayanagara (1946), Rama Rao's Krishnadevaraya (1971) and Sarma's Saluva Dynasty of Vijayanagara (1979) are in depth studies
covering all the aspects of the dynastic rule. These studies emphasise single dynasty's history.

Burton Stein had thrown some more light on the history of Vijayanagara kingdom. In his book, peasant state and Society in Medieval South India (1985), he highlights the nature of the state, its influence on society, the economy of the land and the socio-economic and politico-religious integration under the Rayas of Vijayanagara.

The historiography of the post-Vijayanagara or pre-colonial period can be classified into two groups. The first group deals with the central powers such as the Qutub Shahis of Golkonda, Asafjahis of Hyderabad, Marathas and Muslim rulers of Mysore. The history of these dynasties was dealt with by the historians like Sherwani (1974), Siddique, Sardesai and Nayeen (1985).

The second group covers the local powers such as Palegars. Several works though not in detail, appeared on Palegars, the Zamindars and the Samsthanadhisas, who were the real custodians of the local power during the pre-colonial period.

The Palegars were mentioned in some books in connection with different researches of South Indian History.
But there was no specific study of the Palegars. Baden Powell\(^{29}\) (1892), Dodwell\(^{30}\) (1929) belonged to this category. H.H. Baden Powell was an employee in the East India Company. In his book 'The Land Revenue system of British India', he discussed the Revenue system introduced by the Company, and he compared the Palegars with the Jamindars. He opined that the Palegars like Jamindars used to collect revenue forcibly from the farmers and plunder villages. British 'Utilitarianism' was conspicuous in the company rulers. Having come under its impact, Baden powell was unable to understand Palegars in the right sense. Dodwell in his book, 'The Cambridge History of India' remarked that the Palegars behaved more as anti-British elements.

Thomas Munro was one of the prominent collectors appointed for the Ceded Districts. His reports, Letters and other writings reveal the history of the Palegars of the Cuddapah District in detail. In the opinion of Eric Stokes, a Cambridge historian, Munro was one among those who supported 'Utilitarianism'.\(^{31}\) According to this theory, the East India Company rulers thought that the British rule was essential for the Indians as they wanted to uphold and protect the Indian culture through their laws. They were bent on punishing anti-British elements who were detrimental to the national security.
Gleig (1830-31), Arbuthnor (1886), Beagle Hole (1966), Venkata Subba Sastry (1939), Krishna Swamy (1947) and many others, who did research on Munro’s life and writings, portrayed Palegars as anti-social elements. They opined that the suppression of Palegars was the foundation for the victory of the British. A recent book by Burton Stein (1989) written on the basis of Munro’s economic policies, was quite different to those of many writings on Palegars. Based on Munro’s policies, Stein opined that Palegars were inevitable in the medieval political system. He also brought to light the fact that the villagers were in need of Palegars.

The books published on Vijayanagara history discussed the origin of Palegars. The political, economic and social conditions of Vijayanagara kingdom in Tamil areas were discussed in detail by Mahalingam. He even made a brief study about the origin of Palegars and their political and economic systems. His writings were mostly based on inscriptions. Based on kaifyats, Venkataramanaiah mentioned Palegars while discussing the police system of Vijayanagara.

Based on the Marxist outlook, Satyanarayana (1983) has written about the history and culture of the Andhras. The reference to Palegars could be seen in his chapter on Vijayanagara kings.
While dealing with the economic conditions of Vijayanagara, Burton Stein\textsuperscript{41} mentioned the rule of Palegars supporting the "Segmentary State". Frykenberg\textsuperscript{42} referred to the Palegars while discussing the peasantry, Land reforms and Land Revenue of the Colonial period. While revealing the "Silent Settlement" of Munro, he pointed out the "Inams of Palegars". They are considered a part of the anti-State element. David Arnold\textsuperscript{43} opined that Britishers suppressed the Palegars as they thought the Kavelgar system was the basic foundation for their power. They attracted the small Palegars by offering employment to them. Britishers tried to bring them under their control by showing them employment amenities at the end of the 18th century but it did not materialize.

By supporting the views of Munro reports, Reddy\textsuperscript{44} (1986) in his work on peasants of Andhra described the Palegars as the political traitors. He recognised the Palegars as unnecessary agents between the farmers and the Government. He even referred to them as dacoits and oppressors of farmers.

The above mentioned writings almost viewed Palegars from the British point of view. The role of Palegars was described diametrically opposite in the books written on Indian Freedom movement. Rangaiah\textsuperscript{45} (1965), Regani\textsuperscript{46} (1976), Vaidehi\textsuperscript{47} (1979), Rao\textsuperscript{48} (1984), etc.
have written books on the Freedom Movement in Andhra. These writers portrayed Palegars as the chief freedom fighters. The revolt of Narasimha Reddy in the Cuddapah region was regarded as the first freedom struggle in the history of Andhra. But they did not study Palegars exclusively.

Some books were published especially on Palegars. Rajayyan⁴⁹(1974), Dirks⁵⁰(1979) have done research on Tamil Palegars. Rajayyan published a book on the Palegars of the Tamil region. Though he portrayed the Palegars on the basis of the British reports, later he recognised them as freedom fighters. Veerapandya Katta Brahmanama, who revolted against the British rule, was described as a freedom fighter. Nicholas Dirks, who did research on the Palegars of Tirunalveli of Tamilnadu maintained that they rose to power in three stages. They styled themselves as 'little kings'.

Dua⁵¹(1972), Sobhanan⁵²(1984), Sudhakar Reddy⁵³(1986) and Mangamma⁵⁴(1987) were some of the scholars, who did research on the Palegars of ceded Districts. While Mangamma proclaimed sympathy for the Palegars, Dua had shown neutrality; Sudhakar Reddy has recognised them as part and parcel of the local powers. He described the Palegars' revolt as the revolt of peasantry. Muniratnam Chetty⁵⁵(1972), Subramanyam Reddy⁵⁶(1988) have done research on the Palegars of Chittoor
District mostly based on the British reports.

In this thesis an attempt is made to study the power structure of the medieval and post-medieval times of the Cuddapah region. It is to note that the Cuddapah region was at no time the seat of power of the imperial dynasties during this period. Only the feudatories and the sub-infeudators were in domination. The landed aristocracy as over lords dominated the scene till the fall of Vijayanagara power. From A.D.1565 to 1800 the patrimonial little regime was created by the Palegars, who fragmented the territories of this region. The landed aristocracy either in the fashion of nayankaras, amaranayakaras or the patrimonial little kings in the name of the Palegars and Kavalegars ruled this region during the period under study. These power groups can be termed supra local power segments, because they acted as an intermediary agency between the monarchy and locality. In this thesis an attempt is made to study the nature of state and society under the dominance of supra-local power segments in the Cuddapah region. This, being the major concern of the thesis, other aspects such as women's status in society, music, art, and fine arts etc., are omitted. Even in the state formation certain aspects such as nature of ministry, administrative personnel etc., were excluded. Emphasis is given in this thesis only to state and society during the medieval and post-medieval
This study is based mainly on epigraphical, literary and archival material.

The important source of information regarding the political economic and religious conditions for pre-Kakatiyan and Vijayanagara periods is provided by the epigraphs. The inscriptions of the pre-Vijayanagara period are not many. But on Vijayanagara, inscriptions on stone exist in great quantity. About 685 inscriptions of the Cuddapah region are brought out in three separate volumes by Sastry\(^57\) (1978); other information on epigraphical sources is furnished by Venkataramanayya\(^58\) (1972) and the volumes of *South Indian Inscriptions, Epigraphia Indica, Epigraphia Andhrica, Epigraphia Carnatica, Nellore District Inscription, Topographical List of Inscriptions in Madras Presidency, Annual Reports on Epigraphy* etc.

Next to inscriptions, literary works form the main source for the reconstruction of the history of the region under study. The literary works such as *Amuktamalyada* of Krishnadevaraya, *Kakutsavijayamu* of Matli Anantaraju, the poems written by Tallapala Annamacharyulu etc., are important in the study. The travelogues of the Portuguese chroniclers such as Domingo paes, Fernão Nuniz and Nicolo Conti, and Muslim Ambassador Abdul Razak are also used. The archival material consists of
Mackenzi manuscripts (kaifiyats), District records, Munro Papers, proceedings of the Board of Revenue, old Bellary District records, District Manuals and Gazetteers; Colonel Mackenzie (A.D.1754-1821), after whom the manuscripts are named, and his assistant Kavali Venkata Borraiah, collected many legends and manuscripts, which contain the traditional accounts of villages in the Andhra region. C.P. Brown preserved Local Records (Kaifiyats). The Local Records in 62 volumes contain copies of important material in Mackenzie collections. At least 40 kaifiyats belonging to the Cuddapah region were made use of in analysing the state and society. Interviews with the Palégars' families, in the Cuddapah region were conducted. These oral traditions were scrutinized and made use of in this work.

Thus the available source-material offers ample information for the reconstruction of the history of the rulers, who ruled over this region, besides throwing a flood of light on the nature of state and society.

The thesis is divided into SEVEN chapters.

The first chapter deals with general introduction, review of literature, aim of the study, source material used and a brief outline of the chapterisation of the thesis.
The second chapter refers to the geo-physical system of the Cuddapah region, and how it facilitated the prevalence of various cultures i.e., the tribal, the pastoral and the peasant within the region. These cultural zones in course of time intercepted and intermingled in the process of acculturation. The process of acculturation itself was due to the Geographical system. The river system and the vagaries of monsoon combined with the nature of soils made the region a dry zone. As the region falls under the dry zone the expansion of agrarian order was dependent upon the construction of irrigation tanks. Such a background provided the base for the emergence of Supralocal power segment between the state and the peasant.

The third chapter deals with the political developments during the period under study. This is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the political conditions between A.D. 1300-1565, and the second deals with A.D. 1565-1800. As a prelude, the political conditions prior to A.D. 1300 are also taken for consideration. The first phase can be termed pre-Kakatiyan and Vijayanagara period. During the imperial rule of the Kakatiyas, the Kayasthas of local ruling family, who were the migrants from the Maratha province, ruled the Western taluks of the Cuddapah region. Kakatiyas themselves prebended the rights to the Nayankaras, who also held sway over certain regions of Cuddapah.
After the fall of the Kakatiyas, neither the Velamas nor the Reddies, who formed the regional kingdoms in the immediate post-Kakatiyan age, could extend absolute control over the regions of Cuddapah. Hence, the regions of Cuddapah witnessed the rule of another imperial dynasty soon after the fall of Kakatiyas. The imperial dynasty, which came to power in the Cuddapah region, was no other than the Rayas of Vijayanagara. This region experienced the rule of all the four dynasties of the Vijayanagara empire. Similar to the Nayakara system of the Kakatiyas, the Vijayanagara rulers introduced a super-local power segment in the name of Amaranayakaras. On a par with the Hindu empire, the Muslims also established an empire in the Deccan provinces. The Bijapur Sultans tried to encroach upon territories of the Cuddapah region. The constant conflict between the Hindu and the Muslim rulers of the South perpetuated the war scenario. With the result, the Hindu empire under the Rayas of Vijayanagara, reoriented itself as a militarist regime.

Consequently the supra-local power segment gained prominence during this period. Immediately after the fall of the Vijayanagara empire the supra-local powers declared independence. With the result, the Palegar-Kavalgar institution on the one hand, and the Jagirdar -
Amildar system on the other, had gained prominence during the entire post-Vijayanagara and pre-colonial periods. Roughly 85 Palegars and Kavalgars ruled over the territories of the Cuddapah region in this period.

The fourth chapter deals with the nature of State during the period under study. In this chapter a theoretical exercise has been taken up to formulate a model of the State formation that prevailed between A.D. 1300-1800. A detailed discussion on three schools of thought, which deal with the nature of state is made in this chapter. The traditional school of thought (conventional model), the Marxist school of thought (Feudal model) and the American school of thought (Segmentary state model) are discussed in detail. Based on the source material, it is observed in the thesis that a multicentred power structure organised in a pyramidal framework is noticed in this region. It is noticed that in the state formation of the entire period, the Supra-local power segment between the Royal power and the local power tried to dominate and establish its sway over the regions of Cuddapah.

The fifth chapter deals with the economy of the region. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the economic conditions during A.D. 1300-1565. In this section 'revival' in the economy is explained.
The slump in trade and commerce owing to the paucity of coinage and irregular circulation of money, prior to A.D. 1300 in general, gave the character of feudal economy, where in the monopoly of trade and commerce was enjoyed by the mercantile and caste-guilds. However, after A.D. 1300, with the revival in the economy, the position of guilds showed a decline indicating the competition in trade and commerce. Both inland and overseas trade seem to have gained momentum. With the result, the expansion of agriculture also gained prominence. Deforestation and settlement of new villages on the one hand, and the construction of tanks on the other, became the order of the day. From the expanding boundaries of the state, the supra-local power segment became a potential force. The increase in the bulk of this power segment resulted in multiplicity in the tax structure. Several new taxes were levied during this period. It is noticed that the state exchequer received more revenues from non-agricultural items than the agricultural produce. Trade and commerce generated the highest revenues to the state. Hence the 'revival' in the economy is clearly established.

The second section of the fifth chapter deals with the economic developments of the post-Vijayanagara period. The supra-local power which gained prominence during the
pre-Kakatiyan periods sub-infeudated their territories to the patrimonial peasant warrior families. This group called *Palegars*, due to revival in the economy, gained prominence as the custodians of the trade routes and the renters of the village. The economy under *Palegars* showed signs of transition from feudal to colonial economy. They increasingly privatised the pre-bendal rights and possessions. Even the colonial rulers tried to introduce the concept of private property in land. Therefore, the economy under *Palegars* was considered as one which was in transition.

The sixth chapter deals with the social formation. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section deals with social stratification and the second with the social institutions. It is shown in the first section that the society during the medieval times was dynamic. The notion of static society with a rigid caste structure is questioned in the light of new evidences. The group mobility and the individual mobility in the caste framework is very much noticeable during this period. Many of the tribes and pastoral communities came under the purview of *varnasrama dharma*. However, in all these cases, group mobility is noticeable only in those who had economic base. Most of the peasant warrior families who claimed Sat-sudra status elevated themselves to *Kshatriya varna* with the help of the Brahmans and the sectarian leaders. They created
laniages and genealogies to those peasant warrior families by linking them to puranic or mythical ancestors. It is observed in the thesis that most of the members of the supra-local power segment claimed solar dynasty leniage.

In the second section it is noted that temple became an Institution to serve the existing power structure. The royal temple policy is highlighted in this section in view of the non-Kshatriya families gaining stronghold in the supra-local power segment. Even the education system promoted the growth of supra-local power segments. It perpetuated the sense of servitude among the masses. The passification of the frontiers autochthonous communities being the major concern of the State in the medieval times, the power segments promoted the devadana and brahmadeya grants to the temples and Brahmans. It is observed that the strength of Agraharas was reduced and the Devadanas were increased. This clearly shows the Royal temple policy.

In the final chapter major conclusions are drawn. It is noticed that the entire period of study was dominated by the supra-local power segment in the Cuddapah region. Hence, the history of the Cuddapah region is not the history of the imperial dynasties but it is the history of the intermediary agencies called supra-local powers between the monarchy and locality.
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