

POWER STRUCTURE IN THE BELLARY REGION A.D. 1565-1835

A Thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad for the award of the degree of

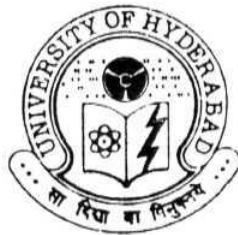
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHIC

IN

REGIONAL STUDIES

BY

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November 1996**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that I, K. Johnson, have carried out the research embodied in the present thesis for the full period prescribed under the Ordinances of the University.

I declare to the best of my knowledge that no part of this thesis **was** earlier submitted for the award of the research degree of any University.

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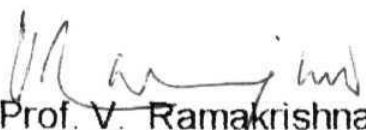
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first and foremost regards in this respect are due to Professors V. Ramakrishna, Department of History and to L.K. Murty, Centre for Regional Studies, for their guidance and constant encouragement in accomplishing this doctoral thesis. I am indebted to these teachers, who have shaped my conceptualization of South Indian Political and Social History to a large extent.

I acknowledge my sincere thanks to Dr. Y.A. Sudhakar Reddy, Reader, Centre for Folk Culture Studies for his valuable discussions and help in presenting this thesis. I have also benefitted from the comments of Dr. P.S. Kanaka Durga, Dr. K.S.S. Seshan, Dr. Rekha Pande, Dr. Shivaram Padikkal and Rev. John Ackldas on several occasions during the course of writing this thesis.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to many of my friends for their help and encouragement, especially to R.K. Laxman, Ketema, M.C. Raja, Jayakar, Mustafa, Venu and Mohanty.

I also recall with gratitude the kind cooperation of the various staff members of the Indira Gandhi Memorial Library, University of Hyderabad, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Madras, and Andhra Pradesh State Archives, Hyderabad. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Indian Council for Historical Research (ICHR), New Delhi, for awarding me a fellowship.

As ever, I am deeply indebted to my parents and other family members, for whose love and care have endured me through these years.

Finally, I am grateful to Dinakar and Brynerd for carefully going through the proofs of the copy, and to Mrs. C.K. Sujatha Veni for painstakingly preparing the typescript.

This thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of my brother Anand K. Babu.

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Chapter - I

INTRODUCTION

"... how laden all 'knowledge' is with power, interest, and strategies of control, appropriation, and domination..." (Preface to Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Hollow Crown*, XV, 1987)

This thesis deals with the power structure in the Bellary Region during ca. 1565 to 1835 AD, one of the most turbulent periods in the late medieval history of south India: the 'post-Vijayanagara phase' at the threshold of colonial takeover. The focus therefore is the transition from late medieval to early modern times in this region. The enquiry thus centres on a micro region - Bellary, presently situated in the modern linguistic State of Karnataka. The methodology adopted here seeks to go beyond the traditional pattern by following a systemic approach. The medieval legacy of power (or the epicentre of the Vijayanagara 'State' on the banks of river Tungabhadra dredging through this semi-arid terrain) and the aftermath of its decline in the late medieval centuries is the scope of this study.

The emphasis in this thesis is an appraisal of the widely held notion that the historical influences of a region's ecotype have a direct effect on the overall political systems it reflects; socio-economic institutions operate in a given time scale (Robert 1982 : 18-19). In this context, it should be noted that the Bellary region, a typical semi-arid country, predominantly supports sheep/goat pastoralism, agro-pastoral (primarily dry farming villages (millets being the main crops), and further hunter-gatherers like the Boyas (who were prominently known from the medieval times in Karnataka as Bedars) live in symbiotic association with the agro-pastoral and trading village communities in the lowlands. The pastoralist groups (Kurubas/Gollas) and the Boyas played a significant role in the political economy of the region, ever since the medieval times and eventually rose to eminence in the power structure of Bellary, of course with a royal initiative, corresponding to its regional specificities (Murty 1992 : 326).

Mention should be made here that, although aiming at a holistic view of a micro-region as implied in the methodology, the Bellary region as conceived in the present study entails a slightly larger entity than how it exists today, with some of the taluks included in the former Bellary district forming the westernmost **part of the** 'famous **four**' Ceded Districts of the erstwhile Company administration (the other **three** being Kurnool, Anantapur and Cuddapah) (Francis 1916 : 46).

Given the nature of the study, and the geographical aspects of the region taken **up** for this investigation, it is necessary to make an overall assessment of the nature of the state and society with special **reference** to medieval South India, with focus on the divergent views and broader theoretical formulations as put forward in the existing historiography.

The traditional Indian historiographical model which perceived the state as unitary, centrally organised, and territorially defined to any great length in elaborating the state is followed subsequently by **the** three popular models: 'Indian feudalism', the 'segmentary state' and 'the patrimonial **state**', which have more clearly been elucidated in recent descriptions of medieval India.

One does not have to overstrain to recognize that **the post-Independence** historical writings in India have been dominated by intense academic exchanges between R.S. Sharma and Harbans Mukhia (which subsequently drew in many others) on 'Indian feudalism'; Burton Stein's application of the 'segmentary state' concept for South India; and the projection of the Mughal empire as a **patrimonial/bureaucratic** state by Stephen Blake and M. Athar Ali (see Kulke 1995).

While R.S. Sharma's writings in the last three decades have tended to take cognisance of multipolarity of his thesis, much of the counter arguments and alternative constructs have remained confined to political processes (Champakalakshmi 1992 : 151-56; Mukhia 1979 : 229-80; Sharma 1985 : **19-43**). However, B.D. Chattopadhyaya in

his 1983 Presidential Address had recognised that the **construct** of 'Indian **feudalism**' represented a "structural change in the Indian social and economic order" and that its most distinctive contribution was "to plug in the gap between polity and society". Chattopadhyaya further argues: "in **trying** to understand **the** political processes and structures in early medieval India, **it** may be more profitable to **start** by juxtaposing the process of the formation of local state politics and supralocal politics than by assessing the structures in terms of a perennial oscillation between forces of centralization and decentralization" (Chattopadhyaya 1983 : 36).

As an alternative paradigm, political processes in the "integrative polity" are seen in terms of parallels with contemporary economic, social **and** religious developments, such as; (i) horizontal spread of rural agrarian settlements, (ii) horizontal spread of the dominant ideology of social order based on Varna division, and (iii) integration of local cults and sacred centres into a pantheistic supralocal structure. **Influenced** by Perry Anderson's thrust on the political forces (construction and deconstruction of state) as a catalyst and determinant of struggle between classes, the case of "integrative polity" is based on shifting political geography of the lineages and the pattern of network they represent, "both **territorially** and in **interlineage** combinations" at different levels of organisation of "political power". Preferring to use the nomenclature of "*samanta* system" rather than "feudal polity", Chattopadhyaya views the system as an instrument of "political integration" and "a counterpoint to **the** decentralized polity of the feudal", which was caused by the horizontal spread of lineage based state society with varied local bases (Chattopadyaya 1983 : 36-38). The political basis of such an organisation of both local and supralocal structure was the "ideal of ranking", which in turn was to function as a potential source of tension on the political plane. Crisis was thus built into processes of the formation of the structures (Shrimali 1994:4-5).

In quite contrast, Stephen P.Blake sees the Mughal empire as a patrimonial bureaucratic state, a concept he borrows from Max Weber, where the state was an enormously extended, if bureaucratized, household. All authority emanated from the

emperor, and government was an instrument **for** the fulfillment of the interests of the imperial household (Ali 1978 : 38-49, 1993 : 625-638; Blake 1978 : 77-94, 1991 : 1-6). Here we see an extremely centralized state that impinged heavily on the society allowing no space for alternative centres of power. Interestingly the same view is echoed in the recent work of J.F. Richards too (1993). **In** his choice of themes and the space he allots them, Richards is greatly convinced of the strength (or reality as he puts it) of the Mughal empire. **In** his view, the empire was an extremely centralized power that crucially affected the Indian society, the history he writes is one which has the imperial court as its **epicentre**. As he frankly puts it: "the empire was more than a superficial canopy stretched over the substantial life lived in **that** region. **It** was an intrusive centralized system which unified the **subcontinent**". And again this time more emphatically: "the uniform practices and ubiquitous presence of the Mughals left an imprint upon society and every locality and region of the subcontinent, few persons and communities, if any, were left untouched by this massive edifice (Richards 1993 : 1-2).

The historians of the 'Aligarh School' with whom Richards seems to be in agreement here, do not go that far, yet they insist in viewing the Mughal state as a centralized state possessing a uniform currency, an imperial fiscal system, and centralizing military-cum-administrative institutions, such as **the jagir** systems. Despite all the controversies that have gone on regarding the nature of the Mughal state, a question that still begs an answer is whether the state alone affected the society, or whether the society too, possessed the means and dynamism to influence, and **even** encroach upon the preserves of the state.

However, Irfan Habib (1963) in his work on Mughal agrarian history argued that the agrarian system of Mughal India towards the late seventeenth century was characterized by the oppression of the peasantry by the state and that the jagirdars had considerably increased, leading to a decline in agricultural production and a series of **zamindari-led** peasant revolts that sapped the vitality of the empire and led to its ultimate demise.

Now, let us also consider the most controversial and highly **debated** 'segmentary state theory' proposed by Burton **Stein** in his **re-examination** of medieval south Indian state and society. In a segmentary state formation the king's real authority would extend over the core, while the segmentary and shatter zones being the *nadus* which constituted the periphery, formed pockets of Power bound to the centre in a tributary relationship. The sovereignty which the 'core' extended over the 'periphery' (or peripheries?) was a ritual one. The early notions of his 'grand **narrative**' of the south Indian segmentary state are to be found in his article, *The Segmentary State in South Indian History* (1977). Those ideas and theories consequently crystallized in his, *Peasant State and Society* (1980), many of which were admittedly based on the sound research of Y. Subbarayalu (Subbarayalu 1973).

However, the seminal theme of the segmentary state of Stein derives from the model posited by Aidan Southall for the tribal society of the **Alurs** in African Uganda (Southall 1956). Southall's analysis of political authority, stemming from clan chiefs and kinship ties, was picked up by Stein and posited against the holistic **model** of **Chola** state in South India. Richard Fox had applied it to the states of Rajputana in his, *Kin, Clan, Raja and Rule* (1971) to come up with the intriguing observation that 'rural India is a picture of a tribal society rearranged to fit a civilization'!

Southall responded to these two scholarly efforts by conceding the application of the segmentary model to the Rajput states but questioned its suitability for the **south** Indian states. But upto the last Stein proclaimed that the model of segmentary state was seminal to his conceptualizations of south India (Southall 1988 : 52-82).

The study of *nadus* has been fundamental to Stein's theories on the south Indian polity. He defines them as 'locality social, economic and political systems' which 'predated the Cholas and endured long after their demise'. The units were 'self-regulating' though not 'self-sufficient'. The empirical and theoretical focus on the *nadus* is the major contribution Subbarayalu and Stein have made towards formulating

hypothesis of the **Chola state** (Stein 1980; Subbarayulu 1973). Stein spoke of 'opposition which is complementary' among parts of the state as a whole as well as within any constituent segment. That is, the political system of the Cholas **was** described as composed of a multiplicity of political units-each a segment, and within each segment internal divisions (ethnic and functional groups) which are capable of acting together as units. The segments of the structure are integrated on the one hand by royal patronage to the Brahmans and temples, and on the other by ceremonial and ritual acknowledgement of Chola kingship (1980 : 22-98). It is not easy to ignore the significance of a centralised '**core region**' and the emergence of a 'state society', but understanding the impact of these on the state itself requires greater scrutiny.

Southall's scepticism about Stein's formulations arose from the superimposition of a model applicable to a tribal set up of clan lineages to a caste-based society. Stein believed that the *nadus* were held together by 'ethnic **coherence**' and voiced his conjecture that the functionaries with high titles mentioned in inscriptions implied not 'central bureaucrats' but rather clan or tribal leaders, whose 'rule **credentials**' indicated status as an ancient one not dependent on the Chola kings. The inherent weaknesses of such a supposition are obvious. There is a wide gap between the ethnic coherence of the Alurus or Shmbalas held closer by the accepted oral tradition of common origin, and proliferating *jatis* with conflicting origin myths which characterized Indian society, unless one were to argue with Fox that 'what is true of the kin body also applies to the so called caste' (Fox 1971 : 63-174).

Also, in a recent study of the **Chalukya-Cholas**, the Kakatiyas, the Reddis, the Gajapatis and the Rayas in the Eastern Ghats of south India between AD 1000 and 1500 based on extensive use of the *Kyfiat* literature, epigraphic references and anthropological parallels, case has been made out for the state being a major variable in the manipulation of physical and social environment with an **intensification** of forest clearance, founding of new villages and expansion of agrarian order. In this process of integration of the forested zone, with the king's **domain**, the forest people (hunter-

gatherers like Boya and Chenchu) and pastoralists eg. Gollas became historically important. The state made alliance with the hunter gatherers and pastoralists by allocating services; as a consequence emerged a new pattern of resource exploitation, mobilization and distribution. In this new mechanism of surplus appropriation, *mathadhipatis* and *pitadhipatis* became willing collaborators and sustainers of kingly authority. Without being an overt critique of the 'segmentary state', this significant micro analysis gives a severe jolt to the notions of the core and the periphery and their linkages with the political and ritual suzerainty respectively, which were hitherto considered to be cornerstones of the concept of the segmentary state (Murty 1993 : 626-27).

Coming now to the subject proper, the shift of focus over to the post-Vijayanagara phase' as it is hoped, would help us in more ways than one. Primarily, it makes this possible for us to see through the processes of state formation, deformation and transformation in one such a political continuum from the visible collapse of a major political era signalled in the imperial downfall of the medieval Vijayanagara untill the ushering in of yet another, relatively modern state form of colonial dimensions in around AD 1800 in respect of Bellary (See Dirks 1987; Ka rash i ma 1992; Narayana Rao et al. 1992).

Secondly, historiographically too, the period under consideration, and more so in relation to the region under consideration has not received due attention, though it has enough potential to draw serious scholarly enquiry. Especially, the period beginning with Vijayanagara eclipse until the rise of Hyder Ali in Mysore in AD 1761, is considered to be something akin to a blackhole in South Indian history by modern historians. This they ascribe, sadly so, to the paucity of sources. However, there have been a few studies made on the contemporaneous Nayaka period of interior Tamil country, since some of the South Indian scholars are increasingly converging on this period (Menon 1995 : 125-128; also see price 1983 : 563-590). As against the fairly well researched works of the Nayaka period Tamil country, the post-Vijayanagara problematic of the

upland Rayalaseema plateau is a relatively **untouched** area. The present **attempt**, therefore, is hoped to fill in this lacunae to a certain extent, with Bellary as its focus.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the time bracket chosen for the study, AD 1565 - 1800, has rightly been taken to represent a period of transition from late medieval to early modern era. The transition as implied here suggests a whole of set of **changes** in the historical development of a region from one major epoch to another (See Bayly 1989). It is in this sense, that the interregnum following the imperial collapse of Vijayanagara, until the coming of the British, covering over a span of three centuries has been seen to have witnessed a discernible shift not only in the realm of power, but even in the composite spheres like agrarian political economy and society. And this process has been **systemically** dealt with, using longitudinal analysis as a general tool for the identification of the underlying factors responsible for change.

What is politically important during the period under consideration was the virtual fragmentation of royal authority with the disintegration of Vijayanagara power. It should be remembered here that the city of Vijayanagara was sacked at the hands of the allied Bahmani forces of Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Golconda and Bidar in the battle of Tali kota (or Rakkasitangadi), in the year AD 1565, during Aliya Rama Raya's reign (1542-1565) (Venkataratnam 1972 : 1-2). It was a catastrophe which changed the entire course of south India history. Hence the **period** ending with this battle is a convenient point to start this enquiry. This empire, however, lasted for another century under the Aravidu dynasty, the fourth and its last dynasty, but its foundations were deeply shaken, and it could not rise to the former zenith of glory. The Muslim dominion which followed was weak, and the unstable political conditions consequent to the decline of Vijayanagara kingship gave way to the rise of numerous sub-regional strongholds held by those known as poligars, (Telugu - *palegadu*; Kannada - *palegararu*, meaning, holder of an estate), each one in his own right, forming a core of patrimonial regimes in the Vijayanagara heartland (Dua 1972 : 467). Such of these poligars mostly comprising the dominant lineages of the turbulent Boya/Bedar stocks and militarist, peasant warrior

groups, to start with, were the holders of army camps and collectors of **revenue** which they passed on to their overlords under the Vijayanagara kingship. In a way, they should be seen as the supralocal intermediaries between the **villages** under their control and the state, and acted as "boundary role players" (Cohen 1974 : 265). It therefore suggests the shrewd political expediency of the Raya overlords to integrate these ethnics into the state's realm both politically and ritually by virtue of their fighting prowess; and for whom Bellary became a favoured habitat since ages, as the physiography of the region suggests sufficiently.

There are numerous inscriptions to tell us that certain lineages of the forest dwellers especially the Boyas were **bureaucratized**; each village had a complement of watchmen for the protection of persons and property, and policing the village seems to have been an ancient institution (Mahalingam 1967 : 246). These watchmen were remunerated for their services by the assignment of land and the proceeds of a cess called *padikaval kuli*. During the Vijayanagara rule (1660-1700AD), a person enjoyed *padikaval* rights over a *nadu* (a large administrative unit), and he engaged a complement of watchmen called *taliyaris*, whom he paid in kind or cash, besides granting land free of rent, and held them responsible for the safety and prosperity within their jurisdiction. A work with the title *Rajavahanavijaya* attributed to Krishnadevaraya, the Vijayanagara king who ruled from 1509-1529 AD describes how the Boyas in his army were marching with bows in their hands and quills on their backs like black tigers. Some lineages of these Boya militia, who had wielded great influence over their tribesmen, and who were highly paid officials (they were given rent free agricultural lands and other kinds of allowances) began to emerge as powerful potentates from 16th century onwards, with the decline of the Vijayanagara power (Murty 1992 : 332-334).

Similarly, the village bodies (eg. *Sabha*, *ur*, *periyanaadu* etc.) dominated mostly by *Sat-Sudra* families of peasant warrior groups, wielded considerable power over the villages and attracted the attention of the kings and royal personages. The power of the village bodies virtually became a force to reckon with for the state. To get these village

bodies into the fold of the state, some influential lineages from among them were bureaucratised as revenue and military officials. These were instrumental for the protection/expansion of settlement boundaries, establishment of new agrarian settlement and water resource management. Through patrimonial legacy the peasant warrior families amassed considerable properties and control over the local resources. They actively participated in the state expansion strategies and acquired the newly found villages through the prebendal rights bestowed on them by the kings for which they lent their allegiance. The kings for the maintenance of their settlement frontiers, relied on the holders of the patrimonial rights. But when the royal power weakened, especially, at the time of change of dynastic rule, the dominant lineages of the peasant warrior groups also annexed the prebendal rights to their patrimonial legacies and defied the royal authority (Murty 1993 : 620-24).

Therefore, with the colonization of the forested and pastoral landscapes by the state, the forest peoples (like the Chenchu, Yerukula, in other parts, besides the Boya) and the pastoralists (Golla and Kuruba) became partners in the political, economic and social milieu on the one hand, and in the organisation of the settlement frontiers on the other. This created new relations of power, giving rise to institutions such as poligars and kavaligars as noticed above (Reddy 1986 : 112-114).

Contemporary inscriptions and later accounts collected by the first British administrators in the core of the Vijayanagara kingdom provide valuable evidence on the political authority of these chiefs. The heyday of the chiefs was the 16th century, but most seem to have come into existence during the early 16th century, as a result of Krishnadevaraya's policies for incorporating older chiefly families.

Burton Stein sees the new intermediary ruling strata as emerging from below. The *Amuktamalyada* (attributed to Krishnadevaraya), a work containing his political maxims also prescribes measures such as recruitment of martial tribes in the army and royal promotion of commerce and control of forts (Stein 1989 : 51-52).

However, as attention has already been drawn, the present study concerns itself with the core Bellary region only for an exclusive case study of some of these political intermediaries who played a predominant role in the arena of power in the upland Rayalseema, more visibly from the later half of the sixteenth century.

The intermediary zone of authority is largely hazy in many medieval states and as such is one of the least understood areas of power. Hence it becomes particularly necessary to assess their role in the authority structure for an explication of the pre-colonial state (Champakalakshmi 1992: 152-153).

Thomas Munro, the famous first Collector of the region regarded these chiefs as the major centres of resistance, and he justified their removal on the grounds of their historical political authority. Munro, in his letter to the Board of Revenue (1802) speaks of their bravery and turbulent nature, especially of the Boya poligars. In Munro's time, nearly 2,000 villages were held by eighty poligari families of different statuses. The highest and perhaps oldest of such local magnates are found in modern Bellary district. One was the chief of Anegondi across the river Tungabhadra, calling himself Tirumala Raja and claiming descent from a Vijayanagara ruling family. This chief held 114 villages in 1800. Fifty miles southwest of Anegondi and Hampi was the Harapanahalli poligar; this family seems to have been established in the sixteenth century by a Lingayat chief, Doddappa Nayaka, on the modest basis of his watchman's (taliyari) rights in two villages (Munro Reports 1802 : 37).

The number of villages held by each chiefly family in the Vijayanagara times is not always known from the family records said to have been consulted by Munro. Those of the Anegondi and Harapanahalli chiefs are not known, but another, the Jaramali Poligar, held 309 villages then and appears to have supplied a force of 3,000 foot-Soldiers (infantry) and 500 horsemen (cavalry) to the kings. The Rayadurg chief, Venkatapati Nayaka, paid no money to the Viayanagara kings, but contributed 2,000 infantry. The other prominent poligars include those of Bellary, and (Gudekota in the

kudligi taluk), all invariably belonging to either **Boya/Bedar** or Kuruba castes in the Bellary region. Evidence of around 1800 suggests that all of the eighty poligars of this Vijayanagara heartland held some villages free of any payment to the **Vijayanagara** kings" and held other villages as tax farmers. In addition, they were **obliged** to maintain **some** mounted and some foot soldiers for royal service. Munro estimated that over 1,200 villages were under poligars until 1660 when the former Vijayanagara heartland **had** come under the control of Bijapur sultans or their commanders such as Shaji, father of Shivajai. Of these villages, 682 were held free of any money demands and 535 were held as tax farmers for which money was paid to the Sultanate officials. The same eighty poligars supplied a total of 29,000 infantry and 1,200 cavalry to Bijapur armies (Munro Reports 1802 : 38-44). Moreover, warfare tested and fortified the military capabilities of the numerous military chiefs of the south; wars also spread the poligar institution. Fighters seized or were granted income from villages for maintaining the armed forces used in the wars of greater lords; otherwise, local cultivating and trading **groups seeking** some protection from the violence of the times paid for the protection of poligars in many places of the far south, as implied by the term *padikaval* used in Ramnad and Pudukkottai (Stein 1989 : 60-61). No chieftains could remain aloof **from** nearby warfare, which was bound to lead to a reshifting of local power that left the strong stronger and pushed the weaker into greater vulnerability and submission. Scattered contests for local dominance often changed balances between local chiefdoms and **the** communal bases of their rule on the one hand and between these local lords and the kings of Vijayanagara or their agents on the other. As evident in the **Post-Vijayanagara** phase of the Bellary region, these various local potentates were very much sought after by the successive Mohammedan rulers also for their fighting prowess (**Murty 1992: 352**).

So, it is suggested here that this cluster of poligari conglomerates thus evolved were not altogether independent either. **They** did have to function under a new stream of **Bahmani** dynasties that followed one after another in quick succession, by only contributing a regular tribute or military support, after the fall of Vijayanagara. For a short interval, Bellary witnessed the rule by **the** Marathas as well as the Mughal emperor

Aurangzeb. We also notice here that towards the fag-end of the period (excepting Sandur which witnessed the Maratha rule administered by the **Ghorpade** clan of the **Bhonsles** of Satara from the beginnings of eighteenth century **onwards**), this region seems to have come under the hold of Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan, the **warlords** with their base in the Mysore **region**. And it was from whom the **Nizam** of Hyderabad **regained** the lost **territories** by the treaties of **Srirangapatnam** in AD **1792** and Mysore in AD **1799**, respectively. Though became a part of the Nizam's Dominions, interestingly, these vast tracts comprising the **districts** of Bellary, Kurnool, Anantapur and **Cuddapah**, as mentioned before, were again ceded over to the East India Company as a result of an alliance entered into with **the** British in AD **1800**, with Thomas Munro as **the** first Principal Collector (Regani 1963 : 184).

These districts together with Bellary thus came to **be** known as the Ceded Districts of the erstwhile Madras Presidency. After inclusion of the region into **the** modern colonial system, the British had to wage prolonged wars to subdue the **poligars** who became a formidable force.

An important aspect of the economic organisation in the form of property organisation in **the** form of property held by various people, the most prominent of which being the **inams**. Munro reports a large number of land holdings under **the** category of inams. These were also *agrahara*, *devadana* and *brahmadeya* grants. Gradually, inams granted as service tenures were substantially increased and converted into private and hereditary possessions by **the** poligars. **Even**, the poligars appear to have grabbed the fertile lands under their jurisdiction, most often by **use** of brute force, and declared them as poligar manyas. Another interesting feature of the post-Vijayanagara power structure which should **need** a special mention here is that almost parallel to the **dominant** poligari system, the incumbent Muslim rulers initiated their own revenue systems in the form of *amildar i* or *jagirdari* systems in certain pockets of Rayalseema. These later revenue systems which functioned in close alliance with **the** help of the deputies drawn from those having a close nexus or 'extraneous connections' with the new ruling strata **scem** to

have enjoyed greater autonomy in terms of lax farming and overall jurisdiction, in most cases. It was unlike their poligari counterparts who had derived their leanings from the earlier Vijayanagara ruling system (Reddy 1986: 105-106, 115-116).

And for such an exercise to come to fruition, even though the permissible scope of the thesis ends by the close of eighteenth century when traditional processes of power had been confronted by inroads of colonialism in the Bellary region, its purview extends a little further into the early decades of nineteenth century, in order to locate the subtle changes and continuities occurring in one such a political continuum as described above, especially in matters pertaining to the responses of local structures to the British administrative policies.

Finally, what comes in here for one's immediate attention from an altogether different perspective, and which is also stimulating to note was the 'reassertion of self in the *Sudra* consciousness' evidenced in this period. And it is in a way similar to what some analysts tend to say: the reawakening of subaltern consciousness, as part of a larger discourse (for a cross-cultural study see O' Hanlon 1988 : 1-33). This reassertion or reawakening here is not only seen through *Sudra* participation in the power structure of the region as local potentates, but also by following an alternative belief system like Virasaivism, and at times even by acculturating certain 'symbols of substance'¹ usually associated with ritual superiority. To cite an instance of this, the best possible means by which the poligars could express their status in the higher echelons of society was by conveniently haunting a proud *nayaka* suffix, in each case, regardless of their social origins ridden either in hunter-gather or pastoral-agriculturalist backgrounds. To further suggest these dynamics of mobility and social change epitomized in these upwardly mobile poligars, certain lineages of peasant warrior families legitimised their ancestry by tracing their descent to either Lunar (*Chandravamsa*) or Solar (*Suryavamsa*) dynasties, as innumerable accounts in the local *kyfials* bear testimony to this phenomenon.

Moreover, when these less privileged social groups tried to crowd themselves into the limited space offered by ritual privileges, the resultant pulls and pressures were reflected in the contemporary late medieval society. This situation of social flux continued into the seventeenth century by which time Vijayanagara had ceased to be an imperial power and the last king of Vijaynagara, Sriranga III AD (1642-49), held no greater title than that of the king of Vellore (Ramaswamy 1985 : 417).

It is then implied here that while trying to analyse the whole process in a transitory phase, the thesis tends to examine also the subaltern perspective, in an attempt to bring into mainstream the historical relevance of the marginalised categories in the power structure of the Bellary region. As a part of this effort, in many cases, the ethno-historic accounts of the lineages of the erstwhile poligari families who prominently figure in this study have been consulted. The vast corpus of *Kyfiat* literature, collected and documented by Colin Mackenzie (Mackenzie manuscripts,) is one of the crucial sources of information for this investigation. During the period under discussion, there are eighty poligars in this region belonging to either Boya/Bedar or Kuruba communities; the most prominent of the Bedar poligars are those of Harpanahalli, and likewise those of the Kurubas are the Bellary Poligars. I have examined and quoted the documented sources of those poligars, especially by Thomas Munro and Colin Mackenzie.

Further, to develop my theoretical position in this discussion, I have Hereby relied upon (and also extensively quoted from) the works of Appadurai (1971), Champakalashmi (1992), Heitzman (1987), Khazanov (1984), Kulke (1978), Mahalingam (1967), Murty (1992, 1993), Perlin (1985), Stein (1989), Subrahmanyam (1986) and Talbot (1994).

The following discussion therefore centres around these dynamics of social mobility, conflict and change in the post Vijayanagara society by analysing the functions and role perceptions of the leading poligari families who held sway over the region until the British subdued them.

Chapter – II

BELLARY: REALM AND REGION

This chapter provides a brief outline of the region's geographical location, its ethnographic demenian, agrarian structure and historical background from prehistoric times to the fall of Vijayanagara, in an effort to resituate Bellary with a holistic perspective. The nature of the economy and society of a particular region, and the political system it reflects is to a large extent dependent on its geophysical and ecological factors. Historically, Bellary is one of the driest regions in south India, falling under the category of "dry ecotypes". And as a representative of the dry ecotype, Bellary possessed traditionally "flat or loose" social structure (Robert, 1982). This less rigid and defined social and economic structures, in a most subtle means, gave way to the rise of several forest and pastoral peoples to preeminence in the power structure of the region from the medieval times, as might be witnessed in the following discussion.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AND PHYSIOGRAPHY

Bellary region takes its name from its present head quarter town, but the etymology of the word is not a matter upon which it is safe to dogmatise. Several derivations have been suggested, but none of them is convincing. A Local tradition, supported by an account in one of the Mackenzie manuscripts, says that the name is corrupted from Bala-hari, meaning "the defeat of Bala", and that this Bala was an *asura*(demon)who lived here and was slain by Indra, because he harassed the *devakanyas* or damsels of the divine world (Francis 1916: 1-6).

Perched in the upland semi-arid zone of Karnataka - Rayalaseema plateau with a low-to-medium annual rainfall (in the range of 600 mm to 800 mm), Bellary lies between 14° 14' N and 14° 50' north latitude and 75° 40' and 77° 11' east longitude. The district is bound on the north by the Raichur district, on the west by the Dharwar district, on the south by the Chitradurga district (all these being parts of Karnataka State) and on the east by the Anantapur and Kurnool districts of Andhra Pradesh. When the district formed part of the composite Madras State it was the westernmost of that State and was roughly triangular in shape (Mysore State Gazetteer IV72).

The region under discussion is a peneplained country forming part of the peninsular interior known as the Deccan. It is chiefly composed of a basement of the pre-cambrian Archean gneisses flanking the western outliers of the Eastern Ghats, coupled with submontane riverine zones. The western peneplained country is marked by expanses of dry deciduous forests, interspersed with thorny thicket tracts. The characteristic floral cover of this region (though degraded) belongs to *Anogeissus - Terminalia* - *Tectona* series, *Albizia* - *Amara* - *Acacia* series) and *Hardwickia - Pterocarpus* - *Anogeissus* series

The river system of Bellary is very simple. The only important rivers in the region are the Tungabhadra and its tributaries, the Hagari and the Chikka - "Magan". The Tungabhadra river forms the natural boundary dividing the region on the west from the Dharwar district and on the north from the Raichur district. The Bellary district consists of two widely differing natural divisions, an eastern and a western, separated by the Sandur hills which run right across the district from northwest to southeast.

SOCIO-POLITICAL HISTORY

Inscriptions show that the Bellary region was intimately connected with the fortunes of the early dynasties of the Mauryas, (Ashoka, 258 BC); The Satavahanas (2nd century AD); The Kadambas (1st century); The Chalukyas (6th century); The Rashtrakutas (7th to 10th centuries); The Gangas (10th century); The Western Chalukyas (11th Century); The Cholas, the Kalachuryas, Hoyasala Ballalas, and Yadavas (12th century AD). It was also evident that Muslim incursions took place in this part of the region by the soldiers of the Delhi sultan Muhammad Bin Tughlaq and crushed the Kampili successors of the Hoyasalas in Karnataka in around AD 1329. But not much is known of the region before the fourteenth century, when the Vijayanagara Kingdom or empire was founded on the banks of river Tungabhadra in Hampi in AD 1336 (Francis 1916 : 32-44).

There are many important questions about Vijayanagara political and social matters which remain vexingly unclear even after more than a half century of scholarly attention (Krishnaswami Aiyangar 1941; Sewell 1924; Heras 1927).

Almost from the outset there has been agreement among Vijayanagara students with respect to certain important interpretations. These have tended to remain acceptable to more recent scholars. The first of these durable interpretations pertains to the success of the Vijayanagara State in limiting the expansion of Deccani Muslim power. The fourteenth and fifteenth century Vijayanagara state did stabilize the frontier between the Bahmani sultanate, its successors, and what was to remain a dominantly Hindu social and political order south of the Krishna-Tungabhadra. This leads to what appears to be the second broadly agreed upon view of the Vijayanagar state: that it created the conditions for a defence of Hindu culture and institutions. This defensive role is also seen to have been self-conscious and ideological. Finally, and again a consequence of the encounter with the powerful Muslim states of the Deccan, the Vijayanagar state is seen as an essentially military state, in Nilakanta Sastri's words: 'the nearest approach to war-state ever made by a Hindu kingdom (Nilakanta Sastri 1955 : 295). The military effectiveness of the empire was based on a large army, the use of new firearms and the establishment of well cavalry units in which Vijayanagara was greatly helped by Muslim and European mercenaries and the trade with the Portuguese (Kulke and Kothernund 1991).

Some of the questions upon which there remain deep differences among scholars have been noticed in the more recently published research on Vijayanagara. Vasundara Filliozat reminds us of continuing differences among scholars about the origin of the first or Sangama dynasty of Vijayanagara (Filliozat 1973 : 9-15). Older views about the origin of the dynasty as tribal peoples, Kurumba or Kadamba, have given way to two other main theories (Sewell 1924 : 33). Nilakanta Sastri and N. Venkataramanayya have taken the position that the founders of the Vijayanagara state were Telugus; others, including R. Narasimhachar, B.A. Saletore, H. Heras, and S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar, have identified the founders as Karnataka warriors. Another study of the second, or Saluva dynasty sees its founders as both, that is, as having originally moved from Karnataka to Andhra country (Sree Kama Sarma 1972 : 38).

According to Saletore., whose principal work centred upon Karnataka during the Vijayanagara period, the integrity of local institutions, or as he puts it, '*purvamariyade*'

(ancient constitutional usage), continued under the Vijayanagara rulers much as it had before (Saletore 1934 V.I : 342).

The issue of 'feudalism' has arisen with respect to the Vijayanagara state as it has with few other pre-modern states in India. D.C. Sircar, who has condemned the use of the term 'feudalism' for all other medieval states of India, reservedly considers that the term may appropriately be applied to the Vijayanagara state because of the central feature of the *amaram* tenure, usually construed as a military service tenure (Sircar, 1969). N. Venkataramanayya, whose work on *amaram* tenure is the most complete, denies the appropriateness of the concept 'feudal' on the basis of the complete absence of any idea of fealty and homage (Venkata Ramanayya 1935 : 171-172).

At another point in his discussion, Sircar attempts to accommodate *amaram* tenure to his terminology in the following way:

...the *amaram* tenure was similar to the allotment of land to the priest, barber, washerman, carpenter and others for the services to be received from them regularly.... The *Amaranayakas* gave their lands to minor landlords on similar terms of military service just as the subordinate rulers had various grades of vassal chiefs under them (Shear 1964).

The weight of historiographical judgement about South Indian political history clearly opposes the idea of a Vijayanagara 'feudal system'. Most historians of the period, while they may use terms such as 'feudatory' and 'vassal', do not seriously consider the concepts. Considering the new elements which come into the political system from about the fourteenth century, as outlined in the introduction, they treat the Vijayanagara political system as an elaboration of that system of political relations which had existed in the southern peninsula from at least the tenth century.

This is most clearly seen in works whose scope extends beyond dynastic periods. T.V. Mahalingam perceives no basic discontinuities during the middle period of South Indian history in his *South Indian Polity* (Mahalingam 1967). The more critical work of Appadorai on economic history assumes essential continuity though, he does not give much attention to formal political arrangements, tending rather to accept Nilakanta Sastri's view of Chola polity and assuming its continuation during the period of Hoysala and Vijayanagara ascendancy in the southern peninsula (Appadorai 1936).

Within thirty years of the establishment of the dynasty upon the foundation of the failing Hoysala house under Ballala III, the early Vijayanagara warriors brilliantly extended their lordship to the southern part of the peninsula, ending Muslim rule in Madurai in AD. 1371. The dramatic reconquest of Madurai transformed the *Sangama* dynasty of Vijayanagara from a powerful, if hazardously based and remote, kingdom into a worthy successor to the Chola empire (Stein 1980 : 381). In this sense, the youthful founders of Vijayanagara were able to accomplish what the Hoysalas even under sometimes extraordinary leadership had failed in. And, it is perhaps ironic that one reason for the success of the *Sangama* warriors was the establishment in AD 1347, almost simultaneously with their own beginnings, of the Muslim *Bahmani* state on their northern frontier. While posing a continuous hazard to the young Vijayanagara state, it also forced the Vijayanagara rulers to establish a lateral defensive system westward and eastward across the peninsula from their principal *locus* of power on the Tungabhadra. Being constrained to such a ploy, the Vijayanagara rulers avoided one of the salient weaknesses of their predecessors, the Hoysalas. The latter vacillated between expansion northward into what came to be called the 'Bombay Karnatak' and southward into the Kaveri basin, and they succeeded in neither. It may also be added that the expansion of the first of the Vijayanagara rulers laterally across the peninsula was made necessary by the success of the first rulers of the Bahmani sultanate in establishing close collaboration with Hindu warriors of Andhra country, notably the Kapaya Nayaka of Warangal (Nilakanta Sastri 1955 : 231).

The expansion of Vijayanagara sovereignty to Tulu country in the west and Penukonda in the east reflects this pressure from the north and created a war frontier between the states in the doab tract of Raichur. Denied expansion to the north, the Vijayanagara rulers were forced into what was to become the second element of strength and durability of their state, that is the expansion into **Tamil** country (Stein : 1980 : 3X1).

The movement of the Vijayanagara overlordship southward came in slow stages, being punctuated by a series of wars with the (232-45). In some cases at least, the victims of Vijayanagara expansion southward were Hindu chiefs. Thus, the defeat of

the Sambuvaraya elicits of Rajagambirarajyam by *Kumara Kamapana*, the son of the Vijayanagara king Bukka I, around A.D. 1363, was as impressive a victory as his conquest of the Madurai Sultanate a few years later. Rajagambirarajyam included a substantial part of Tondaimandalam just as the Sultanate included a substantial part of Pandi-mandalam (Krishnaswami 1964: 6-21). But, such conquests were an exceptional manifesta-tion of the expanding Vijayanagara overlordship. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries what more characteristically 'expanded' was a successful claim of overlord-ship, not direct Vijayanagara control. Great chiefs, like the Zamorin of Calicut (Nilakanta Sastri 1955 : 266-77) and small chiefs, like the *nattar* of Ponpattai in Cholanmandalam (Krishnaswami 1964: 93-94) recognized the overlordship of Vijayanagara in more appropriate ways: the former by responding promptly to a command from Devaraya II for the presence at the royal court of the Persian ambassador Abdur Razzak (who recorded the event) and the latter by the acknowledgement of the right of the Vijayanagara prince *Kumara Kamapana* to present a gift to a temple in his territory.

During the expansion of the Vijayanagara overlordship from the earliest rulers of the first dynasty through the relatively short-lived second, or Saluva, dynasty (A.D. 1486-1505), the importance of dhannic ideology for Vijayanagara rule is revealed: the mission of the 'State' in preserving Hindu institutions against the depredations of Muslims of the Deccan. Venkataramanayya states: 'the history of Vijayanagara may be said to be the history of a fierce struggle between the Hindus of the Deccan and the Muhammadan rulers of the Deccan' (Venkataramanayya 1935 : 145). Nilakanta Sastri similarly states:

... the basic nature of the historic role of Vijayanagar... was to preserve South India as the last refuge of the traditional culture of and institutions of the country,

...that great empire which, by resisting the onslaughts of Islam, championed the case of Hindu civilization and culture in the South for close to three centuries and thus preserved the ancient tradition of the country in its polity, its learning and its arts (Nilakanta Sastri 1955 : 261).

There can be no question that the existence of the highly militarized power of the Vijayanagara state south of the Krishna-Godavari had the effect of stemming Muslim expansion. However, the dharmic posture of the Vijayanagara rulers as protectors of

Hindu culture is above all, ideologically significant. Vijayanagara kingship and the Vijayanagara state were constituted upon, or soon came to acquire, an ideological principle which distinguishes it from previous South Indian states. It is this principle which most decisively identifies the Vijayanagara overlordship, not presumed differences in the basic structure of the State.

Vijayanagara kingship, like all medieval Hindu kingships, expressed appropriateness in terms of the maintenance of dharma, and especially *varna-sramadharma*. This is captured in Vijayanagara inscriptional *prasastis* in a very different way from Chola inscriptions even though the dharmic qualities of their kings were the same. Both kingships claimed to be in the hands of conquerors whose military exploits made them *digvijayans*; these kings were the greatest of prestators whose gifts to gods and Brahmans assured the welfare of the world.

Among the things that distinguish the Vijayanagara from the Chola overlordship is the personal character of the former or their agents as dharmic actors. Vijayanagara inscriptions of the fourteenth century onwards depict the Vijayanagara king, his son, or preceptorial agent making gifts to temples or to Brahmans, adjudicating disputes among such personages, or re-establishing temple worship long interrupted by Muslim depredations or other disorders. There is in the Vijayanagara records an immediacy of the royal presence that is largely absent from most Chola inscriptions. In the latter, royal dharma and prestations are realized through the often impersonal and remote mediation of an unnamed *ajnapati*, or 'executor'. It is this remoteness and indirection of the expression of Chola *rajadharma* - the elaborate set of documents and orders that connect a king to Brahmans or gods with the Chola kings - that gave to earlier kingship its bureau-cratic, even 'Byzantine', tone. Vijayanagara inscriptions, by contrast, place the king, his kinsmen or guru in the arena of prestation in a very direct way (Stein 1980 : 383-384).

In nothing else is the ritual focus of the kings of Vijayanagara so clear as in the *Mahanavami* festival, an annual royal ceremony of the fifteenth and sixteenth century occurring about 15 September to 15 October. Since Vijayanagara times, the nine day festival, followed by a tenth and final day - *dasara* - has been important in many parts of the macro region. Most famous in Karnataka, as *Dasara*, it has been continuously

celebrated at least since Raja Wodeyar sponsored it in late September, A.D. 1610 at Seringapatnam (Ilayavadana Rao 1943 : V2: 68). The same festival, also called *nava rath* is celebrated by the *nayaka* successors of Vijayanagara. The *Mahanavami* is described in vivid detail by the Portuguese sojourners of the sixteenth century, Paes and Nuniz, and also mentioned by the Italian Nicolo Conti whose report of a visit to Vijayanagara about A.D. 1420 is the earliest extant and by Abdur Razzak, the Persian ambassador ordered to Vijayanagara by the king Deva Raya II around 1442 (Sewell 1924 ; 253-64). The theoretical works of Ilocart and Jonda prepare the way for the acceptance of the ritual actions of ancient Indian kings (Ilocart 1970; Gouda 1966), but it is scarcely possible to find a better medieval example than the nine days of the *Mahanavami* dedicated to protection and regeneration at the capital city of Vijayanagara.

Puranic sources speak of two important nine day festivals which mark the turning of the three seasons of the sub-continent: in March-April, after the harvest of the *samba* or *rabi* crop and the onset of the hot season, and in September-October, after the harvest of the *kar* or *kharif* crop and the onset of the cold season (Appendix - 2). The first of these is associated with the god Rama and the second with the goddess Devi, or Durga. Elements of both these festivals, as described in puranic works, can be seen to exist in the *Mahanavami* of medieval, and the Rama motif may have been as important as the Devi motif though it is the later (i.e. September-October) nine days that was celebrated at Vijayanagar (Stein 1980 : 384-385).

The most elaborate description of the festival was that of Paes, from whose account the following features may be stressed. Throughout the nine days, festivities are centred in the 'citadel' area of Vijayanagara, between the palace and on two, large, permanent structures: one of which is called 'The House of Victory' by Paes ('Throne Platform' by Longhurst, the archaeologist of Vijayanagara and the *mahanavami dibba* according to the modern residents of Hampi) and the other 'The King's Audience Hall'. The ruins of both are massive granite slab platforms showing structural signs of having borne large wooden superstructures as described in the medieval chronicles. These were constructed by Krishnadevaraya around A.D. 1513 following his Orissan campaign and victory over the Gajapatis (Longhurst 1917 ; 57-70).

Around and within these buildings were enacted the events of the festival. Here the king observed the many processions, displays, and games and here he accepted the homage and the gifts of the notables as he sat upon his bejewelled throne. The king sometimes shared this throne, or sat at its foot, while it was occupied by a richly decorated processional *murti* of a god; at other times he was alone. The god is not identified. Within the 'House of Victory' was a special, enclosed, and again, richly decorated chamber in which the image was sheltered when it was not on display before the public participants in the festival. At several points in the proceedings, the King, sometimes with Brahmans and sometimes alone, retired to this enclosed chamber of the deity for worship. Both the Audience Hall and the Throne Platform bear bas-relief sculpture along their granite sides depicting many of the events described by Paes and Nuniz (Stein 1980 : 385).

In front of the two structures which were the centre of the festival activities were constructed a number of pavilions which contributed to the aura of wealth and sumptuousness of the festival as a whole. They were elaborately decorated, in among other ways, with 'devices', apparently heraldic symbols, of the grandee occupants for whom the pavilions were temporary housing during the festival. Nuniz reported that there were nine major pavilions (he called them 'castles') for the most illustrious of the notables and that each military commander also had to erect one in the broad space before the palace. Razzak, as ambassador from Persia, was ensconced in one of these (Sewell 1924 : 357).

Access to the guarded, central arena of festival activity was gained by passage through several gates enclosing wells of the temple precincts; Paes' description of this suggests passage through a series of gateways as the medieval pilgrim moved towards the sanctorum in the great temples of South India (Sewell 1924 : 253-254). Once gained, the spacious open area before the palace, the Audience Hall, and the house of Victory was ringed about with the pavilions referred to and with shaded seating from which the great - soldiers, sectarian leaders and others - viewed the proceedings immediately before the House of Victory on whose higher levels the King sat.

What was viewed was a combination of a great durbar with its offerings of homage and wealth to the King and the return gifts from the King - exchanges of honour; the sacrificial re consecration of the King's arms - his soldiers, horses, elephants

- in which hundreds or thousands of animals were slaughtered, *darshan* and *pūja* of the King's tutelary - the goddess - as well as his closest agnatic and affinal kinsmen; and a variety of athletic contests, dancing and singing procession involving the King's caparisoned women and temple dancers from throughout the realm, and fireworks displays. The locus of these diverse and magnificent entertainments was always the King as glorious and conquering warrior, as the possessor of vast riches lavishly displayed by him and his women (queens and their maids of honour) and distributed to his followers. The King was fructifier and agent of prosperity of the world. Most succinctly assessed, the Mahanavami appears as a combination of the *asvamedha* (the greatest of all royal sacrifices, with its celebration and consecration of kingly military prowess as symbolized in the horse of the king) and the description of Kama's return to Ayodhya in Canto 1.10 of the final book of Valmiki's *Ramayana*.

Comparing the Mahanavami of Vijayanagara with the archaic horse sacrifice may seem superficial or strained, for the Vijayanagara period knows of no such royal sacrifices; none are even alluded to as during the Chola period. Certain common features of the archaic *asvamedha* and the medieval *Mahanavami* may indeed be superficial. Both are ten day rituals and at least one of the great *asvamedhas* was celebrated on a *mahanavami* (the March-April or Chaitra one) by Yudhisthira, hero of the *Mahabharata*.

Yet, the anointing of royal arms by priests and by royal women along with animal sacrifices are prominent features of the Vijayanagara festival:

Paes wrote of the King's women:

They came in regular order one before the other, in all perhaps sixty women fair and strong, from sixteen to twenty years of age. Who is he that could tell of the costliness and value of what each of these women carried on her person? So great is the weight of the bracelets and jewels carried by them that many of them cannot support them, and women accompanying them assisting them by supporting their arms. In this manner and in this array they proceed three times around the [King's] horses, and at the end retire into the palace (Sewell 1924 : 26.).

Compare this with the *Satapatha Brahmana*:

It is the wives that anoint (the horse), for they - to wit (many) wives - are a form of prosperity... the wives round (the horse)...thrice they walk round....(Eggeling 1900 : 313).

An even more strikingly parallel feature of the Mahanavami is the symbolic significance of the King's horse in the consecration of his kingship. Paes describes a troop of richly caparisoned horses brought before the King at one point in the Mahanavami, and leading this troop was one bearing two state umbrellas of the king and grander decorations than the others'. Of this one, Paes writes:

You must know that this horse that is conducted with all this state is a horse that the king keeps, on which they sworn and received as kings, and on it must be sworn all those that shall come after them; and in case such a horse dies they put another in its place (Sewell 1924 : 262).

This suggested comparison with the archaic, Vedic *asvamedha* is more than anachronistic; it is also flawed in being an apparent violation of Vedic prohibitions as well. The bright half of the lunar month of *asvina* (Tamil month of *purattaci*) when the Mahanavami festival occurs is said to be inauspicious of Vedic learning and by extension for other Vedic activities as well. These activities are enjoined as *anadhyaya* according to the *dharamasastra* of Aparaka (Kane 1953). Brahmans do figure in the Mahanavami festival as ritual performers along with the King in relation to the King's tutelary; they also are recipients of royal gifts. But, Brahmans do not dominate the ritual arena, which is very much the King's and in one description of the festival, that of Conti around A.D. 1420, Brahmans appear to have been publicly reviled (Major 185; Sewell 1924).

The association of Sri Rama with the Mahanavami is somewhat more direct. The same mood of celebration by a people of their king found in the final verses of the Valmiki Ramayana suffuses the vivid descriptions of the festival of Vijayanagara. And, there is the further shared conception of regal deliverance from threatening evil. Saletore captures this quality in his statement on the festival.

Religious in atmosphere, it is essentially political in its significance. For it commemorates the anniversary of Rama's marching against Ravana and in its twofold aspect of the worship of durga and of the *ayudhas* or arms, culminating in the Vijayadasami (Victorious tenth day) was particularly suited to Vijayanagara times when fatal issues loomed ominously in the political horizon (Saletore 1934 : V2 : 372).

The god Rama appears important in yet another way. One of the major temples of the capital city under the Tuluva dynasty of Vijayanagara, and especially in Krishna-

devaraya's time was that dedicated to Ramachandra, the hero of the *Ramayana* and the seventh avatar of Vishnu. A separate shrine within that temple was dedicated to the Devi, consort of Rama. This temple was also called the **Hazara** Rama temple, and it was the only shrine within the palace precincts and thus quite proximate to the varied activities of the festival. The unidentified image in the accounts of the Mahanavami may have been the consort goddess of Sri Rama if the proximity of the Rama temple is taken as important and if the judgement of Longhurst, the archaeologist of **Hampi**, or Vijayanagara, is correct that the Rama shrine was the private place of worship of the Tuluva kings (Longhurst 1917 : 71).

Though all historians of Vijayanagara have mentioned the **Mahanavami** festival, often quoting long excerpts from the accounts of Paes and Nuniz, the festival has not received analysis as a single, unified ritual event. Culled from the detailed reports have been odd facts (eg., 'the rents' of the nayakas are paid at this time and the Kings 'owns' all the land) and descriptions of the King, his high officials, and queens. However, this festival, like others, is perceived as a unified system of action and meaning, and should be interpreted in that light.

Two aspects of the *mahanavami tirtha* immediately seize attention: its overwhelmingly royal character and its symbolically incorporative character. These aspects confirm conceptions of ritual kingship assumed in the concept of the segmentary state suggested some forty years ago by Hocart and since then largely ignored by **Indological** scholars (Hocart 1970). Hocart's conception of the king as ritual performer and the primary agency for the prosperity and welfare of the realm, and his attention to the symbolically integrative character of the temple and the city are extraordinarily well-realized in the Mahanavami festival. Kingly ritual power is expressed in numerous ways: in the manifestation of wealth displayed and elaborately redistributed at many points of the nine day festival; in the various consecratory actions involving the King's arms as the means of his royal fame and protection, and also in the King's frequent and often solitary worship of (and ultimately identity with) the deity who presides with him over the festival, and in whose name and for whose propitiation the festival occurs. Certain signs of the Devi (Durga) worship are clear in this festival, and they deserve notice. According to the *Devi Bhagavatam*, females in procession before the goddess form an

essential element of the Navaratri or Mahanavami festival. It is also well to recall that since the Mahanavami is considered a time of danger, the protective power of the Devi and also the King are enhanced (Stein 1980:389-390).

Incorporative elements to which Ilocart drew attention in his work included the subordination of all gods and all chiefs to the king. This incorporation is signified by various means in the Mahanavami festival. The palace site of the festival is reached through two large gates over which towers are constructed (Sewell 1924 : 253-254). These massive gateways were apparently destroyed by the Muslim invaders of the city in the sixteenth century; gates in other parts of the *Hampi* ruins at some distance from 'citadel' of Krishnadevaraya's time, confirm Paes' description of these structures which resemble the *gopuram* leading to the sanctuaries of Hindu temples of the time (Longhurst 1917 :47-49). King and god are at least homologized, if they are not equated. The pavilions erected in the spacious, interior courtyard before the Throne Platform to house the notables of the realm are called 'castles', or dwellings of great men placed within the precincts of the palace and thus under the protection of the great king.

Gods of the King's realm are also incorporated in his city. Included here are permanent resident deities like the Gajapati Krishna of Udayagiri and Vithala (Vithoba) from distant Maharashtra (Nilakanta Sastri and Venkataramanayya 1946: V3:47). It also appears that deities from elsewhere in the realm are brought to the capital during the festival and presented to the King for his adoration (Sewell 1924 : 264). And, servants of gods throughout the King's realm come to do obeisance. This included priests, but most conspicuously it was the temple women (whom the Portuguese called 'courtesans') of shrines everywhere. These temple dancers and musicians performed before the King just as they did before the god to whom they were dedicated (Venkataramanayya 1935 : 404-405).

Following Ilocart's perceptive discussion, it is possible to point to the crucial place of the city- this city of victory -in the total moral order over which the Vijayanagara kings exercised sway. The city, Ilocart wrote, 'never stands for anything specific; it is never less than the whole world, and its parts are the parts of the world' (Ilocart 1970 : 250). And, persistently linked to the city and its establishment is the goddess Durga. As

Bhuvanesvari, 'mistress of the world', the goddess was by tradition propitiated by Vidya-ranya, or Madhavacharya, who is supposed to have been the preceptor of the founders of the city in A.D. 1336 (Stein 1980:391). This connection of the great goddess and the city of the Mayas was first presented by William Taylor in his 1835 translation of several Tamil chronicles of later medieval times, (Taylor 1835: 102-103) and though the idea continues to be accepted by most Vijayanagara scholars, none have exploited fully the symbolic power of the relationships of goddess propitiation, the Rayas and the city. While scholars have failed in this, the successor states of the Vijayanagara in South India, notably the Wodeyars of Mysore and the Nayaka kings of Madurai did not maintain this royal festival in their capitals in full richness (Taylor 1835 : 103; Dubois 1928 : 569-71).

This continuation of tradition by successors of the Rayas in South India (and possibly also the Maratha king Sivaji) of the ruler as an active ritual 'principal' (to use Hocart's term) was the result, in part at least, of the perceived threat to Hindu institutions from Muslim powers of peninsular India. Just as the expansion of the Bahmani sultanate and its successors in the Deccan acquired a special saliency in the ideological presentation of the Vijayanagara state as symbols of danger to the dharma which Hindu kings were bound to protect and nourish, Muslims of a later day continued to have a special meaning, however dubious their actual threat may have been.

Actually, those who bore the brunt of Vijayanagara military power were most often Hindu rulers, not Muslims. And, ironically perhaps, the most strategically placed military units of the Vijayanagara military formations were composed of Muslims, as is generally conceded. It is based upon evidence such as the A1. 1430 inscription of the time of Devaraya referring to 10,000 *turushka* (Muslim) horsemen in his service (E.C.V.3. Introduction). This factor is often elicited to explain the ultimate defeat of Vijayanagara arms in sixteenth century; it nevertheless remains clear that Muslim contingents were responsible for at least part of the great early successes of the Vijayanagara rulers against Hindu houses which they toppled. The Vijayanagara state was however not in fact dedicated to different principles of rule as might be supposed from the confrontation of Hindu and Muslim forces in the Deccan, whatever the importance of its dharmic ideology. To suppose otherwise is to transfer to an earlier time the communal politics of the twentieth century.

And, like the rule of the Cholas, Vijayanagara power was often quite remote after an initial intrusion of its forces into territories ruled by Hindu chiefs. Many parts of the deep southern peninsula continued to be ruled by members of the same families whom the Vijayanagara armies had conquered. This is particularly true of the Pandyan territory through most of the fifteenth century. In most other parts of Tamil country, the ancient territorial terminology remained, and Telugu Nayakas and Brahmans placed in positions of supralocal agents for Vijayanagara authority. Hence, to overstate the ideological element and to speak of a newly constituted basis of state power and legitimacy in the Vijayanagara period would be to distort the historical evidence which we possess of the period. Pre-Vijayanagara forms proved by and large to be both adequate and durable.

Another feature of Vijayanagara rule which also invites comparison with the impressive Chola kingship was the diversity of the peoples under each. In a technical sense, it is the rule over many and different peoples which has justified the use of 'empire' or 'imperial' in connection with the Chola and Vijayanagara states. For the Tamil Cholas based in the rich Kaveri basin, the earliest regions to be included in their expanding sovereignty were the two secondary central zones of the Tamil plain: Pandimandalam and Tondaimandalam. But soon after, Chola sovereignty was established over places of dominantly non-Tamil population with ancient cultural traditions of their own (Nilakanta Sastri 1955 : 375-376). Chola influence was extended northward to Vengi and north-westward to Gangavadi well before it was fully established in the Tamil peripheral zone of Kongu (modern Coimbatore and Salem).

Similarly, the first Vijayanagara dynasty, shortly after the establishment of their sovereignty over the northern portion of what was to become the empire, moved to establish themselves in Tamil country. The process was repeated in the second dynasty as well. Whether the Vijayanagara rulers are to be regarded as essentially Kannadigas or Telugus, or whether they are to be regarded as both from the very beginning- a position taken recently by P. Sree Rama Sarma - the territorial scope of their power included the entire southern peninsula (Sree Rama Sarma 1972:37).

Thus both kingships were firmly based in one part of the southern peninsula from which they drew the major resources for sustaining their military supremacy, namely their soldiery; but both also achieved **overlordship** in other, well-populated and wealthy parts of the macro region. **Overlordship** in these latter places appears to have resulted from three different kinds of processes. One was the result adventurous pillaging expeditions of small groups of 'Telugu warriors or by of large 'invasions', as Krishnaswami has labelled them, of Vijayanagara forces under royal commanders. The second process was the transformation of local elicits into *nayakas*, thus constituting the cement of the new overlordship and at the same time, the means of strengthening the control of local chiefs. The result of these two processes in both the **Chola** and Vijayanagara cases were similar. The third means of extending the Vijayanagara overlordship over the southern peninsula is different from anything seen in Chola times; this was the incorporation of the support and the followings of sectarian groupings in **all** parts of the southern peninsula. With respect to this, of course, the dharmic ideology of the Rayas was all-important.

Raids and invasions into territories remote from their prime bases led to permanent settlement in both cases. in the Chola period this occurred when parts of the modern district of Kolar, in Karnataka were brought under the Control of **Tamils** of Tondaimandalam as seen in the famous Mulbagal inscription of AD. 1072. A variation on this expansion process in the Vijayanagara period is seen **during** the fifteenth century. Then, Telugu warriors, without frontally challenging the **Tamil chiefs** of many areas of older settlement, established themselves in more remote parts of the **Tamil plain abutting** on the plain at the foothills of the **Eastern Ghats**. The results of this latter form of expansion are recorded in modern census volumes showing a zone of Telugu **speakers** running from north to south and splitting some of the modern Tamil Nadu districts into a dominantly Tamil-speaking eastern side and **Telugu-speaking** western side (Srinivasaraghavan 1936 : 230) In these sparsely populated interstices, Telugu migrants of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries not only found scope for political control, but they found black soils with which they were familiar and for which they possessed the means of exploiting in ways superior to the older Tamil residents of these areas. **It** was the relatively high proportion of **Telugu warriors and settlers** in these peripheral parts of the

Tamil plain that explains the placement of the two subordinate 'capitals' of Vijayanagara in Tondaimandalarn: Padividu and Tiruvadi. The striking pattern of this Telugu expansion was noted by early British administrators as well as by epigraphists (A R E., 1904). But the unique record of this process is contained in the accounts of the records collected by Colin Mackenzie in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Telugu-speaking Reddis displaced Tamil-speaking local leaders as dominant cultivating groups, and this displacement brought with it changes in the language of temple inscriptions from Tamil to Telugu, as at the great Vaishnava temple of Tirupati. This movement of Telugu warriors into Tamil country was itself part of a larger pattern of movements. During the late fifteenth century, Reddis were seen to be moving into the western parts of Andhra from their home territories to the east as recorded in a Kurnool inscription of Saluva Narasimha's time (A.R.E. 1960-1).

Whether by the movement of small groups of Tamil warriors or by invasions of Telugu armies, these fourteenth and fifteenth century conquests did not result in an easy or firm control over Tamil country by the Vijayanagara overlordship. Tamil country had virtually to be reconquered in the late fifteenth century by Saluva Narasimha and his son, Narasa Nayaka, to seize back the formerly conquered territories in Tondaiman-dalam as well as Chola and Pandya countries from local chiefs (Krishnaswami 1964:106-115). Invasions of these territories subsequently by the Orissan king Kapilesvara Gajapati and his son, Kumara Hamvira in A.D. 1463-4 did nothing to strengthen the Vijayanagara hold on Tamil country. Later, the great Krishnaraya had apparently to send another Telugu army into Tamil country to refurbish, yet again, the Vijayanagara overlordship. This resulted in what Krishnaswami claims to have been a 'momentous change', namely the replacement of a system of governors (*mahamandalesvaras*) by four military commanders, nayakas, presumably to act under the king's orders with the assistance of dependent warriors called *palaiyagars*. The residue and perhaps the only result of these successive invasions of Vijayanagara warriors into Tamil country was the creation of a stratum of super chiefs who were either Telugus themselves or Tamils allied to Telugus (Stein 1980 : 396).

The emergence of the new stratum of supralocal warriors became a possibility with the raids and, later, the invasions of Telugus into various parts of the macro region from the middle of the fourteenth century; the stratum became a reality when these powerful outsiders forged links to the diverse locality populations they ruled while retaining certain ties to the Telugu Kayas in Vijayanagara on the Tungabhadra (Stein 1980 : 397).

Nayakas of the Vijayanagara period are seen by most scholars as warriors possessing an office conferred by the central Vijayanagara government. The term, *amaranayankara*, signifies an office (*-kara*) possessed by a military officer (*nayaka*) in command (*amara*) of a body of troops (Krishnaswami 1964 : 179-80). The office of nayaka carried with it, according to the conventional scholarly understanding of the system, prebendal rights over land usually designated as *amaram* tenure (or *amaramkani* or *amaramahale*). The proportion of land under this tenurial form for Vijayanagara as a whole is generally regarded to be about the same (Venkataramanayya 1935 : 180). Two hundred nayakas were presumed to have existed in the empire of the middle sixteenth century based upon the statement of Fernao Nuniz for the years 1535-7 (Sewell 1924 : 389). However, Nuniz names only eleven of the most important of the officials and specifies the territory and revenue for which they were responsible as well as the number and composition of the troops which they were to maintain (Sewell 1924 : 384).

In an exhaustive search of inscriptional records of the Vijayanagara period to about A.D. 1530, Krishnaswami was able to find references to a larger number of *nayakas* in Tamil country. Between A.D. 1371 and 1422, he finds six *nayakas* mentioned; between A.D. 1440 and 1459, he finds six more; between A.D. 1491 and 1508, another ten are found; and during Krishnaraya's time, A.D. 1509 to 1530, a total of twenty-seven are mentioned in inscriptions (Krishnaswami 1964 : 181-186).

The political history of the Vijayanagara state is essentially the history of great Telugu *nayakas*, their formidable military capabilities, their patrimonial power, and their relations to religious leaders in a new level of authority everywhere in the southern peninsula. Each of these aspects of Vijayanagara politics - except perhaps the last - have

been explored at least partially in the extant historical literature without attempting to account for their existence or their interconnections.

However assiduous the effort by Vijayanagara historians to elaborate the structure of politics of the time, the core of their discussions has pivoted on the great *nayakas* of the kingdom. All evidence turns upon their exploits and their conflicts, whether one considers the three genre of literary sources - Hindu, Muslim, and European - or the inscriptions of the several centuries of the Vijayanagara state, or whether one relies, as Venkataramanayya does, upon the local accounts collected by Colin Mackenzie. There have been few efforts to go beyond, or behind, these great political figures, to discover the structural framework within which they operated. Ever and again, it is to the powerful personages of the empire on whom attention is riveted: the kings themselves, of course, their close warrior kinsmen and other Telugu *nayakas* and commanders who, along with the peasant caste *nayakas*, played the most crucial political parts in the affairs of state. That this attention from historians is warranted is simple to demonstrate in any of the four Vijayanagara dynasties. Consider the period of Achyutaraya's succession, a time when the empire was at its greatest strength following the reign of Krishnaraya.

Then, warrior kinsmen were sources of significant support to Achyuta. When his brother, the great Krishnaraya died. Achyuta's position was secured against the powerful Aliya Ramaraya a brother-in-law of the late king, by two of Achyuta's own brother-in-law: Pedda and Chinna Salakaraju. The Salakaraju brothers continued to serve Achyuta as among his most successful and reliable generals as did another brothers-in-law, Cevappa Nayaka (Venkataramanayya 1935 : 454). And, after the death of Achyutaraya, in AD. 1542, one of the Salakarajus murdered the late king's nephew and successor, Venkata 1 (Nilakanta Sastri 1955 : 299). Throughout the third dynasty, the record of minor rebellions in complicity with one or several great *nayakas* is a dismaying chapter which is usually euphemistically discussed under the heading of 'police arrangements' (Venkataramanayya 1935 : 262-265). In Tamil country, intrigues among warriors linked to the royal house by agnatic or affinal bonds was less important than in the northern parts of the empire, but they were not absent. By the late sixteenth century the political

arena of these Telugu political giants was the entire peninsula. The Brahman commander and minister Saluva Narasimha Nayaka, or Sellappa, who, with the Salakaraju brothers, assured the Vijayanagara throne to Achyuta in A.D. 1529, was rewarded with control of Tanjore, the richest territory in the empire. Sellappa revolted against Achyuta in A.D. 1531 in alliance with other *nayakas* of the South. The reasons for this revolt appear to have been the differences with Ajiya Ramaraya; Sellappa had thwarted Ramaraya's ambitions to the throne at the death of Krishnaraya and was now being made to pay for that by the still powerful Ramaraya (Krishnaswami 1964 : 200-205).

In explaining the dominating character of the powerful Telugu warriors to whom the title *nayaka* was affixed, two factors appear most important. One was the sheer success of arms of these warriors; the other is the significant role played by Tamil country and the acceptance of Telugu rule by its chiefs during the Vijayanagara period.

Reasons for the military success of Vijayanagara warriors against their Hindu and Muslim rivals are hardly considered in the existing literature on the Vijayanagara state. This is peculiar since all have differentiated the Vijayanagara state from others on the basis of its martial character and achievements. An unchanging dharmic ideology is presumed to account for the successes of the several dynasties; yet, as is clear from the records of Vijayanagara, the major victims of Vijayanagara military power were not Muslims but Hindus, and a major factor in this success were Muslim soliders in Vijayanagara armies (Stein 1980 : 400). Clearly, other kinds of explanations are necessary.

One that would appear to deserve serious consideration is that the success of Vijayanagara armies was direct consequences of their experience with and imitation of Muslim armies, their tactics and weapons. The founding brothers of the first dynasty had served in Muslim armies, and it was against Muslim soldiers that there was intermittent conflict for two centuries. Nor is the military importance of the Portuguese, with whom the Vijayanagara rulers maintained friendly relations, to be ignored.

A second explanation already briefly mentioned above as differentiating the process of extending the overlordship of the Chola and Vijayanagara king\$, involved relationships between the latter and their Telugu agents with the leaders of Vaishnava sectarian orders (*sampradayas*). As this relationship was dependent upon the military capabilities of Telugu warriors, it is to this matter that attention is first given.

Two military factors appear significant: one was the improvement in cavalry warfare and the other, the use of artillery,] horse warfare is among the oldest elements of Indo-Aryan culture and a well-recognized part of armies in both the Sanskrit and Tamil traditions (Mahalingam 1967 : 250) However, the mounted warrior appears to come into his own in South India in the armies of Vijayanagara It has been suggested that the Vijayanagara kings were as famed as 'lords of the horse' (*asvapati*) as the imperial Gangas of Orisa were famed as 'lords of the elephant' (*gajapati*) (Sircar 1957 : 275). This suggestion is supported by the Mahanavami festival already discussed.

At first glance, the importance of horses is puzzling since the Vijayanagara rulers were completely dependent upon the importation of war-horses of quality. Considerable notice has been taken of this trade in horses from Ormuz and other western Asian trade centres by foreign commentators since the time of Marco Polo (Latham 1957 : 237). According to the Portuguese visitors to Vijayanagara, and Nuniz was there as a horse trader Krishnaraya purchased 13,000 Arabian (Ormuz horses and country-bred horses each year. The king kept the best of these for himself. Saluva Narasimha, before Krishnaraya, is reported to have paid a substantial sum for imported horses whether dead or alive (Sewell 1924 : 235). The establishment of Muslim powers in the Deccan and the long-standing hostility between them and the Vijayanagara state must have eliminated or curtailed the availability of horses bred in northern India or imported from Central Asia (Latham 1958 : 151). With country-bred horses of poor quality in South India (in apparent contrast to those of Maratha country so skilfully used by Sivaji and his successors somewhat later) the Vijayanagara state sought and apparently attained a monopoly of horses fit for military use.

It must also have been true that military horses were a significant political currency and source of political control by the Vijayanagara rulers. The supply of strong horses would have extended the range of effective political control of subordinates, local warriors of the time. There would thus be strong inducements on the part of local notables to assure themselves of a supply of horses and, especially, a source which remained accessible from one year to another. Horse breeding and care were notoriously poor according to foreign commentators (Mahalingam 1967 : 254).

Of course, warriors with strong mounts constituted both a source of strength and danger to the Ray as of Vijayanagara. The more mobile and powerful subordinate chiefs were the more effective in the army which could be brought to the field against the formidable armies of Muslim and enemies. However, the same cavalry capability could be and was used against the Vijayanagara kings as the rebellions of Telugu *nayakas* instruct. This latter hazard could be reduced in several ways. One was for the rulers to monopolize access to superior military horses by paying a high price to those importing and trading in horses, even dead horses. Another means was to establish greater control over the coastal markets to which horses came: this was apparently attempted by Krishnaraya and later under the forceful Ramaraya (Krishnaswami 1961 : 21-16, 233-15). Finally, mobile strength could be checked in its long-term effects by strongly fortified garrisons of reliable soldiers of the sort to which reference is repeatedly made in the poem, the *Amuktamalyada* attributed to Krishnaraya.

But there is another military factor which is almost totally ignored by Vijayanagara historians; that is the use of artillery by the Vijayanagara armies. The earliest experience of artillery by Vijayanagara armies occurred in a late fourteenth century battle between Bukka I and the Bahmani Sultan Muhammad (Mahalingam 1967 : 262-263). But, unlike the perfection of cavalry techniques which must have been learned from Deccani Muslims, it is probable that the use of artillery was more a consequence of later contact with the Portuguese (Dikshitar 1944 : 105-106). Doubts have been raised about the proficiency in the use of artillery by Hindus as compared to their Muslim opponents, but this deficiency was off-set by the use of Muslim and Portuguese soldiers by the Rayas. We have the story, well-worn by its demonstration of religious tolerance of the

Vijayanagara rulers, of Devaraya II keeping a Koran beside his throne so that his Muslim soldiers could swear allegiance properly (Nilakanta Sastri 1955 : 259-60). Muslim soldiers served in Vijayanagara armies from at least the early fifteenth century, and from Paes and Nuniz a century later, there are descriptions of the use of artillery as well as muskets and other weapons involving gunpowder. The Portuguese accounts of the battle of Raichur in A.D. 1520, record that the Muslim commander Salabat Khan used artillery and his 500 Portuguese mercenaries also used guns. Against these, Krishnaraya's soldiers included musketeers, but there is no reference to artillery. However, among the spoils of the Raya's victory were 400 heavy cannons and numerous smaller guns (Scwell 1921 : 242-243; Salctore 1934 : 417). There is little question therefore of the development of the use of artillery and other firearms by Hindu soldiers during this time; they augmented the firepower of Muslim and Portuguese auxiliaries in Vijayanagara armies.

Changes in the form of warfare in South India must have contributed to the persistent success of the Vijayanagara rulers against their Hindu rivals. Increasingly effective cavalry and artillery also explain the strategy of royal fortresses manned by special troops and commanded by dependable officers. Dozens of important fortresses are mentioned in Vijayanagara inscriptions and in the major literary sources of the sixteenth century (Venkataramanayya 1935 : 170-171). In inscriptions, the Sanskrit term *durga*, 'fort', also acquired the additional meaning of the territory under the influence of a fortress, and the title which is taken by Vijayanagara historians to mean 'provincial governor'¹ literally means 'the officer (or chief) over a fort': *durga dammaik* (Sircar, 1966). His designation emphasizes the importance of fortified places as well as the fact that the great officials of the Vijayanagara state were not civil, but military officials. This last point is somewhat surprising when it is noted that most of the *durga dammaiks* were Brahmans according to inscriptions. These references thus corroborate the literary evidence of a policy of Krishnaraya to place reliance on fortresses and to entrust them to Brahmans. The didactic poem, the *Amuktamalyada*, attributed to Krishnaraya, gives an almost equivalent importance to forts as to Brahman; in fact these two subjects are treated together. Repeatedly, the (royal?) poet instructs that

fortresses are to be strong, well-manned, and under the control of* Brahmins (Rangaswami Saraswati 1926 : 72-73).

It is difficult to resist the temptations of comparing the fortresses of the Vijayanagara kings with the only other massive structures of the age under Brahman custodianship, Hindu temples. This is occasionally noted in the historical literature as in the case of the hill temple of Simhachalam (Visakhapatnam district) in modern Andhra-Pradesh (Sundaram, 1960 : 135-136). During the eighteenth century warfare among English, French, and Muslim forces in what was then called 'the Carnatic', temples were frequently used by all combatants. Orme reported on the suitability of temples for this purpose: 'all pagodas on the coast of Coromandel are built on the same general plan a large area which is commonly square, is enclosed by a wall 15 to 20 feet high..., and, he referred to numerous temples used as fortifications (Orme 1803: V.1 : 117). It would be surprising if during the Vijayanagara period, when the construction of great walled temples reached full development, they were not used or were not seen as potentially useful for military purposes by their builders, who were for the most part locality magnates.

Superior military capability based upon cavalry and artillery as well as strategically placed fortified places under the control of reliable troops and Brahmins, especially Telugu Brahmins: these were the principal components of Vijayanagara authority in the southern peninsula. Another element which is taken by scholars to be part of the foundation of Vijayanagara authority was the *nayaka* system, that is, the functions and relationships Telugu warriors in control of substantial territories distributed over the entire South Indian macro region and presumably responsive to directives of the Vijayanagara rulers. Is this a correct understanding of the role of the *nayakas*?

As already noticed, the extant historiography on the *nayaka* system is at least confusing, even contradictory. The exact or even approximate number of such personages and their territorial jurisdictions are unknown; these questions have never been comprehensively investigated. *Nayakas* are described by the Portuguese chroniclers of the sixteenth century, Paes and Nuniz, as agents of the centralized control of the Rayas. The evidence of Vijayanagara inscriptions and the later Mackenzie manuscripts present a different picture; one of territorial magnates pursuing political ends which at time at least,

collided with the aims of the Rayas as these may (indeed must) be inferred. Between these two opposed conceptions there are other views of the *nayaka* system, such as Krishnaswami's recent presentation of the system as '*feudalism*'. In the work of Nilakanta Sastri, several views of *nayakas* may be discerned. His 1946 publication, *Further Sources of Vijayanagara History*, contrasts the Vijayanagara *nayakas* before and after the battle of Rakshasi-Tangadi in A.D. 1565, in the following words: '*The nayakas, who were absolutely dependent upon the royal will... [until 1565] acquired a status of semi-independence*'. The next chapter, dwells at length on the issue of these *nayakas* or poligars as they were called in the Ceded Districts who were the supra-local intermediaries drawn mainly from the pastoral Kuruba; and hunter-gatherer Boya/Bedar backgrounds in case of Bellary. It apparently shows the political expediency of the Vijayanagara kings, particularly of Krishnadevaraya, to incorporate these ethnics into the authority structure owing to their martial powers. But it is also interesting to note here that this political intermediary class which was once subordinate to their overlords defied the royal authority at the time of change of dynasty at hands of the allied Bahmani forces.

Later, in his *History of South India*, Sastri implies a somewhat less strongly centralized system before A.D. 1565. In his very brief discussion of Vijayanagara political, administrative, and military organization, he states that in addition to a large standing army supported, in part, from:

... crown lands, annual tributes from feudatories and provincial governors... military chiefs studded the whole length and the breadth of the empire, each under a *nayak* or military leader authorized to collect revenue and administer a specified area provided he maintained an agreed number of elephants, horses, and troops every ready to join the imperial forces in war.

In yet more recent work, published almost ten years after that cited immediately above, the conception of *nayakas* as officials under direct central supervision is drastically altered. Here, Sastri writes:

Vijayanagara became the focus of resurgent Hindu culture and offered a more successful resistance to Islam in this part of the country than anywhere else. So it was a long military vigil. As there was no room for weak or incompetent rulers on the throne,

nayakas¹ who died defending the Kakatiya queen Rudramba's claim to the throne against Ambadeva, and equally vague references to a nayankara system.

The term 'nayaka' is, in fact, a very ancient Sanskrit one denoting a person of prominence and leadership, particularly military leadership. During the medieval period, in South India, nayaka refers to the bhakti relationship between god (nayaka) and devotee (nayika). It is a term upon which too much has been permitted to be borne by modern historians concerned with the analysis of the political system. When we may point to usage as diverse as that cited by Drett and others for warriors of specific local dominance to that of Gajapati inscription of the fifteenth century in which the King, Kapilesvara, is called a nayaka, it is necessary to question the meaning generally ascribed by historians of Vijayanagara: 'one who holds land from the Vijayanagar kings on condition of offering military service'. The more prudent reading of the term nayaka is the generalized designation of a powerful warrior who was at times associated with the military enterprises of kings, but who at all times was territorial magnate in his own right.

To the extent that it is possible to speak of a nayaka system, this notion has to do with the existence of a new level of intermediary authority in South India. The powerful combination of a technically superior royal army and strategically placed fortifications under Brahman commanders constitute one part of the Vijayanagara political system. The other part consisted of Telugu nayakas who, with astonishing ease, established and maintained their authority over most of the southern peninsula, especially Tamil country.

Nayaka authority in Tamil country certainly hastened or perhaps even completed the demise of those local institutions which together provided each locality segment of the Chola state with basic coherence: the local body of nattars acting corporately through their territorial assembly, the nadu, or latterly, combined with other locality bodies in the greater nadu, the periyannadu; brahmadeyas acting as the ritual and ideological cores of each locality. That these several institutions had already begun to lose their important place in Tamil country as early as the twelfth century in some cases seems clear. Their decline cannot be attributed to the Vijayanagara state, but must be seen as the result of changes in Tamil society and amongst the Tamils themselves

there were revolutions resulting in a change of dynasty and renewal of strength. The empire is best looked upon as military confederacy of many chieftains cooperating under the leadership of the biggest among them. Here is a virtual denial of anything approximating the centralized political system of which Sastri spoke in his 1946 work, except, possibly, when an unusual warrior - a Krishnadevaraya - occupied the throne. Here, too in this 1964 statement of Sastri, the threat of Muslim domination is given continued saliency as a reason for the politico-military changes of the Vijayanagara period. However, Sastri's most recent formulation of the essential character of the 'empire... as a military confederation of many chieftains...' is an extreme position. It is a position which goes too far in what may be seen as an effort to correct the early conception of a centralized polity; it fails to distinguish the differential concerns and capabilities of intrusive Telugu warriors from those of other military chieftains, and it therefore fails to appreciate the way in which the great Telugu warriors dominate the political scene. The Vijayanagara period is the age of Telugu military power and glory. Most of those possessing substantial military capability were Telugus, and they comprise a new intermediary level of authority in what continued to be a segmentary state in South India.

As to the title, nayaka, it occurs in Karnataka at least three centuries before the establishment of the Vijayanagara state, and it is found in Andhra country at least two centuries before the Vijayanagara state. Derrett refers of the term in inscriptions of the late eleventh century and substitutes the English 'captain' implying a military office. However, Derrett mentions other evidence, notably an inscription of the middle twelfth century refers to a nayaka of Hoalalkere (in modern Chitaldrg district, Karnataka) Who recognized no overlord', suggesting not a military office, but a personage of local power. Telugu literary works and incriptions from Andhra of about the same time also mention nayakas in this same ambiguous fashion. Kakatiya records of the middle and late twelfth centuries refer to nayaka of specific localities as dependants to great families of local dominance. There are eve uri-nayakulu and grama nayakulu, that is 'village nayakas', mentioned in Andhra. Later inscriptions of the Kakatiya rulers Rudramadevi (A.D. 1259-95), the queen Rudramba (A.D. 1273), Ambadeva, and Prataparudra (A.D. 1295-1332) are interpreted in such a manner as to place nayakas into a formal military organization. Thus, there is the ambiguous tradition of the seventy-five

as discussed in chapter six. Still, the scope for the politically integrative function of ritual authority of the segmentary state remained. Neither a Tamil state nor a Karnataka state emerged to challenge the Vijayanagara state, to attract the recognition of indigenous locality chiefs, or to reinforce the claims of the latter to their ancient locality control. That recognition was instead extended to the Telugu nayakas whose original presence in the macro region outside Andhra country was as military agents of the Vijayanagara kings. These Telugu warriors were not, however, to remain simply agents of the Vijayanagara kings; they could not because there was no political framework through which an agency of this sort was capable of being sustained. Telugu nayakas quickly became locality figures in their own right, encouraging the settlement of other Telugus to strengthen their control over local Tamil and Karnataka chiefs as well as to buttress their relations with the distant but still intimidating power of the Rayas. With respect to the Rayas, Telugu nayakas continued to express their agency position (*kartta*). Thus ensconced, they became a new intermediary level of authority within a changed, but nonetheless recognizable, segmentary state.

The next chapter, dwells at length on the issue of these *nayakas* or *poligars* as they were called in the Ceded Districts who were the supra-local intermediaries drawn mainly from the pastoral Kuruba; and hunter-gatherer Boya/Bedar background in case of Bellary. It apparently shows the political inepidency of the rate these ethnics into the authority structure owing to their martial powers. But it is also interesting to note here is that this political intermediary class which was once subordinate to their overlords defied the royal authority at the time of change of dynasty at hands of the allied Bahmani forces.

CHAPTER - III

SUB-REGIONAL INTERMEDIARIES:

THE POST-VIJAYANAGARA PHASE

From the fifteenth century onwards, medieval south Indian society presented a picture of social order in ferment. Far from accepting the theoretical notion of 'my station and its duties' (Bradley 1876), the Sudra castes who described themselves as Sat-Sudras, sought to propel themselves into the higher echelons of society which commanded ritual superiority. When these less privileged social groups tried to crowd themselves into the limited space offered by ritual and social privileges, the resultant pulls and pressures were reflected in the contemporary late medieval society. This situation of social flux continued into the seventeenth century when the last king of Vijayanagara, **Sriranga III** (1642-49) belonging to Aravidu dynasty held no greater title than that of the king of Vellore (Ramaswamy 1985: 416).

The present chapter which actually forms the focus of this study is an attempt at understanding the dynamics of the Post-Vijayanagara state formation of south India with special relevance to the Bellary region. Obviously, the region deserves this special attention as it once formed the core of the Vijayanagara state with its imperial legacy; and which took its symbolic 'rise and fall' on the banks of the river Tungabhadra dredging through this upland semi-arid terrain. And most significantly, the shadows of which having persisted even after its virtual decline through the late medieval centuries is probably the reason why a study such as this becomes prominent. Further, in order to be more effective means of studying the processes of political change (being its main concern) the discussion needs to be placed against the constituent socio-economic, and wider cultural context of the region. That the region offers an excellent landscape for such an exercise in several respects is only evident through its distinctive geographical features.

As already pointed out elsewhere in the earlier chapters, for the analysis of a specific region, however, the model must be modified to fit within its distinct historical, ecological and social context. Historically, Bellary is one of the driest regions in south India, falling under the category of "dry eco types" (Robert 1982 : 18). And as a typical

representative of the dry ecotype, (Appendix-3) Bellary possessed traditionally "flat or loose" social structure. This less rigid and defined social and economic structure, as may be found in the following pages, gave way to the rise of several forest and pastoral people (for whom Bellary offers a natural habitat) to pre-eminence in the power structure of the region ever since medieval times; it was of course, with the royal initiative corresponding to the regional specificity's.

Interestingly, the dominant economic strategy of a over-whelming population of Bellary still remains sheep/goat pasoralism, and/or cattle herding. In addition to pastoralism, this zone supports agro-pastoral dry farming villages. It further indicates that the pastoral agriculturists of Bellary (Kuruba/Kuruva) appear to have played a substantial role in the region from the medieval Vijayanagara times. So also is the case with yet another ethnic group - the Boyas or Bedars, the traditional hunter gatherers who live in symbiotic association with the village communities. Let us then dwell at length on the ethnographic dimension of Bellary for a clearer exposition of this problem, since these traditional ethnics who inhabit this zone provide variable repores in a wider context of the emerging complexity of social environment. The role of active individuals (lineage ancestors) among these ethnics in the process of culture change (especially in the realm of ideology and power) due to recursive relationship with the state can be acknowledged from their ethnohistoric accounts (Murty 1992 : 326-329).

The Boya or Bedar hunter gatherers of Bellary have a symbiotic association with the agro-pastoral communities, and in the lowlands they have become marginal enclaves of the village economy due to cultural contact. The ecosystems of these hunter gatherers though they are no longer pristine, their subsistence strategies do include exploitation of small game, birds, insects and a variety of wild plant foods; seasonal fishing in streams, lakes and ponds, and honey collection are also important strategies. They have extraordinary knowledge of biological environment and their exploitative technology consists of a variety of contrivances such as nets, spring traps, gravity traps, and noose traps. The bow and arrow is an important tool for the Boyas (as in the case of the Chenchus). The meat procurement strategies also include chasing and stalking the game and opportunistic scavenging. Fire aided hunting and ambushing big game (antelope, deer, wild boar, etc) at fords and water holes were also the strategies of the past for the hunter-gatherers (Murty

1992 : 326) These were basically kinship - oriented societies, where there were close family ties, forming a clan. And the head of the clan was naturally an elderly person who had authority over the whole of the clan. The worship of mother-goddess or village deity in the most turbulent form of shakti who sought ready sacrifices at festivals was most common.

There was, further, yet another dimension - the reclamation of forests (*aranya*) for village settlement (*grama*), and the expansion of agrarian order. In most cases, such newly established *gramas* in south India, more often than not had a component of priestly class (Brahmans), brought in from north India (Murty 1992 : 332).

Herman Kulke has pointed out that the *rajas* of medieval period needed land for the gradual extension of the peasant agriculture, which was also able to yield sufficient surplus crop for the maintenance of the increasing court, for instance, the members of the royal family, Brahmins, officials and soldiers (Kulke 1978 :128). Therefore, the assimilation of tribal people into their fold became a necessity for them. In Burton Stein's view, "the reduction of forest and the expansion of regularly cultivated land was a continuous process. This may be regarded as the ecological concomitant of the social displacement and assimilation of tribal people. As in any developing, tropical, agrarian systems, the clearing of forests was one of the standard methods for expansion; this kind of change in environment, may, therefore, be considered a regularized process in which the tempo of expansion is a factor of vital importance" (Stein 1979: 179).

Deforestation and articulation of the tribal frontiers with the Kings's domain was an ongoing process from early historic times. To give some examples, Maurya Sarma (ca. 345-370 AD), a king of the Kadamba family, claims in an inscription that he had defeated the "frontier guards of the Pallava dynasty and occupied the inaccessible forests stretching to the gates of Sripavata i.e. Srisailam on the Nallamala hills (Minakshi 1938 : 18). Trilochana Pallava (ca 5090 AD), a Pallava king who held sway over parts of the Eastern Ghats claimed in an inscription that he had destroyed the forests and wild country and established *agrahara* {*Brahman*) settlements numbering 700 to the east of Sripavata (Krishna Rao 1973 : 61-62). The Pallava kings, for that matter, bore the epithet *Kaduvetti*, which means the "destroyer of the forests". Such examples suggest that the forested

zones were being constituted as settlement frontiers within the state's domain. This process continued till the pre-colonial period with incessant battles between the regional powers for the expansion and/or retention of the boundaries.

The state (the successive states to be more appropriate) for the maintenance of the integrity of the frontier civilisations in the forested zone adapted a policy of incorporating the forest ethics both politically and ritually (Murty 1992 : 332).

The Boyas figure much more prominently in the inscriptions than their Chencu counterparts in the Telugu region because of their strategic position in the lowland zones. There are two main divisions among the Boyas called *uruboya* (village Boya) and *mys- aboya* (Boyas of the grassland), and each is divided into a number of exogamous septs, a long list of which is given by Thurston (Thurston 1909: 180-209). This turbulent ethnic group finds mention in the inscriptions from 6th - 7th century onwards and late medieval inscriptions (ca. 14th century AD) refer to their country as *boyaviharadesa* (the country where Boyas roam) and *boyavidu* (the land of the Boyas). The reference to twelve Boya *Kottams* (fortresses) and Boya chieftains as *dora* (lord) and *simhasanaboya* in the 9th century AD records suggests that powerful Boya strongholds existed in this region (Hanumantha Rao 1983-1984:77-91; Prasad 1978:322-343). The Eastern Chalukyas, who founded their new kingdom in Vengi (the Krishna-Godavari doab) at the beginning of the 7th century AD waged wars against the Boya *Kottams* to extend their sway southwards. To consolidate their authority and to win the support of Boyas, the Eastern Chalukyas employed them as officials. An inscription of the great Chola king, Rajendra Chola (ca. 11th century AD), mentions a Boya chief as a lord of 480 villages. Boyas were sought after especially by the late medieval rulers, both Hindu and Mohammedan, for their fighting prowess. A work with the title *Rajavahanavijaya*, attributed to the Vijayanagara King Krishnadevaya (who ruled from ca. 1509-1529 AD) describes how the Boyas in his army were marching with bows in their hands and quills on their backs like black tigers. Some lineages of these Boya *ilitia*, who wielded great influence over their tribesmen, and who were highly paid officials (they were given rent free agricultural lands and other kinds of allowances), called *poligars*, began to emerge as local potentates from the 16th onwards with the downfall of the Vijayanagara empire. The British found them to be a formidable force and Thomas Munro (1802) in his letter to the Board of

Revenue speaks of the bravery and turbulent nature of the Boya poligars. However, the ritual sovereignty enjoyed by the **erstwhile** Boya poligari families persists even to this day in their **descendents** in parts of the Bellary region.

Historical information about these ethnics in epigraphs, sculptures and more so in the medieval literature, is a valuable source for the explanation of the social, ritual, and symbolic domains of the hunter-gatherer cultural systems. To begin with, in the medieval religious literature which is in Sanskritized Telugu, these ethnics were referred to variously as *vanacharulu* (those who move in the forests, who dwell in the forests) *kiratas*, *ni shad*, *pulind*, *andh*, *bhilla sabara* etc. In fact, these terms were used in the medieval literature as synonyms for the forest people, though references to specific ethnic names such as Chunchu (i.e., Chenchu), Boya and Yerukula figure from the 6th century onwards. They were described as out-languish, live by hunting and forging in the forests, and that the state has to integrate these forest peoples into the king's realm. What is important in the trajectory of the hunter-gatherer cultural system is the role played by the state as a crucial variable. Suffice it would to note here that the **intra-regional** powers (especially from the early medieval period, say 4th century AD onwards) with internecine wars to expand and safeguard their frontiers made all efforts to integrate these forests ethnics into the "state's realm" for political expediency (Murty 1992 : 331-332).

Coming to the pastoral Kurubas (*also called Kuruva/and/oGolla in the adjoining Telangana - Rayalaseema plateau*), who inhabit the lowland country, they either herd exclusively cattle, or a mixed herd of sheep and goats, (which is the case with **some** groups of Gollas). After the Boyas and Bedars the most numerous ethnic group in Bellary are the Kurubas. The eastern upland country of Karnataka and the contiguous portions of the adjoining Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh states, have been the domain of pastoralists. The pastoralism of Kurubas falls in the category of herdsman husbandry (Bose 1975 : 1-15; Khazanov 1984 : 68). Like the other pastoral castes of India (such as the Ahirs, Gowla, Gonda, Yadava (jadev), Gavli, Gowli, Kolari, Dhangar etc.) the Kurubas and Gollas live in permanent dwelling places in villages and are involved in agriculture in a supplementary capacity (Mahapatra 1975 : 209-19). All these groups, we shall, following Khazanov, characterize as sedentary and semi-sedentary pastoralists (Khazanov 1984). In most cases, it is observed that, like the hunter gatherers, **the** pastoral

Kurubas also have a symbiotic relationship with the peasant communities, and practice dry farming (millets and pulses are among the most commonly grown). They often pen their sheep herds in the fields (the droppings are used as manure) before the sowing season for which they get their returns in cash or kind. It is not uncommon for a Kuruba to describe the size of his herd in terms of the acres they cover (as for instance, a herd of four acres). In those families which have taken to agriculture, the youngest of the male members often tends the sheep/ goats in their transhumant range. On the other hand, in those families which mainly depend on sheep/goat herding, both the elder and younger males move with the flock and a pack of dogs to guard the sheep from predators (Murty 1993 : 33-34).

What is more important for our discussion in this exercise is the kind of interaction between the sheep/goat pastoralists and the state. The Kuruba social organization fits into the segmentary lineage system described by Sahlins: it consists of primary (or minimal) segments with an agnatic genealogy (Sahlins 1961 : 322-43). Primary segments whose focal line ancestors are siblings form a territorial entity, and the geographical position of territories follows the genealogical division into lineages. Each lineage has a god, the deified ancestor. The gods of the respective lineage's though they may have different names, have the same iconographical features and all the lineage gods are identified with the apical ancestor, Birappa.

The centrality of the oral traditions of this community construes the temporal perspective of the institutions embodying Birappa at the apex of the sheep/goat pastoral economic and political structure. Kurubas generally do not ride horses or ponies as they are the vehicle of their god Birappa, who seems to be a form of Virabhadra. The Kurubas and/or Kurubas of Karnataka-Andhra are distinguished into two groups, namely, *unni-kankanam* kurubas (those wearing a wool wrist band) and *hattikankanam* kurubas, those wearing a cotton wrist band. They are believed to have been born to the first and second wives of Elanagireddi, respectively. These two groups, with the prefixes *-unni-* and *hatti-*, betray syntagmatic linkages with the forest and village life. For, Elanagireddi marries his first wife in the forest and ties a woolen wrist band (no cotton being available, whereas in the case of the second wife he ties a cotton wrist band in the marriage ceremony. The *unnikankanam* kurubas are primarily transhumant sheep herders, moving in forest pastu-

res, while the *hattikankanam kurubas* depend on agriculture and cattle husbandry like the Vokkaligas and Gavadas of Karnataka, or the Kapus (Reddis) of Andhra (Murty 1993).

According to the Lingayat oral traditions, the Kurubas are the illegitimate children born to their god in the forest. It is perhaps the reason why the Kurubas have their strong leanings towards the Lingayat faith, or Virasaivism. Almost everywhere *jangamas* are called in as priests and allegiance to the Lingayat *maths* is acknowledged, and in places (Kamalapuram, for instance) the ceremonies at weddings and funerals have been greatly modified in the direction of the Lingayat pattern. The Mylar Lingappa cult in Hadagalli is the place of worship for the pastoral Kuruba population in Bellary (Francis 1916).

The institutional analysis of the Kuruba and Golla culture systems helps us draw generalizations concerning the evolution of their political economy. As referred to earlier, their social organization falls in the category of the segmentary lineage model. There are numerous episodes in the oral epics of both Birappa and Mallanna (the Golla pastoral god) which explicate the historical connections, especially, the consistent conflict between the sheep/goat pastoralists (i.e. chiefdoms) and the state. They are warrior gods, who move on a horse back with a sword and shield, and are always ready for a raid. Ancestors of lineage groups at various levels of segmentation are deified and are venerated as incarnations of Siva. Even some of the Kuruba lineage ancestors are rajas (kings) as in some parts of Bellary and the neighboring Anantapur district. They are bestowed with royal insignia, the most common and important being palanquin, umbrella and fly whisk. And the deified ancestor of each lineage is equated with either Birappa or Mallanna, as the case may be. The solidarity and cohesion of these segmented lineage's are renewed through annual or cyclical congregations at the cult centers which dot this pastoral landscape. The ritual performances at these centers provide sources to decode the cultural content, ideology and power in the past cultural systems of these pastoral communities (Murty 1993 : 35-37).

Certain lineage's of both the Kurubas and Gollas, who established their power as poligars in the Vijayanagara empire like the hunter-gatherer Boyas, carved out their little kingdoms after the overthrow of the Vijayanagara rule. These poligars, to begin with, were the holders of army camps and collectors of revenue which they had passed on to

their overlords. In a sense, they were the supralocal **intermediaries** between the villages under their control and the state, and acted as "boundary role players" (Cohen 1974 : 265). During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were no less than eighty pillagers (majority of them being of pastoral Kuruba/Golla origin), who were the virtual rulers (some of them were despots) of the Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantapur and Chittoor districts, besides Bellary. further, these late medieval and early colonial Kurubas and Gollas who emerged as powerful pillagers legitimised **themselves** by claiming their descent from the *puranic* Yadava clan of *candravamsa* (Murty 1993 : 41).

Therefore, what appears striking here is that the historically documented **sources** in the region under discussion allow explanation with a greater degree of authenticity of the capacity of hunter-gatherer and pastoral cultures in sustaining their systems under conditions of changing physical and social environment. The corpus of historical traditions of the hunter-gatherers which figures from the 6th century AD, and more elaborately in the medieval literature (ca. 13th century onwards), reveal, in so far as subsistence behaviour is concerned, uniform patterns.

What is further significant in the history of both hunter gatherer and pastoral stocks is the development of institutional arrangement under the impact of external stimuli, the latter being the state. The state in its endeavour to maintain its frontier civilization, and expansion of agrarian order, developed integrative mechanisms to articulate the hunter-gatherer and pastoral cultures with itself. The crucial impact of the state is not merely on the physical and social environment but more so on the relations of production. The state began to allocate services and as a sequel, there emerged a pattern of resource exploitation, mobilization and distribution. These forest ethnics and pastoralists exploited these external factors and evolved viable forms of political and social organization within their systems in which key individuals of influential lineages were the decision makers. These key individuals who enjoyed authority and rose in hierarchy acted as regulatory mechanisms of the settlements under their jurisdiction.

These dominant individuals among both the hunter-gatherers and pastoralists (Appendix - 4) began their careers as police, military and revenue officials, and held sway over the settlements under their control as poligars, and finally became local potentates

with the decline of the Vijayanagara power (16th century AD). The British had to wage wars with these poligars to subdue them, and the exploits of these are preserved in folk narratives.

As against this broad ethnohistoric framework, let us consider the twilight zone of post-Vijayanagara state formation in one such a continuum from late medieval to early modern decades in the political evolution of Bellary. It is now widely conceded that strong local associations such as the natter peasant assembly flourished in the wet zone of the Tamil country until the mid-Vijayanagara period. Elsewhere in south India, the situation was strikingly different. In the dryer expanses of Tamil Nadu, and in most of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, where the bulk of the terrain is upland plateau, political authority was exercised by individuals who occupied an intermediary position between the king at the top of the hierarchy and the villagers at the bottom (Talbot 1994 : 261). Were such men bureaucratic agents of a centralised administration, the vassal lords in a feudal structure or chiefs who represented communal groups such as tribes and castes (Heitzman 1987: 35-61; Kulke 1982 : 237-54; Subrahmanyam 1986 : 357-77). Because of disagreements over the nature of the state structure, we lack even a common terminology to use in referring to these intermediaries.

A better grasp of intermediary political figures is clearly essential in order to advance our understanding of medieval state systems. Without more detailed information on the social backgrounds of these individuals, it will not be possible to refine current classifications of political systems.

In the case of Bellary it is evident from the above discussions that these political intermediaries belonged to the traditional ethnics who inhabited this region - the pastoral Kurubas or the hunter-gatherer Boya/Bedar stocks. And we also studied how the conditions of external stimuli, the geopolitical and ecological factors, were responsible for their rise in the authority structure. But what is interesting to note here is the way this intermediary ruling class defied the royal authority after the disintegration of Vijayanagara (Venkataratnam 1972 : 1). What are the conditions that possibly allowed the change of polity at the helm, and which kind of socio-cultural transformation that may have been taking place within the system?

Evidently, the Golconda kings who followed were not able to establish a political ascendancy in any way comparable to that of Vijayanagara dynasty. It hence led to the virtual disintegration of royal authority. It should be remembered here that the city of Vijayanagara was sacked at the hands of the allied forces of Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Golconda and Bidar in the battle of Talikota (or Rakkasitangadi) in the year AD 1565, during Aliya Rama Raya's reign (1542-1565). It was a catastrophe which changed the entire course of history. This empire lasted, however, for another century under the Aravidu dynasty, the fourth and its last dynasty, but its foundations had been deeply shaken, and it could not rise to the former zenith of glory (Venkataratnam 1972 : 1-6). The Muslim dominion which followed was weak, and the unstable political conditions consequent to the decline of Vijayanagara kingship facilitated the rise of numerous sub-regional strongholds held by these poligars, each one in his own right, forming a core of partrimonial regimes in the Vijayanagara heartland. This includes the present day Rayalaseema comprising the districts of Anantapur, Kurnool and Cuddapah besides Bellary. The prototypes of these little kingdoms may be found in the enterprising Nayaka kingdoms of Senji, Madurai and Tanjavur, as well as Kallar/Maravar politics of Pudukkottai and Ramnad in the interior Tamil region. This clearly shows a gradual shift in the relations of power from one of subordination to semi-independent status in the intermediary zone of authority. As indicated earlier, the poligars were the supralocal intermediaries predominantly drawn from the traditional hunter-gatherer and peasant warrior communities, who were subordinate to their overlords during the Vijayanagara period. In other words, these poligars, to start with, were the holders of army camps and collectors of revenue which they passed on to their overlords. They were the intermediaries between the villages under their control and the state, and acted as "boundary role players". But in the Post Vijayanagara phase, the situation was peculiarly different. These numerous poligars had begun to emerge as powerful potentates from the sixteenth century onwards, consolidating their local dominance out of the fluid circumstances arising from the decline of Vijayanagara suzerainty. However, such of these subregional strongholds so evolved were not altogether independent either. In most circumstances, they appear to have maintained their strongholds by contributing a regular peshcush or tribute to the new stream of Bahmani rulers, apart from the Mysorean warlords, Hyder Ali and his son, Tipu

for their rise in the authority structure. But what is interesting to note *first* is the way this intermediary ruling class defied the royal authority after the disintegration of Vijayanagara (Venkataratnam 1972 : 1). What are the conditions that possibly allowed the change of polity at the helm, and which kind of socio-cultural transformation *thoti* may have been taking place within the system?

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lords in strict sense. They did not buy or sell land, nor did they dispose of it by gift. It was an inam resumable at will. Moreover, knowledge of the private ~~anded~~ property in the 'Ceded Districts' seems to have been always little known except as inam from the sovereign. It is evident from the form and tenor of all grants of lands in the Ceded Districts that there never existed a landlord, the kings being the real owners of land. All grants of whatever kind were resumable at pleasure, and as all persons holding them were every moment liable to be deprived of their estates, there was no real landlord but the king (Dua 1972 : 469-471).

His rents were collected immediately from the cultivators by the *Patels* or headmen of each village, by whom they were paid to the *Tchsildars* or Collectors of Districts. Moreover, they did not regard the cultivators as their serfs. The primary duty of a *jagirdar* was to render military service to the sovereign, while the *poligar* paid rent for the estate he possessed. The concentration of these two important duties, together with the right arising therefrom, accounted for the vast influence of the *poligars*. There are numerous inscriptions to tell us that (certain powerful lineages of) the forest dwellers were burcacratised each village had a complement of watchmen for the protection of persons and property, and policing the village seems to have been an ancient institution (Mahalingam 1967 : 246). These watchmen were remunerated for their services by the assignment of land and the proceeds of a special cess called *padikaval kuli*. During the Vijayanagara rule (ca 1600 - 1700), a person enjoyed *padikaval* rights over a *nadu* (a large administrative division) and he engaged a complement of watchmen called *talaiyaris* whom he paid in kind and cash, besides granting land free of rent, and held them responsible for the safety and property within their jurisdiction. The appellation *taliari* which is in vogue with some Chenchu headmen to this day, who performed police duties (reporting crime, catching robbers and punishing murderers) during the British period, indicates the survival of this official rank held by some hunter-gatherer groups from the historic period. From such families of Chenchu *taliaris* who gained both social ranking and economic power apparently emerged powerful Chenchu chieftains about whom the Chenchu oral traditions and the late medieval literature, speaks (the latter mentions *chenchu redu*; *redu-king*)(Murty 1992 : 332). These Chenchu *taliaris* are particularly fanned in the contiguous portions of Bellary

It is a matter of surprise as to how, a few months after his arrival, Munro was able to collect so much detailed information. A report of Thomas Munro, written in 1802, contains the history of eighty poligars as might be noticed a little later. Out of these eighty, the account of forty nine poligars belongs to the Cuddapah district, while the remaining 31 to the districts of Bellary and Kurnool (Gribble 1875 : 133). Though these were usually nominally subject to the Adil Shah of Bijapur for about a century, each of them assumed almost independent or semi-independent powers over their respective territories by strengthening their local base. And it is observed that locally, their power was absolute and they used it mercilessly, so that the common people were everywhere ground into dust (IGI Vol.111, 1907). It should be remembered here that simultaneous with the emergence of regional powers, the Shiaite Muslims established (AD 1347) the Bahmani empire at Gulbarga, which soon broke into five independent kingdoms-Bijapur, Bidar, Berar, Ahmadnagar and Golconda (Serwarni 1973). These five kingdoms by exploiting the mutual rivalries among the native powers, extended their sway upto Raichur in the Krishna valley. By the 15th century A.D the Rayas of Vijayanagara succeeded to emerge as a strong political force and act as a bulwork of Muslim power in the south. However, the Muslim kings of the Deccan, who had combined against Vijayanagara, fell out among themselves because of their mutual jealousies and did not follow up their victory to conquer the south. In 1568, the king of Bijapur took Adoni, from a dependent of Vijayanagara who had established himself there, but for the most part Bellary region fell by degrees into the hands of a number of local potentates.

Matters continued thus until the Marathas appeared upon the scene. In 1677 Sivaji, the Maratha chief, took most of the possessions held by Bijapur in the Carnatic and in the next year visited Bellary region. He besieged the fort of Bellary and took it. Shortly, afterwards one of his generals reduced to submission a number of poligars in the neighbourhood who had for sometime refused to pay tribute to Bijapur. In 1680, this tract was formally ceded to him by the sultan of Bijapur, and all the poligars paid him the usual tribute called the *chant*. In 1687, emperor Aurangzeb of Delhi advanced to reduce Bijapur and Golconda to submission and he recovered the region and added it to the Mughal subah of Bijapur. The poligars, however, remained in the old position of semi-independence (Francis 1916 : 133-138).

In 1723 Asaf Jah, the emperor's governor at Hyderabad, though nominally subject to Delhi, made himself independent. But his power over Bellary, which had never been absolute, remained only partial, for though he claimed sovereign rights over the region, the Marathas continued to collect tribute from its poligars. About 1713, Siddoji Ghorpade, a Maratha general, had seized the valley of Sandur by force from one of these chiefs (Ghorpade 1992: 1-10).

Meanwhile the kingdom of Mysore had been rising into prominence and in 1761, the famous Hyder Ali usurped its throne, and thereupon began to encroach upon the possessions of his neighbours. After several conquests in Mysore, he moved through Bellary and received the submission of the poligars, chief among whom were those of Rayadurg and Harapanahalli. In 1768, he again marched through the region to recruit his finances. The poligar of Bellary (who was a dependent of Basalat Jung, brother of Subedar of the Deccan and Jagirdar of Adoni) refused to make him any contribution and Hyder accordingly attempted to take his fort. But he was beaten off with a great loss. In 1775, however, this poligar refused to pay tribute to Basalat Jung and was besieged by him and his French general Lally. He thereupon sent to Hyder, for help. Hyder arrived by forced marches, fell upon the besieging army and routed it, and then turned upon the poligar and demanded the instant surrender of the fort. The poligar was helpless and yielded. Hyder extracted a lakh of pagodas from Basalat Jung, and all the poligars of the region, including those of Rayadurga and Harapanahalli were forced to acknowledge his supremacy and to pay a contribution towards the cost of the campaign.

In 1780 Hyder's son Tipu attacked Adoni and at length captured it and destroyed its fortifications. The same year he returned to Mysore by a route lying about midway between Rayadurga and Harapanahalli, and while professing friendship between poligars of these two places treacherously sent out two brigades to capture their forts and at the same moment seized upon the poligars themselves, who were in his camp. They were cast into prison and their towns were looted. These two poligars had always been among the staunchest supporters of Tipu and his father and the manner in which he thus requested them is among the most indefensible of all his actions (Kelsall 1872:144-148).

In 1790 Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General of India, entered into an alliance with the Marathas and the Nizam to reduce Tipu to order, and it was agreed that whatever territories should be acquired by them from Tipu should be equally divided between them. Certain specified poligars, among whom were the chiefs of Bellary, Rayadurga and Harpanahalli, were however to be left in possession of their segments. Tipu was reduced to submission in 1792 and by the treaty of that year he ceded half of his territories to the allies. Sandur was allotted to the Marathas and a part of the Bellary region to the Nizam. The poligars still, however, as before retained their virtual authority over their territories, the Nizam's administrative machinery being unable to control them.

In 1799 war was again declared against Mysore by the three allies, Srirangapatnam was captured and, Tipu was killed. In the partition treaty of that year the Marathas were allotted, among other tracts, Harpanahalli and the Six taluks attached to it, while the rest of the region went to the Nizam. But owing to some differences, the Peshwa refused to accept the share given to him, and in accordance with one of the articles of the treaty, it was divided between the Nizam and the English. The Nizam received Harapanahalli (Kelsall 1872 : 158-174).

In 1800 the Nizam agreed to cede to the English all the territories acquired by him by these two treaties of 1792 and 1799 in return for a subsidiary force to be stationed in his dominions. Some of these were north of the Tungabhadra, and they were exchanged for the taluk of Adoni in order that the river might be the boundary between the two territories. Bellary thus passed to the British. The districts which were handed over by this treaty (Bellary, Anantapur, Cuddapah and part of Kurnool) are still known as the "Ceded Districts". The following discussion deals in detail with each of the poligari strongholds located in the Bellary region.

So as to make it a viable unit of study it should be, however, mentioned here that the Bellary region as conceived in the present thesis is a much larger entity than what it appears as the present day Bellary district. Therefore, the cluster of poligari conglomerates located in the Bellary region are essentially those mentioned in the Old Bellary Records, being Thomas Munro's early reports. Contemporary inscriptions and later accounts collected by the British administrators, including Colin Mackenzie, in the core of the old

Vijayanagara kingdom provide valuable evidence on the political authority of chiefs, most of whom were called poligars¹ by the British. The heyday of these chiefs was the second half of the sixteenth century, but most seem to have come into existence during the early sixteenth century as a result of Krishnadevaraya's policies for diminishing older chieftain families, and to ritually incorporate them into the power structure (Stein 1989).

Thomas Munro, the famous first Collector of the region, regarded these chiefs as the major centres of resistance to British rule, and he justified their removal on the grounds of their historical political authority. In Munro's time, 2,000 villages were held by eighty poligari families of different statutes. This was not a small region, nor were its resources meagre. The heartland extended over 30,000 square miles, from the Kannada speaking modern Bellary district to the Telugu speaking districts of Kurnool and Cuddapah. This was approximately the same territory administered by Thomas Munro between 1800 and 1808 as Collector of the 'Ceded Districts' of the Madras Presidency. The population of the sixteenth century may not have been very different from that two centuries later, that is about two million in this region. The highest and perhaps the oldest of such local magnates are found in modern Bellary district. The following discussions briefly narrates the numerous poligars located in the Bellary region until they were finally subdued by Thomas Munro during the initial years of his tenure. It also gives a detailed account of the underlying principles of the poligars' politics in relation to the various overlords of the interregnum.

Tirumala Raja of Anegondi

According to Thomas Munro's memorandum of poligars submitted to the Board of Revenue in the year 1802, one was the chief of Anegondi, (of the present Chitradurga district) calling himself Tirumala Raja. Claiming descent from a Vijayanagara ruling family, this chief held 114 villages in 1800. After the conquest of Vijayanagara by the Muslim rulers of the Deccan, the nominal Rajas were allowed to retain Anegondi and some other tracts amounting to the kamil rent of cantary pagodas 1,78,725-9-51. They held this territory in jagir, free of all rent, for several generations. The time when peshcush was first imposed is not ascertained. It appears, however, to have been previous to 1794; for the Maratha chiefs, arriving in that year with an army at Vijayanagara to pay their devotions at Hampi, the Rajah instead of waiting upon them, absconded - for which reason they deprived him of some small territories and still made him pay, it is said, his old peshcush of cantary pagodas 7,000. In 1775, Hyder Ali raised the peshcush to 12,000 pagodas and also stipulated that the Rajah should serve when called upon

with 1,000 soldiers and 100 cavalry at his own **expense except** batta or allowance which was to be paid by the central power. In 1786, Tipu Sultan entered Anegondi, expelled **the** Raja, burned his palace with all his records and annexed the district to the sovereign lands. The Raja, on the commencement of the confederate war in 1790 against Tipu Sultan, again seized the district, but was driven out in 1792 by Kamaluddin Khan. He made himself master over it again in 1799 and did not submit till he was compelled by the approach of the army. The Diwan of Mysore took the management of the country from him and gave him a monthly allowance of Rs. 2,000 which was reduced to 1,500 rupees when Anegondi was given over to the Nizam of Hyderabad. This poligar appears to have been a man of very mean capacity little removed from idiotism, his son was so ill-treated by him, that thinking his life is in danger he fled for refuge to one of the Maratha chiefs by whom he was supported (Munro Reports 1802).

The Poligars of Harpanahalli:

Harpanahalli was the seat of one of the most powerful of the old Poligars of the district and has a long history. The first of its chiefs was a Beda named Dadayya who belonged to Khananahalli, now a hamlet of Madlagiri, seven miles north-west of Harpanahalli. After the overthrow of the Vijayanagar dynasty at the battle of Talikota in 1565, Dadayya collected some followers and made himself a master of Bagali and Nilagunda and the country attached to them. He seemed to have had matrimonial relations with Jakkanna Nayak, the Poligar of Chitradurga and thus established his suzerainty over the region, even gaining certain portion of the Chitradurga country, the prominent of which being the hill fort of Uchchangidurgam.

About this time he founded Harpanahalli and called it after Siva (the name is properly Harpanahalli or Siva's town) who had helped him to prosperity.

He cannot be said to have been an independent ruler, as, in common with most of the petty chiefs who came into being all the time, he was forced to submit to the sultan of Bijapur, pay him tribute, and render him military service. On the decline of the power of Bijapur, Dadappa's successors extended their possessions until these included the whole of the country afterwards comprised under the name of Harpanahalli.

This consisted of 460 villages, which brought in a revenue of over Rs. 8 lakhs. In 1680, on the confirmation of the Maratha conquests in the south by Bijapur, the then Poligar acknowledged the Maratha supremacy and paid the customary tribute.

Somasekhara Nayak (1742-1766) was the most prominent of all the Poligars of Harpanahalli. Unlike his predecessors and the founder of the family, **Dadayya**, he turned hostile to the **Chitradurga Poligar**. In 1748, with the Poligar of Rayadurg, he joined the forces of the Poligar of Bednur in an attack against **Chitradurg**. At the battle of Mayakonda (in the present **Chitradurg** district) he engaged in single combat with the **Chitradurg** Poligar and slew him (Rice's *Mysore* ii, 503). **Hyder Ali** marched against him in 1762, and the Poligar seems to have submitted to **Hyder's** authority and even to have been much of service to him later. His name is still remembered throughout the western taluks and during his time Harpanahalli reached the height of its prosperity. **Munro** states that he is said to have paid a **peshcush** of 12,000 paggdas to the **Nizam**, 6000 pagadas to **Morai Rao** of Gooty and some two or three lakhs of Rupees to the **Pesha**. He ruled for about 24 years until 1766 when he died without issue. He was succeeded by a collateral named **Basappa Nayak**, who was converted to the Lingayat faith later.

In 1755, after taking the fort at Bellary, **Haider** marched against Harpanahalli for the second time, compelled the Poligar to acknowledge his authority and exacted from him a tribute of over two lakhs of rupees. In 1787 **Tipu** treacherously seized **Basappa Nayak**. This went on crushing of a chief who had always been loyal to his house was an act which even **Tipu's** most active apologists could never adequately justify.

Somasekhara Nayak II was the last of the Harpanahalli Poligars. In 1792, at the close of the Second Mysore war, Harpanahalli came under the Maratha suzerainty.

On the fall of Srirangapatnam and the death of **Tipu** in 1799, General **Harris**, the Commander-in-Chief marched towards this part of the country, which had not yet acknowledged the British supremacy. The **Divan**, who was the real master of the country (**Somasekhara** being only sixteen years of age) made overtures to him and went with **Somasekhara** to his camp at **Harihar**, where an agreement was conducted by which a Jagir of Rs.60,000 in the district of Bellary was granted to the Poligar and his principal servants on condition that they quietly disbanded their troops and resided in Mysore. (**Munro's** letter of March 29th 1806 to Govt).

The old fort still stands in Harpanahalli, though in ruins. It differs from most of the well-known strongholds in the district in being built on the low-ground instead of on a hill and it depended chiefly for its strength on the two tanks which flank the whole of two of its sides. It had a double line of fortifications built on the usual plan with circular stone bastions connected by circular curtains and faced by a ditch and rough glacis. A few families still live within it, and in

two temples inside it-one dedicated to Hanuman and the other a Jain shrine, where worship is still carried on.

He descended from a distant female branch of the family and was adopted by his predecessor who has no children. He also had left no issue and though some pretenders had appeared, there was in fact no heir in existence. His widow who was forced to abscond under the Mysore power had since returned. She had an adopted son, but as he is no relation of the ancient line, he can have no claim to inherit any allowance that may be granted to her during life (Munro Reports 1802).

The Poligars of Jaramali

Another poligari stronghold in the Vijayanagara heartland was that of the jaramali poligar, nine miles in a direct line south-west of kudligi.

Village and hill nine miles in a direct line south-west of Kudligi. The hill is 2,742 feet above the sea and some 800 feet above the surrounding country, and is a most conspicuous landmark for miles around. The fort on the top of it, now in ruins, was formerly the residence of a well known Poligar who owned much of the country around, including Sandur. This was later taken from him by Siddoji Rao Ghorapde in 1728.

The founder of the family was one Pennappa Nayak. For his services in seizing rebellious chiefs he was rewarded by Achuta devaraya of Vijayanagar with a personel jahir, and an estate on the condition of his providing military support whenever needed. After the fall of Vijayanagar, the Bijapur kings resumed much of this country and required the Poiigar to pay a peshcush and to provide military service to continue his chieftainship.

In 1742 the chiefs of Chitradurg and Harpanahalli stripped the Pohgar of all possessions except a few villages around the fort, and ten years later, the formr of them reduced the Poiigar to a position of entire dependency.

Around 1767, the fort came under the direct control of Hyder Ali which was retained by his son Tipu till the peace of Seringapatnam in 1792.

When Jaramali was made over to the Nizam by the Partition treaty of 1799 the poiigar allowed to rent the places around it at their full value. But he fell into arrears with his payments

and when Bellary was ceded to the Company in 1800 he took refuge in Mysore lest he should be apprehended and forced to pay (Munro Reports 1802).

The Poligars of Bellary:

The first of the poligars of Bellary was apparently a Kuruba named Baludn Hanumappa Nayaka. Accounts differ as to his origin but sources prove that he held office under the Vijayanagara kings as a "supra-local intermediary chiefs in control of the estates of the estates of Bellary, Kurugodu and Tekkalkota and even after the collapse of Vijayanagara he continued his regime subject to the Bijapur Sultan, who succeeded the Vijayanagara kings. His superior military strength was reflected in the huge fort he had raised on the Race Hill, (as it is called) in Bellary. He was succeeded by three lineal descendants - Hire Malatappa, Siddappa and Hire Ramappa - who ruled until AD 1631.

Thereafter the Muslims appear to have been the real masters of the place for about sixty years until AD 1692. It was during this time the Maratha Chief Sivaji became master of the fort for a short time.

from then onwards the accounts of the Place are clearer. About 1692, the poligars again obtained authority over the fort and continued till 1724. Again at this time the suzerainty of the place changed hands and came under the Asf Jahis. The last poligar of this place was Doddappa Nayak. He held the Place from 1769-1774 in spite of the opposition from the faction of a rival.

In 1775, however, he refused to pay his tribute to Basalat Jung, declaring that he had transferred his allegiance to Hyder Ali. Basalat Jung sent Bojeraj, his minister and M. Lally, the French Officer who was then in his service to invade Bellary. Doddappa fled to Hyder for help. Hyder was at Seringapatnam and instantly set out. Doddappa fled and Hyder took hold of the territory which he had won (Munro Reports 1802).

The Ghorpades of Sandur:

Sandur has an interesting history. After the destruction of the Vijayanagara the Poligar of Jarmali in Kudligi talook, made himself master of Sandur about 1700, but about 1728, he was turned out by a Maratha named Siddoji Rao of the Ghorpade family. This Ghorpade family claimed to be connected with the well known Bhonsles of Satara, from whom the famous Maratha Chief Sivaji descended. Siddoji Rao was the ancestor of the Rajas of Sandur until

April, 1949, when its administration was transferred to dominion government. For several reasons the Ghorpades of Sandur could be distinguished from that of the poligars of this region as their land revenue administration and soio cultural background was very close to those of the Maratha Chiefs. Moreover they always proved loyal to the British unlike the poligars who became a formidable force until they were totally subdued by Sir Thomas Munro.

The poligars of Kottakonda

Permappa Nair, the ancestor was talari of the village of Gongondalah in Canoul. On the fall of the Vijayanagara Government, he collected 500 men and went to Golconda where he was employed for many years, and afterwards obtained the kaweli of the districts of Adoni, Canoul, Gudwal, Raichur and Moodgul and served with 500 men. The rate of kaweli was one percent on the Sirkar revenue and one crore of grain from each village. One of his descendants, Mudappa Nair, served under Aurangzeb and procured from him a confirmation of the kaweli, and the districts of Kotcondah and Kapitral estimated at kamel cantary pagodas 15,443 for a rent of cantary pagodas 13,325 and the service of 500 men. Asoph Jah continued the districts to the Poligar on the same terms as before. A partition at this time took place between two branches of the family, the one getting Kotcondah and the other Kapitral. In 1770, Bussalet Jung being unable to enforce the paymet of their peshcush called on Hyder, who reduced their forts and delivered them to him. The Polligars escaped but the two brothers Madappa and Permappa of Kotcondah waited on Hyder in 1773 who gave them some enams in Gooty where Mudappa died. Permappa accompanied him to the Carnatic and was appointed one of the killandars of Arct, in which situation he died. His mother who had remained in Adoni obtained in 1777 from Bussalet Jung the Sirkar village of Hulgherah in jageer. It was taken from her in 1788 when Mahabut Jung gave her Kocondah in rent for cantary pagodas 13,000. On her death, the following year, the widows of her two sons Madappa and Permappa rented it till 1796, when it as placed under the Sirkar Amildars and Hulguerah was given to the widows for their maintenance. Its Kamel rent is cantary pagoda 365. Its present rent is country pagodas 536, but I have resumed it and the widows now receive a pension from the rent of cantary pagodas 600. They have also enams producing about cantary pagodas 78 more (Munro reports 1802).

The intermediary zone of authority is largely hazy in many medieval states and as such is one of the least understood areas of power. Hence it becomes particularly necessary to assess their role in the authority structure for an explication of the nature of the state. The policy of Krishnadevaraya (1509-29) of checking the nayakas and other

chiefly powers by appointing Brahmin commanders, or/dannaiks (corrupt form of dandanayaka is seen by N. Venkataramanayya as an attempt to impose a structure of authority from above (N.Venkataramanayya 1935:70-171). Stein argues that this new intermediary ruling stratum, namely the poligars, are seen as emerging from below, of course, with a royal initiative corresponding to the regional specificities. The Amuktamalyada, attributed to Krishnadevaraya as a work containing his political maxims does prescribe measures such as recruitment of martial, forest tribes in the army and royal promotion of commerce and control of forts. However, Stein is over-anxious to show that at the height of Vijayanagara centralism, i.e., in the sixteenth century, these chiefs were independent; prebendalism being of a weak form in Karnataka and the Tamil region. The 'fundamental political and economic divisions of peninsular polity' according to Stein were the cause of the Raya's failure in his attempts at centralisation. The reversal of Krishnadeva Raya's policy by Rama Raya, who appointed close kinsmen as commanders, in the latter part of the sixteenth century is hence seen as a return to kin-based distribution of power and resources and the emergence of patrimonialism-a family business on a large scale-which ultimately led to the decline of the imperial power (Champakalakshmi 1992 : 153). The term 'patrimonial' refers to those rights which are ownable and heritable, and prebendal to rescindable or delegated rights (Frank Perlin 1985 : 415- 480).

Even in the case of lordships and chiefships there is no single homogenous category. Different levels of chiefs did exist as implied by the terms used for these chiefs - such as *nayakas*, *palaiyakkarars* and *kavaligars* - feature which did not emerge suddenly under Vijayanagara, but had its prototypes earlier, except for the *amaranayakas* and *poligars*. The *Padikaval* (rights of lordship in return for protection in a certain area) rights in the Ramnad and Pudukkottai region create yet another level of chiefs from among the localities (Champakalakshmi 1992 : 154).

Apart from chiefships of the nayaka type, the sectarian leaders *mathadhipatis* and *pithadhipatis* - who developed impressive administrative infrastructures in temple and *matha* organisation which institution is in addition supported by landed inams, played intermediary activities in the relations between the kings and major temples as in the case of Ujjini in the Kudligi taluk of Bellary. It should be seen here that the Post-Vijayanagara phase had witnessed a tremendous impact of non-Brahman sectarian

cults of the medieval Bhakti movement, and sectarian organisations like the *mathas* whose heads enjoyed paraphernalia similar to royalty and the quality of administration available even to moderate chiefs. These, in fact, are better understood not as a replica of the imperial or central organisation, and represent diverse structure of authority. Particularly, in Bellary, Virasaivism started in 12th century AD by Basaveswara in South Kanara district, who is described as an axe to the root of the caste system (R.N. Nandi 1975 : 32) left its indelible marks during sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The followers of this faith are known as the Lingayats. Members of the Lingayat sect are ubiquitous and powerful; and they have their own spiritual gurus, called the *jangamas*. Their temples, in striking contrast to most of the other Hindu shrines, are well kept; they are, as a body, wealthy and enterprising; and though there is no open antagonism between them and the Brahmans, and they follow gurus of their own (Francis 1916 : 158-167).

The two chief Lingayat sacred books are the *Basavapurana* (apparently finished during the 14th century), and the *Channa Basava Parana* (written in the 16th century) which describe the lives and doings of Saint *Basaveswara*. Their creed also aimed at breaking down all the restrictions which Brahminism had set up. Caste distinctions were to be swept away; according to them Siva was the one true god; the wearing of his emblem the *lingam* (hence the name Lingayat) rendered all men equal; men were holy, not by birth alone, but in proportion as they were worthy followers of the faith; sacrifices, penances, pilgrimages and fasts were unnecessary; women were equal to men and were to be treated accordingly. The faith purported to be the primitive Hindu faith cleared of later excrescences and the Lingayats claimed to be the puritans of the Hindus. Unlike the Brahmanical castes, the Lingayats buried their dead, practised widow remarriage, and did not observe any rules regarding ceremonial pollution. The main followers of Basaveswara were the Banajiga and other trading groups, tanners, tailors, weavers and untouchables. R.N. Nandi gives a fairly comprehensive idea of the social base of the Lingayat movement. Although Virasaiva movement began as a protest against orthodox Brahmanism, it soon began to develop social exclusiveness based on the privilege of birth and cleanliness of occupation, much along the lines of Brahmanical orthodoxy. In fact, even the concept of physical pollution was revived. Thus the untouchables among the Lingayats could neither invest themselves with the sacred *lingam* nor perform the eight

sacraments (Ramaswamy 1985: 42-443). The government also gave up notions of caste negation and reverted to efforts at caste exaltation. However, many poligars also seem to have come under the impact of this faith, as for instance, Dadappa Nayaka, the Boya poligar of Harapanahalli. It has been argued by Arjun Appadorai that the extension of patronage to popular sectarian leaders and the leading artisan groups was a part of the strategy adopted by the Vijayanagara kings to strengthen their rule at the grassroots level (Appadurai 1977 : 47-73). Burton Stein in his '*Social Mobility and Medieval South Indian Sects*' further goes on to say that the sectarian leaders acted as a vital link between the Vijayanagara and the local elements (Stein 1967). The same phenomenon is evidently true of the Post-Vijayanagara phase too, when several of these religious setups had continued to act, as major centres of power to qualify an assumption that the late medieval state was essentially multicentred, characterised by divergent elements of power based on patrimonial legacy and prebendal rights and properties. Through patrimonial legacy the peasant warrior families, often referred to as the Sat-Sudra in the epigraphs, amassed considerable properties and control over the local resources (Stein 1985:50). They actively participated in the state expansion strategies and acquired the newly found villages through the prebendal rights bestowed on them by the kings for which they lent their allegiance. The kings, for the sustenance of their settlement frontiers, relied on the holders of the patrimonial rights. The mutual alliances and the internicine conflicts, the prime features of the medieval polity, caused no political power to sustain constant boundaries for more than a century (Murty 1993 : 6-7).

As mentioned elsewhere, land control and water resource management have become the prerogative (from ca. 500 AD onwards) of the medieval state in this region. Taluva kings of the first half of the sixteenth century drew upon a large agricultural zone in the midst of whose dominantly dry cropped fields were small regions of high agriculture based on tank irrigation. In this region there are zones of best cotton soils in the peninsula, and as well as some of the largest pasturages that supported the herding of both cattle and sheep. Thus, cotton and woollen goods were exported in large numbers from the region as well as bullocks. Scattered over this dry upland tract of the kingdom there are many pockets of high cultivation and population based on the development of tank irrigation by chiefs such as Saluva Narasimha. He not only increased irrigation in the Chandragiri area, his base,

but also encouraged temple authorities at the nearby temples of Tirupati and Kalahasti to invest money endowments to improve tanks and irrigation canals in hundreds of nearby temple villages. This practice was imitated by other magnates, among the most important of whom were the eighty or so within the Vijayanagara heartland itself during the Post-Vijayanagara phase. This, in turn, gave fillip to trade and market economy. Added to this, were the jagirdari and amildari revenue systems introduced by the newly incumbent Muslim rulers, which also accelerated this process. These should be seen here as being parallel to the poligari system in the arena of local dominance.

As already mentioned, the religious institutions, likewise, played a predominant role in the statecraft and land control. Religious institutions such as the *pithas* and *Mathas* of Saivite, Vaishnavite, and Smartha systems, promoted devotionism or Bhakti cults (R.N.Nandi 1973). The cult centres, through their sectarian ideologies, integrated various tribes and castes, and being as they were strategically set up in the dense forests atop the hills, and closely to the passes of Eastern Ghats, they also aided in the maintenance of trade routes and frontiers (Murty 1993:8).

Growth of sectarianism, and incorporation of several tribes and castes, resulted in caste proliferation, leading to caste complexity in social formation. The Brahmans, well versed in the Vedic literature, were replaced by the Agamic scholars at various religious centres. This shift was crucial in the sense that the lands which were hitherto made to the Brahmans as *agharas* and *brahmapuris* became fewer, and their place was taken by the Pithas and Mathas. In this new mechanism of surplus appropriation, *mathadhipatis* and *pithadhipatis* became willing collectorates and sustainers of kingly authority (Murty 1993 : 9).

This situation appears to have continued into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, during which the central authority was not all too powerful with a constant shift from one dynasty to another at the apex. And when the royal authority weakened, especially at the time of change of the dynastic rule, the dominant lineages of the peasant warrior groups annexed their prebendal rights to their patrimonial legacies and defied the royal authority. The multi-centred power structure was controlled by the state by adopting two strategies: (a) land reclamation and founding of new villages

and (b) royalisation of cult centres. The multi-centred power structure, comprised the peasant - warrior communities, the non-Brahmanical sectarian leaders, heads of the mercantile guilds, and the indigenous forest peoples.

Further more, Bellary represents a typical picture of physically dry, yet politically fertile landscape. Warfare tested and fortified the military capabilities of the numerous military chiefs of the south. It is the same use with the poligari institution. Fighters seized or were granted income from villages as a means of maintaining the petty armed forces used in the wars of greater lords. Otherwise, local cultivating and trading groups seeking some protection from the violence of the times paid for the protection of the poligars in many places, including the far south, as implied by the term *padikaval* used in Ramnad and pudukkottai, almost reminiscent of the modern day hooligans. No chieftains could remain aloof from nearby warfare, which was bound to lead to a reshuffling of local power that left the strong stronger and pushed the weaker into yet greater vulnerability and submission. Scattered contests for local dominance changed balances between local lordships and the communal bases of their rule on the one hand and between these local lords and the kings of Vijayanagara or their successors on the other. This also suggests that the patrimonial legacies of the poligars had been clubbed to their prebended rights (for extending military and political services); a feature truly typical of the precolonial south.

It is held by some historians that the policy of land reclamation and founding of new villages resulted in the displacement of tribal organised pastoral and hunting peoples by the caste organised village-based agrarian societies (Stein, 1979 :185). The situation seems to be of a different nature in the region under discussion. The newly founded villages both along the foothills and the hilly forested zones acted as centres of articulation of the forested zones with the states, and in making the forest peoples the subjects of the royal power. They were linked to the cult centres, either of Saivism, or Vaisnavism, and this process can be termed as royalisation of cult centres.

Thus, with the colonisation of the forested and pastoral landscapes by the state, the forest peoples (hunter-gatherers like the Chenchu, Boya, Yerukula) and the pastoralists (Golla/Kuruba) became important in the political, economic and social

milieu on the one hand, and in the organisation of settlement frontiers on the other. This created new relations of power, giving rise to institutions such as Kavaligars and Poligars (Reddy, 1986). Kaifiats attest to the fact that Kavaligars were appointed to safeguard the villages, pilgrims, and trade routes in the hilly and forested country.

The term '*kavel*' is derived from Tamil, which is an equivalent of *kaveli* in Telugu. It simply means 'guard' or 'watch'. The term '*gar*' is a Tamil word, an equivalent of *gadu* in Telugu. It means 'person' or 'man'. Therefore, *Kavalgar* (Tamil) or *Kavaligadu* (Telugu) means 'watchman' or simply 'guard' (McLean 1885). The kavaligar system or the native police institution, which was in vogue during the late medieval and post-Vijayanagara periods, was prevalent not only in the Ceded Districts but also in the Tamil soils, wherever the Vijayanagara rule was extended. The offices of great and petty Kavaligars were frequently blended in the same person and therefore there was very little of subordination of rank among the Kavaligars of Rayas of Vijayanagara, it can be surmised that the appointment of Kavalgars was usually granted as a reward for distinguished services. However, no distinction was made between head and petty Kavaligars with respect to office, but there was differentiations with regard to emoluments, between the two. In one of the sunnads the following account is given: petty kavaligar having saved the life of Aliya Ramaraya, was made muni or head kavaligar of a number of districts yielding a revenue of pagodas 17,900. Another sunnad mentioned that a person by name Yerram Naidu on account of same service which he had performed, obtained the *Kavalimerah* of several districts. It is evident from both that the appointments were newly made as a gesture of reward (CDR Vol.651 P.240). The Kaval right of Timma Naidu is granted in perpetuity yet, after twenty eight years a great part of his district was given away to Yerram Naidu. The families of both Kavaligars were totally unconnected with each other, and the descendants of both continue to this day a small portion of their ancient inams. It is therefore, clear from the above sunnads that the office of Kavaligar never was extensively established but was occasionally abolished in one place and created in another according to the need. However, it became permanent only when the weakness of the state enabled the Kavaligar to maintain himself by force of arms (Munro's Report 12th August 1801 : Vol.62 - PP.36-44)

A Boya by name Gujjula Paramappa Naidu, was appointed as a Kavaligar of Adoni, Gutti, and Kurnool areas. In the same way the villages which were founded along the hills and forested lowland country were organised into patterns; these were given to the forest peoples, pastoralists, and the dominant peasants with hereditary rights. The prominent among those who were holding palemis (as poligars were Boyas, Gollas, Kapus and Reddis. The Boyas to begin with were drawn into the temple services as cattle keepers and some dominant lineages from among them (as for instance, Komppula and Ayya) rose to the position of feudal lords as *mahamandaleswaras*. The poligars of Golla origin legitimised themselves as yadavas, like those of Kunkanur, Dundikonda and Maddikera (Kunkanur Kaifiyat MMS : Vol.123, No.928; Dundikonda Kaifiyat, MMS, Vol. 14, No. 149; Maddikera Kaifiyat MMS : Vol.16, NO. 855). These poligars began to emerge as powerful potentates from the 16th century AD onwards (with the decline of the Vijayanagara power. The British found, especially the Boya poligars, to be a formidable force, and Thomas Munro (1802) in his letter to the Board of Revenue speaks of their bravery and turbulent nature.

As regards the agrarian political economy of the pre-colonial Bellary, land being the major source of revenue and income to the state, the ancient and medieval states attached a good deal of importance to the countryside. To sustain in power, the rulers relied heavily on the agrarian society for resource mobilisation. The relationship between the State and the cultivators was as important as the relationship within the society to understand the agrarian relations. The traditions and notions regarding land tenures of rural society influence the principle of assessment and the nature of administrative machinery to be set up to collect revenues by the central power. In other words the rights of land, the principle of assessment and the administrative machinery to collect land revenue were the three important aspects governing the relationship between the state and the agrarian society (P.T. George 1970 : 1).

Of the three aspects, the "rights of land" or the question of proprietor of the soil was fundamental and remained most complicated throughout the pre-British period. The British administrators further complicated the problem by imposing their ideas of "private property in land" which became the root cause for the origin of the three major forms of land tenurial system (ie., Zamindari, ryotwari and *mahalwari*) in the British

period. In the pre-British period, broadly speaking, there were two notions regarding the proprietorship of the land. The first one was that the village community was the **owner** of the soil wherein communal ownership was the basic **principle** in holding land; and the other, that the state or the sovereign was the owner of the soil, in which the principle of alienation or the right to resume was given emphasis to substantiate the king's position as the proprietor of the soil. Both the notions were popularised by the administrators of the Company rule. In fact, the reports of the Company administration made scholars like Marx and Engels believe strongly in the existence of the kind of communal ownership of land in the form of village community that prevailed in Asiatic Societies. Munro also seems to take into his consideration that kind of structural relationship downwards from the constituent village assemblies; and the various overlords from above while dealing with the problem of poligars.

The nature and the condition of village economies in India in pre-colonial general and the Ceded Districts in particular made the British administrators as well as the Western scholars to depict the village communities as closed and **self-sufficient** peasant economies. Hence, for a better understanding of the concept of village community as the proprietor of the soil, one has to look into the basic conditions of the villages, in the Bellary region.

The village was the basic unit of the rural society (Appadorai Vol. I, 1936 : 71). The village was an aggregate of cultivated holdings with or without some waste land, belonging to, or attached to it. And usually it had a central site for the dwelling houses congregated together (Baden-Powell 1978: 66). In the fifth Report, the following description of a village is found : "a village, geographically considered, is a tract of country comprising some hundred or thousand acres of arable and waste land (Fifth Report, Vol. II, P.167). Politically viewed, it resembled a corporation or a township having within itself municipal officers and corporate artificers (Sarada Raju 1941; Mark Wilks 1810). The size of the village varied according to ecological and demographical factors (Fifth Report Vol II PP. 167,728). It has been already pointed out that two kinds of cultures appear to have co-existed in the Bellary region i.e., 'tribal' and 'peasant village' cultures. The tribal culture gave rise to **semi-nomadic** and primitive agricultural villages where people lived in fixed abodes only for a short period of time,

n few months to n few years, based on soil exhaustion, scope of **game** in the forests and availability of forest produce such as vegetables, roots, honey etc. The type of dwellings in these villages was usually made of bamboo shelters; like tiny huts with sloping roofs and looked alike without much distinction in **size** or decoration (Karve 1978 : Spate 1954). The locations of these villages were mostly in forest regions and hilly tracts, thus resulting in the forms of neither the 'nucleated' nor the 'linear' but the 'isolated' villages.

The plains gave rise to settled-peasant villages where the people lived for generations, even for centuries (Fifth Report Vol. II, P.728). The shapes of dwellings in the villages were in the linear cluster, with horizontal roofs (Spate 1954 : 254). It is pointed out that, flat roofed store houses were constructed in the Bellary region, using the locally available rocks and slabs, so as to protect the dwellers from the severe heat of the sun (Subrahmanyam 1938:168-75). Many houses had flat mud-roofs supported by beams. The size and location of the houses to a great extent are based on the occupational, social and economic positions of the people (Mahalingam 1951: 3). The **landlords/ rich** peasants, the dominant of whom belonged to Kapu or Reddy caste in the Ceded Districts lived in the heart of the village with big and well built stone houses. Their house roofs were always covered either with stones or slabs. This type of construction required hired and skilled labourers and masons, apart from the material for the house construction, which was also expensive. Therefore only the rich could afford them. They were very spacious, with provision for cattle-sheds within the houses. The **other** ryots lived in houses of average size which were flat mud-roofed. In the village each caste lived together as a cluster. The houses of the village artisans were easily distinguished, because their dwelling and work-spots were one and the same. For example the smiths of the black smiths (Kammara) were in their houses. The shepherds (**Gollas**) kept their sheep in their houses. A bit away from the higher caste quarters, two clusters of houses, known as the *malapalli* and the *madigapeta* respectively, were a general feature of the villages. These were the dwellings of the untouchables, equivalent to Pariahs of Tamil Nadu, who performed menial labour for the villages. Their huts were usually with slopy thatched roofs, obviously reflecting their low standard of life (Spate 1954 : 179).

In the Bellary region, the pattern of settled-peasant villages was the 'nucleated villages', where the houses were clearly marked out from the surrounding cultivated fields. Irawati Karve points out that in the Maharashtra village, unlike the Ceded Districts' village, though the habitation area was well marked, the boundaries of the village together with its fields were never perceived. The fields owned by one village merged into those owned by another except where a hillock or a stream or a highway formed the boundary (Karve 1978 : 186). The nucleated villages numbering three or four to six or seven were generally situated within the radius of fifteen to twenty kilometres having an average of two kilometres distance between the two villages in Ceded Districts. Though the village was a nucleated cluster in form, each was clearly demarcated along with their cultivable, non-cultivable and cultivable-waste fields. The boundaries of the villages were demarcated by the erection of stone slabs. Most of them contained carved female figurines, supposed to be *pidari* or *ellai-amma*, the boundary deity of the village. The tradition was that the village deity protected the villagers by preventing the evil-doers, enemies, diseases and other such trouble making elements entering the village. They even performed puja or worship to the deity on periodically selected days (Mahalingam 1951 : 3; Appadorai 1936 : 79). Apart from the village boundary deity-stone slabs, various indicators were used to convey the boundaries of the village. Appadorai in his work mentioned at least eleven types of boundary indicators (Appadorai 1936 : 94-95). The traditional boundaries were generally respected and followed by the villages for avoiding of grabbing of waste land of one village by the neighbouring village since the waste land was always, as a rule, placed on the frontiers of the village. Munro observed this fact in his tours. His waste was not just fallow land which meant to recultivate, but *anadibanjar* (PBR, 24 Aug. 1807). The reason for this was that in the medieval period land was abundant. To quote Irfan Habib, "the readiness with which the authorities recognised the peasants' rights of occupancy and the anxiety they showed to prevent him from leaving the land were both natural in an age where land was abundant and peasants scarce (Habib 1963 : 23). The population increase, of course, was a feature of the medieval period which was indicated by the policy of land reclamation for the sake of bringing new lands under the plough through the means of deforestation and also by the extension of cultivation over the less fertile lands. There were many *kyfiats* collected by Colin Mackenzie which show that the policy of deforestation in the Bellary

region was followed by the Kakatiyas and the Vijayanagra rulers. Mackenzie collected a number of epigraphs relating to various aspects of villages in the Ceded Districts. The origin of some of the villages was described. It appears that most of the villages of the region were once covered with the forests. Individuals cleared the forests and farmed the villages which were named after them. Naidupalli, Gangareddipalli etc; which were named after their founders (MMS; Microfilm Roll no. 7-9 APS A).

The nucleated village generally had two kinds of roads: (a) the roads connecting different villages meant for inter-village communications; (b) internal streets or narrow alleys connecting housing areas. But in the pre-British period, the roads were in a very bad condition and were unfit for wheeled traffic. They cannot be equated with any present day roads but they were mere tracks (Venkatarangaiya 1965: 53). The deplorable condition of the communication network was well brought out by the first Report of the Public Works Commissioner of Madras. The nature of roads left the villagers with no other option but to use bullocks as their principal means of transportation and these roads were rather tracts frequently intercepted by channels and hillocks, causing severe strain on the bullocks (Raman Rao 1958 : 47; Spate 1954 : 200). The bullocks were used for transportation of grain and other food and war material to the battle fields (Sarada Raju 1941; PBR 8 June 1802, Vol.630). Hyder Ali of Mysore, took a keen interest in raising the breed of tough fasttrotting bullocks for use in his mobile warfare. The same policy was continued by his son, Tipu Sultan (Walt Vol.V, 1890:666-67).

The tracks were also used for trading purposes. Bullocks were chiefly employed to carry the articles. During the Vijayanagara period, articles were carried over long distances by carts and pack-animals (Sewell 1970: 254). According to Mahalingam, it appears that the carts were not used on a large scale in some parts of the empire, probably owing to the bad conditions of the roads (Mahalingam 1951: 53). This imposed a limit on the exchange relations of the countryside and the urban centres. Most of the products consumed within the villages did not take the form of commodity. The exchange relations within the nucleated village were confined to 'country fairs' or *santa* where articles of different villages were sold once at periodical intervals (either weekly or bi-weekly) (Mahalingam 1951: 54). According to A.V.Raman Rao, in the early stages of commerce, in order to enable the meeting of the seller and the buyer, it became essential to establish

fixed timings for their coming together" (Raman Rao 1958:39). "This led to the establishment of weekly village fairs where food grains, vegetables, fish, cutlery, textiles, silks, shawls, carpets, steel, -brassware, chintzes, knives, glassware and other articles used to be offered for sale and livestock like sheep and cattle were also sold in the *santa*. These fairs were also held during religious festivals and at religious centres, and during religious festivals called *thirthams* on the banks of rivers. Usually petty traders were involved in the exchange relations. In the off-season, the peasants themselves, or some-times one of the family members carted their products to *Santa*. The komati and the Baliya castes played an important role in conveying the products from village to urban centres especially, to those of political importance (Satyanaryana 1983 : 399-400). The nomadic Banjara and the Lambadi tribes were known for their inland-transportation business. These tribes used to have a *naik* to regulate their itinerary and bargains. They enjoyed exceptional privileges like immunity from attack at times of war, exemptions from duties on their goods and guarantee of protection from the state (Raman Rao 1958 : 39-40). The pastoral and artisan castes such as the *Kurubas* and *Kammars*, participated in trade in a supplementary capacity in the *santa* by bringing their own manufactured goods for sale. Desai has pointed out the general conditions of the Pre-British villages in India (Desai 1978). For centuries, the mind of the overwhelming portion of the Indian people has been distributed in numerous and autarchic village centres, each village being a closed system, with very little social, economic or intellectual exchange with the outside world, did not grow. The almost complete absence of any appreciably developed economic exchange between the village and the outside world as well as the very weak means of transport (which did not grow beyond the bullock-cart), isolated village population, reducing it to a single small unit, mainly living its life exclusively in the village. A country fair or a marriage was the only occasion when the villagers left their village for a very brief period (Desai 1982:18). Hence, the nature of villages itself hampered the development of communications. To quote Karl Marx, "the village isolation produced the absence of roads in India and the absence of roads perpetuated the village isolation" (Karl Marx 1977 : 496). Thus, the above general conditions gave the village a character of communal and closed peasant economy. The village organisation pattern of production and distribution of yield from the land was looked after by the 'village community'. The Indian village community had evoked profound interest among the scholars belonging to

various disciplines. One group of thinkers portrayed a golden age picture of the village community. Another group criticised vehemently the static, narrow and **extremely self-centered** life that was the hallmark of the village community.

The East India Company officers were struck by the unique organisation of the village community in the first half of the nineteenth century. Munro, Metcalf and Elphinstone noticed the salient features of this institution; their reports formed the basis for the exhaustive description of this institution in the British Parliamentary papers. The Madras Presidency officials were the first to notice the prevalence of village community. Later in A.D. 1819, Holt Mackenzie reported the existence of the village community in the northern India while in service as the Secretary to the Board of Commissioners in the Conquered and the Ceded Provinces. Elphinstone of Bombay Presidency, noted the village community's existence in the Deccan in his report written in A.D. 1819 and it was further confirmed by the Administration Report of Captain Robertson from Poona in A.D. 1821. Again in A.D. 1830, Sir Charles Metcalf, a member of the Governor - General's council gave the details on village community in Northern India. Later on in A.D. 1852 the First Punjab Administration Report also confirmed the existence of village community in that province. This clearly indicates that the village community was a general feature spread throughout India; except in the south western extreme of the sub-continent i.e., below the river bed of Krishna or the present day state of Kerala (CDR 2 Oct. 1801, vol. 629; Mukherjee 1958). Baden-Powell also showed the absence of republican village communities in South Canara, Malabar and the Northern Circar and argued that non-republican types were of Dravidian origin (Baden-Powell 1972:366-67).

Various reports of the British administrators described the Village Communities as "Corporate Bodies" or self-contained "Little Republics", functioning with their own organisation whose members hailed from the same village within the framework of caste system and were unaffected by the political changes that took place from time to time. It may be recalled here that "Little Republics" was the word first used by Charles Metcalf in his famous report on the village community (Mukherjee 1958 : 140-174).

The Company officials' reports and other scholarly writings such as Mark Wilk's *Historical sketches of South India* (1810), James Mill's *History of British India* (1806-18), John Campbell's *Modern India* (1852), Volumes of Parliamentary Debates and Reports especially those preceding the Charter Act of A.D. 1853, William Jones' translation of *Manusmriti*, Francois Bernier's Travel Accounts during the time of Aurangzeb enabled Marx to reach his conclusions on the Indian village community (See Marx and Engels 1978; Gunavardana 1975). Other writers of the nineteenth century who also contributed to the notion of village community were Sir Henry Maine, Lee Vinky, and Pollen. From these writings one can summarize the characteristics of an idyllic village community (Henry Maine 1895; Fukazawa 1984). The village community had communal ownership of land; it was the unitary place for agriculture and manufacture which resulted in socio-economic independence or self-sufficiency, and it enjoyed politico-cultural autonomy which anchored stability and continuity to the Village Community.

The idyllic depiction of the village community was not accepted by one group of thinkers. They even went to the extent of criticising it as a myth and non-existent in reality. The foremost critic on the subject was Baden-Powell. His criticism was based on the existence of ryotwari tenures (individual proprietorship over land), which proved an antithesis of communal ownership of land. And, therefore, he held that the village community in India was not an established general order in the countryside (Baden-Powell 1896: 8). A.S. Altekar, who worked on the village communities in western India, criticised the stable and unchanging character attributed to the village community. He argued that the teachings of history disproved the nature of stability and perpetuity attributed to the village community and they were, in his opinion, neither "republics" nor "democratic" institutions (Altekar 1926). W.H. Wiser, a social anthropologist, made a substantial criticism about the nature of self-sufficiency of the village community. He found, to his own surprise, a village in northern India having the system of jajmani relations, did not confine to that village alone but spread to neighbouring villages too (Wiser 1936). The leading sociologists, M.N. Srinivas and A.M. Shah, after conducting many village surveys, have come to the conclusion that the self-sufficiency of the village community was a myth. They showed that not all villages had all the different castes necessary to secure economic and social independence. Only in large areas which

included tiny villages, was division of labour amongst different castes possible and did materialize (Srinivas and Shah 1960 : 1373-78). Burton Stein also pointed out the same wherein he stressed the "larger area" than village for a study of south Indian socio-economic relations of a Peasant State (Stein 1980 : 101-111). Noboru Karashima confirmed the same fact by analysing some of the inscriptions of Tanjavur and Gangaikonda Cholapuram temples. According to Karashima, "villages were not primary units where social reproduction of the people was maintained and to which villagers social activities were confined. Instead, social reproduction must have been made possible only in an area larger than a village (Karashima 1984 : 42-55). Irfan Habib did not contribute to the classical view of the village community. He even emphasized the view that communal property did not exist in the medieval Indian Villages. "When village community is used - it does not mean that there was a village commune that owned the land on behalf of all its members ... The Peasant's right to the land was always his individual right. There were some spheres outside that of production where the peasants of a village, usually belonging to the same fraternity often acted collectively and the village community is our name for the corporate body which they formed for such collective action" (Habib 1963 : 123-124) In his recent work, he further substantiated the same opinion on the basis of Baden Powell's view that villages were treated by the Governments as revenue units for assessment and collection of land revenue and; not as an autonomous socio-economic units (See Rayachanduri and Irfan Habib 1984 : 254).

It appears that the geographical conditions also contributed to a certain extent for the evolution of the village communities in the Bellary region. The communal ownership of land, which was a basic character of the village community, was largely confined to drought-prone and famine-stricken areas in the upland dry districts of Rayalaseema. Hence, it would not be illogical to argue that the collective resistance was put forth by the agriculturalists of the region to safeguard themselves from natural calamities and also from the ever demanding state for land revenues. Moreover with the water sources limited and the irrigational facilities being scanty and costly, the agriculturalists formed into guilds and held lands in common. This led Karl A. Wittfogel to formulate an hydraulic society in his work, Oriental Despotism (Wittfogel 1954).

Very interesting records of the first half of the thirteenth century were found in the present Anantapur district, which probably belong to Yadava Singana's rule. These records were engraved on the slabs which also bear the symbol of plough (*meli*) together with other figurines of bull, serpent, drums and *purnakumbham* (Indian archeology 1954-55, p.25). This was a solitary and unique record of this time which revealed the existence of agriculturists' guild in the district. Similar guilds were reported to have been in vogue in the reign of the Chalukyas of Kalyani (A.D 973 - A.D. 1183) in the Eastern Deccan. At least three important agricultural guilds have been mentioned in the epigraphs of the period i.e. *okkalu*, *chitrameli* and *galega*. All these guilds held land in common (ML Vol. XVI, pp 190-191; SH Vol 11 no. 129; AGAS vol. IX, p.29).

According to Dharma Kumar the communal system of land holding was a special feature in south India (Dharma Kumar ed. 1984 : 210). Thomas Munro on his survey tours noticed the existence of *visabadi gramas* in the Cuddapah district. The *visabadi grama* had a 'co-sharing' system similar to mirasi village of Chingleput district in Tamilnadu. According to Sunderaraja Iyengar, the *visabadi* system was applied in the Ceded Districts and Telengana to a coparcenary village, of which the lands or profits were allotted by sixteenths and fractions of sixteenths among the hereditary proprietors (Sunderaraja Iyengar 1921 : 55). The Board of Revenue described the *visabadi* system as follows. Under this system, a fixed sum of money was assessed on the whole village for one or more years. A certain number of the most respectable ryots became answerable to the amount, each being responsible for his own separate portion thereof, and all for each other and the lands were divided by lot as in the *samudayam* village of the Tamil country, the portion of land to be occupied by each being determined by the proportion of the rent for which he became responsible. Thus, if ten ryots obtained their village for three years at a *visabadi* rent of one hundred *pagodas*, the first becoming responsible for twenty, the second for forty and the other eight for five *pagodas* each, the lands of the village would be divided into ten equal shares. The first would be entitled to two of these, the second to four and each of the others to half a share; and from this division of the lands into shares the settlement took its name of *visabadi* namely, a settlement by shares in ready money (PBR 5 J AM. 1807). The Fifth Report, based on the evidence of Thomas Munro, who was then the principal Collector of the

Ceded Districts, described the *visabadi* village ns follows , In all villages the ryots **were** in the habit of meeting and debating upon the subject of rent; but there were many villages in which they settle among themselves the exact **proportion of the whole** rent that each individual was to play. These were called *visabadi* (or *veesapadi*) which meant a sixteenth part. The rent to be paid from the land was divided into sixteen shares. When the season of cultivation drew near, all the ryots of the *visabadi* village **assembled** to regulate their several rents for the year. The Pagoda was the place usually chosen for this purpose from the idea that its sanctity would render their engagements with each other more binding. They ascertained the amount of the agricultural stock of each individual, and of the whole body, the quantity of land to the culture of which it was adequate, and they divided it accordingly giving to each man the portion for which he had the means of cultivating and fixing his share of the rent, whether his share was one or two sixteenths. He paid this proportion, whether the whole rent of the village was higher or lower than the previous year (Letter from the Principal Collector of the Ceded Districts 30 Nov. 1806, Fifth Report Vol II p.351). Thus, a *visabadi grama* was basically a revenue unit wherein the revenue was fixed for the village as a whole, but cultivation was carried on separately by each proprietor undertaking to pay a fixed share of the assessment. T.V.Mahalingam showed three types of joint land tenures prevalent in south India: they were (I) the members of the village who cultivated land in common and shared the profits among themselves in proportion to the number of shares (*vriltis*) each possessed, (2) a particular portion of the village was enjoyed **indi-vidually** by the share-holders for cultivation purposes, the rest being held by them jointly as under the first group; and (i) land had been divided into different grades in accordance with their fertility and every individual member of the joint community was given a portion of each of the three classes of lands for a definite period, and after **the** expiry of that period land was redistributed among the members (Mahalingam 1955 : 37).

The concept of communal ownership and the periodic distribution of land was basically a relic of tribal system (Chattopadhyaya 1979 : 156-157). The **custom** was absorbed by the village communities and this concept defined their very existence. In other words, this became the focal feature of village communities in the East and the West (Henry Maine 1895 : 107-109). Irfan Habib viewed that this was not true with the

case of northern India during the Mughal times. To quote Habib, "when village community is used, it does not mean that there was a village commune that owned the land on behalf of all its members. No evidence exists for communal ownership of land or even a periodic distribution and redistribution of land among peasants" (Habib 1963 : 123). M.P.R.Reddy suggested that this was not the case with the south Indian agrarian system. His opinion, based on Munro's Minutes, showed the existence of the above concept in *visabadi gramas* of the Ceded Districts and also in the south coastal Andhra (MPR. Reddy 1978 : 73). Sundararaja Iyengar too pointed out the same by attributing it to a customary practice for the south Indian peasantry. Wherever the *visabadi* system prevailed, it was customary for the residents of the village to periodically exchange (once in four or six years) all their lands so as to secure an equal division of the soil, good and bad. Where it was for a year, the ryots generally retained the same lands but the assessment on them was raised every year, the revision being made by the tenants themselves, and to ensure its impartiality the peculiar practice of challenging was introduced, whereby any ryot who considered that his own holding was overassessed and that of his neighbours under-assessed, demanded that the latter should be made over to him at an increased rate which he named. If the ryot in possession consented to pay the enhanced rate, he retained the land, and in that case a proportionate reduction was made in the assessment of land held by the complaining party. If the ryot in possession refused to agree to the enhanced demand, he was compelled to give up the land to the complaining party who took it at the higher rate (Sundararaja Iyengar 1921: 56). This system was democratic in nature and Saradaraju described it as a 'challenging system' (Sarada Raju 1941 : 30).

Similarly, *gonchipatta* or joint patta holding were accepted by the company administrators. There were two kinds of *gonchi patta* holders. One kind was of a low-income and economically weak group. They held small plots of lands. The Company officials, for easy administrative business, combined them as fields (comprising forty acres each) and issued a common patta known as *yeshkalpatta* (PBR 30 Sep. 1804, Vol. 995). Other gonchi holders were of substantial or leading ryots. They belonged to the *patel*, the *kaniyam* and other influential Reddy families classes. Their primary motive was to evade house tax, wealth tax etc. through the gonchi patta facility (Stein 1977: 73). In

fact the joint-ownership of land in the ceded districts was nominal and was created for administrative purposes. Barrington Moore argued that the village community was considered as the basic 'economic unit' for collection of revenues by the state (Moore 1967 : 338- 345). Even in the *visabadi gramas* it was the rural elite which dominated and made decisions for the village. The *panchayat*, a vital organ of the village, was nothing but an instrument in the hands of the rural elite. The influential ryot families were the members of the panchayat who regulated and executed the revenue policies (of central and local powers) in the village. In the same way, the village community in the ceded districts did not prevail in its idyllic form, but existed nominally and only to serve certain economic and administrative purposes. Under the *visabadi* system and *gonchipatta* holding, "the share of the produce" rather than a particular "plot of land" was commonly considered as the private property of the members (or families) of the village.

In the political realm also, these village communities (eg. *Sabha, Ur, Periyandu* etc.) dominated mostly by *sat-sudra* families of peasant warrior groups, wielded considerable power over the villages and attracted the attention of royal personages (Stein 1979 : 175-126). The power of the village bodies became a force to reckon with the state. To get these village bodies into the fold of the state, some influential lineages from among them were bureaucratized as revenue and military officials; these were instrumental for the protection/expansion of the settlement boundaries, establishment of new agrarian settlement, and water resource management by way of large scale tank irrigation.

It is a common belief that private property in land did not emerge in India until the introduction of the land revenue settlements (especially the ryotwari system) by the East India Company administrators. At least two points of view emerged on the question of proprietor of the soil in India. One group as already discussed, treated the village community as the proprietor of soil and this contributed to the theory of joint ownership of the land; another group, rested the proprietorship of land in the hands of the king or sovereign (or state). The second view began to dominate and influence the British authorities in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The European travellers and the British administrators held the view that the king was the sole and only proprietor of all the land. The idea of the king granting lands to tenants who became territorially powerful and eventually supported the royal power was basically a European concept. This was closely associated with the concept of European Feudalism. With this background the British administrators tried to understand the Indian political and social life (Embree 1979 : 38-49). Irfan Habib suggested that this wrong notion was perhaps derived from equating the Mughal *jagirdars* to the European landlords, since the *jagirs* were transferable at the emperor's will. The Europeans therefore, concluded that there was no private property in land in India. Another reason for the mistake might have arisen from the understanding and the interpretation of Asia's past, which in their view, was of an 'oriental despotism', and therefore, the Sovereign (King) invariably became the owner of the land. James Grant, in his Political Survey of the Northern Circars, came to the conclusion that, "one of the first, most essential and best ascertained principles of eastern legislation" was that "the property right of the soil is constitutional and solely vested in the sovereign" (Fifth Report Vol. III : 14). Francois Bernier (A.D.1620-88) the French traveller who visited the Mughal court stated that the great Mughal was the proprietor of every acre of land in the Kingdom. His main thesis was that the Mughal empire and the other oriental states were decaying because there was no private property in the soil (Constable 1904 : 204-232). Karl Marx, having read Bernier, came under his influence and wrote in A.D.1853, "Bernier rightly considers that the basic form of all phenomena in the East-he refers to Turkey, Persia, Hindustan is to be found in the fact that no private property in land existed. This is the real key even to the oriental heaven" (Marx to Engels 2 June 1953 : 75-76). Later on, he changed his views. All other European travellers like Thomas Roe, Niccolo Manucci, Abbe Dubbois and Xavier held the same view (Embree 1979: 43). The Utilitarian theorists such as James Mill advocated the same in his work *History of British India* (London, 1824) According to Mill, "the property of the soil resided in the sovereign; for if it did not reside in him, it will be impossible to show to whom it belonged" (Mill 1824, Vol I : 265). Munro, who was the principal collector of the Ceded Districts, observed that in British India the King was the owner of land (CDR 2 Oct. 1801, Vol 629 : 261). Eric Stokes held the opinion that the English Utilitarians, especially, Mill, believed that the right of ownership of land belonged to sovereign and therefore "it is

the Company's right to be the owner of land for it is the sovereign of India and the land settlement should not renounce the rights traditionally held by the Indian rulers" (Stokes 1982 : 90). Ainslie and Embree suggested that the Utilitarian idea of State or royal ownership appealed to them because of tendencies within their general philosophical system (Embree 1979 : 43). Nuniz, the Portuguese traveller who visited the Vijayanagara during the sixteenth century stated that the King was the owner of the soil. According to him all land belonged to the King and from his hand the captains held it. They made it over to husbandmen who paid one-tenth to their Lord; and they had no land of their own for the kingdom belonged entirely to the King (Sewell 1900 : 280-281).

This kind of misunderstanding arose partially from the misunderstanding of the Hindu *dharmasastras* and partly from their own perception of the land tenure (Jones 1985: 264-266). The claim that the king was the owner of the soil was not made by any Indian authority before the eighteenth century where as it was the usual statement on the lips of the European observers from the sixteenth century onwards. The Hindu law gave only the duty of 'protection' not the right of 'proprietaryship' to the kings. In the *dharmasastra* the king was described as "lord paramount of the soil" and "the regent of the water and the lord of the *firmament*" (Sundararaja Iyengar 1921:9). Wilson rightly observed the limitation of these titles of the sovereign. According to Wilson, "He (the king) is not the lord of the 'soil', he is the lord of the earth, of the whole earth of kingdom, not of any parcel or allotment of it; he may punish a cultivator for neglect, in order to protect his acknowledged share of the crop; and when he gives away land and villages, he gives away the share of revenue. No donee would ever think of following such a donation by actual occupancy; he would be resisted if he did. The truth is that the rights of the king are a theory and abstraction; poetically and politically speaking he is the lord, the master, the protector of the earth (*Prithvipati, bhumiswara, bhumipa*) just as he is the lord, the master, the protector of men (*narapati, nareswaranripa*). Such is the purport of the common title of a King; but he is no more the actual proprietor of the soil than he is of his subject; they need not have his permission to buy it or sell it or to give it away, and would be much surprised and grieved if the king or his officials were to buy or sell or give away the ground which they cultivated" (Fifth Report Vol. II : 495). Burton Stein also strengthened the view that the sovereign's right to rule over the

people and territory was of ritual nature in South India (Stein 1980 : 367), Karl Marx, who in his early writings, was influenced by Bernier's statement of Sovereign's right over soil, later abandoned the view and wrote, "the land however, in India did not belong to the Government, the greater proportion of it being as much private property as in England, many of the natives holding their estates by titles six or seven hundred years old" (See Habib 1983: 103).

If the king was not the owner of the soil, then who should be called the proprietor of the land? This was the primary concern of the British authorities to decide upon, for, firstly they needed revenues to promote their trading activity. Secondly, they needed a so called legal right to extract it from the proprietor of the soil. "The idea of ownership as understood either in the Roman inheritance or in the British formulation was lacking in India" (Embree 1979 : 45). According to the Roman lawyers the power of alienating land was the criteria of property. In other words, right to sale identified the property and in Mahalingam's opinion this was an important feature (Mahalingam 1951 : p 80). In England, a proprietor of land who formed it out to another was generally supposed to have received as rents, a value equal to about one third of the gross produce. This proportion varied from one country to another according to the circumstances, but whatever it was, the portion of it which remained after the payment of the demands of the public may safely be described as the proprietor's share of the produce of his own land. Whenever one can find this share and the persons entitled to it, he may be, without the risk of error, considered as the proprietor.

The Hindu and the Mohammedan law accepted the principle of the "first occupant as the proprietor of the soil." In course of time the same principle was also approved by the British Judicial system (Sundararaja Iyengar 1921: 3-5). In the pre-British times there were a number of evidences to show that the land was purchased, sold, and mortgaged by certain individuals, and families, to kings, nobles and to the temples. The terms '*astabhoga*' and '*ekabhoga*' denote the existence of private property in land and the law of inheritance was well laid out in the pre-British period (Mahalingam 1951 : 84).

Thus the private property in land did exist in India, but the claim of 'family' property was not commonly and customarily accepted. In the case of collective farming

(or in *visabadi gamas*) the "share of the produce" rather than a definite plot of land that was accepted as the property right of the family. Teodar Shanin, rightly pointed out that "property in land, in a wide sense may have the form of, on the one hand, the peasant family holding defined by custom, on the other hand, of politically formalized legal ownership. In peasant households, land appears as the object of traditionally defined and stable holdings and does not necessarily constitute the object of legal ownership" (Shanin 1979 : 241; see also Shanin 1966 : 5-27).

In the pre-British times there were three categories of villages prevalent in the Ceded Districts. The first category consisted of those villages which were held directly by the State (or Central power) wherein the State collected the revenues directly by employing its own administrative machinery. They were generally known as *bhandara-vada gramas* or *kara* villages. The Mohammedan rulers called them as *khalsa* or *khas* lands (or villages), which simply meant 'crown lands' (Venkataramanayya 1935 : 134). The second type of villages were known as *amara* villages. They were held by the officials of the State or feudatories who were bestowed with these villages for their military services rendered to the State. In the Vijayanagara empire nearly three fourths of the territory was constituted under this tenure. The areas which were situated around the forts of Adoni, Cheyyetiduram, Gooty, Gandikota, Chandragiri, Gurramkonda, Maddur, Penukonda, Nandyal and others were held by *amaranayakas*. These areas were not hereditary and the emperor confiscated their holdings at any time. These feudatories also leased out their lands to revenue farmers or *guttadars*, but most of the land which was under their jurisdiction was held by the villagers themselves. Therefore, "they claimed no property right in the soil, not did they regard the cultivators as their serfs" (Satyanarayana 1983 : 304). The third type of villages were those held by groups of people or institutions like the temples, paying nothing or a nominal amount as revenue to the State. They were called *brahmadeyas* or *devadana* lands (Mahalingam 1931 : 36). These villages were hereditary. They had to pay jodi or low quit rent to the State treasury.

These three broad categories of village were made on the basis of land tenurial system and the nature of land revenue collections that were present in the villages. Generally speaking except in the first form of villages referred to other two were

predominantly held under the service tenure basis, and the mode of collection was chiefly done by an intermediary agency.

Two types of land revenue system were followed in these villages. They were the *amani* and the *appanam* systems (See Wilson's Glossary 1855). Both these systems were prominent in the Ceded Districts. In the *amani* system collection of revenue was done directly by the Government through its village servants without the interference of middlemen such as *zamindars*. The revenues were collected either by taking a share of the produce or by the collection of money rents. Taking a share in the produce was known as *asara* or *waram*. This system was loosely called *ammi* and it was a form of ryotwari system. In both cases settlement was made by the State directly with the ryot; but in the *ammi* system, share was taken from the gross produce whereas in the ryotwari system it was done from the net produce. The *appanam* system was predominant in Bellary, Cuddapah and Kurnool districts. Under this system the cultivator who were responsible for land revenue payment were allowed to hold which ought to pay the land revenue were highly assessed and hence they were given other lands on favourable terms or rent-free (Wilson's Glossary: 1855). The Reddies and the karnams who held the office of the potail and accountant respectively, were responsible for land revenue collections in the Ceded Districts. Therefore, they were given inam lands under this system. The *appanam* system was similar to 'Village Lease System' wherein the renters, usually the Reddies or *karnams* or such influential persons of the village, were responsible for land revenue collections and if the ryots relinquished their lands, the revenue Collectors were bound to provide for their cultivation and were not allowed to reduce own holdings by relinquishment.

The system of granting lands and villages to the individuals and institutions was followed by the Hindu and Muslim rulers alike. It was a system through which the rulers recognised socially and economically privileged persons and institutions and in turn, the latter supported their benefactors. In fact it was a survival strategy that was followed by the 'Central' and 'local' powers. The *nam* (or land grant) system helped the rulers to collect the land revenues smoothly by making an alliance with the rural elite groups. It also helped in founding new villages which ultimately paved the way for extension of cultivation, thus acquired additional revenues to the 'Central' and 'local' powers.

The Service tenures may be classified into five categories:

- a) Grants for public service
- b) Grants for particular service
- c) Grants for village officers
- d) Grants for religious service
- e) Grants for private and personal service.

Among the grants for public service, *dasabandam inams* were very important and they come under the Socio-economic privileged holdings. Regarding the grants for particular service, the foremost were *pallikatu* and *adaiyoli manyams*, given for clearing jungles and bringing the land under cultivation (Sundaraja Iyengar 1921 : 121). Number of other inams were given for particular services such as *eruvaka* (for first ploughing of land), *idiga* (for planting trees), *moti* (For encouraging the ryots to settle in a new place) etc. Whereas the karnam inams and the Reddi manyams were of the most important among the grants given to village officers. Religious grants are divided into three types (a) *devadan* or *devadayam inams* (given to temples, mosques dargahs (fakir tombs) takiyas (fakir residents); (b) *brahmadeyamams* (given to Brahmins for socio-religious purposes; *adhyam deya inams*; (c) *mathapura inams* (for educational institutions, *Chatrams* or choultries etc.) Similarly, grants for private personal services were of socio-political holdings. Among them amarams and *kattubadi inams* were the most prominent. Besides those a number of other inams for services such as supplying perfumes for the poligar, for holding palaquines, for supplying gum-powder, medications etc. for the poligar were given inams (Sundararaja Iyengar, 1921 : 132-138). However, the above classification was done by the writers of the first half of the twentieth century. This classification was based just on factual evidence and displayed lack of critical and analytical approach. However, the presentday historians have divided the inams (or simply land grants) into four categories based on the 'functional' principle. They are as follows: (Frykenberg, 1979 : 40-45)

- a. Socio-Religious Holdings
- b. Socio-Service Holdings
- c. Socio-Economic Holdings and
- d. Socio-Political Holdings

Among the four, the third and the fourth categories were of much importance to the rural society. Of the Socio-Religious Holdings, *dasabandam inams* were prominent. A tropical country like India, scanty rain fall and lack of perennial river systems in the

Rayalaseem area demanded a constant construction and maintenance of water-works. The maintenance of irrigation systems became a primary condition and duty of the State. In the words of Frykenberg, "regular revenues called for regular water supplies, regular water supplies called for regular expenditure for development and maintenance. Expenditure subtracted from revenues, especially if institutionalised permanently through hereditary giants of land, were a convenient way of removing burdens of administration from a central government and throwing them upon a local government" (Frykenberg 1979 : p45). This led to *dasagandam inam* tenures. The *dasabandam* tenure in the kannada districts, was known as katta-kodige (PBR 12 July 1819, Vol. 826). In the Telugu country, the Kakatiyas introduced this system. According to *dasabandam* tenure, an inam or copyhold was granted to a person for repairing, maintaining and constructing a tank on condition of paying in money or kind one tenth of its produce to the king. Elsewhere it has been already stated that the Kakatiya rulers followed the policy of extension extension of cultivation through temple construction and tank irrigation. The same system was further strengthened by the Vijayanagara rulers. The construction of irrigation systems, such as tanks, channels and wells, even got the religious sanction. The popular belief was that the construction of irrigation works secured them a place in heaven (Satyanarayana 1983 : 338). There was a slight modification in the *dasabandam* tenure of the Vijayanagara period. More terms were brought into the contract of *inam*. Those persons who were entrusted with (sometimes the persons themselves came forward voluntarily for the cause of) the work of construction and maintenance, should execute the work at their own cost, sometimes receiving money in advance. But generally the work was based on the contract basis, the terms of which were specified in the form of an agreement. According to this arrangement the person or persons would execute the work in return for the assignment of a plot of land which was to be irrigated by the water drawn from the tank or well; the plot of land was to be tax-free, with hereditary rights of ownership. Such a plot of land was called the *dasabandam* or *kattungodagi* land and sometimes a whole village, or even two or more were granted for the purpose (SII Vol. IX, 597; SII Vol. IX, 472).

The *dasabandam* inams were given for three purposes: (1) for maintenance of the tanks which cultivate the Government lands; (2) for levelling lands and rendering them fit for

wet cultivation, and (3) for bringing dry-waste land under cultivation. In the first two cases wet lands were granted and in the third as a general rule, dry lands were granted as *dasabandam* inam tenure. The *dasabandam* were of two kinds, *khandam* and *Shamilat dasabandams*. The *khandam dasabandam* was basically a land grant and *Shamilat dasabandam* was the assignment of a certain porportion of the cultivation each year free of assignment. The *dasabandam* system of contract was prevalent in all the districts of Rayalasema. In the Cuddapah district a number of inscriptions are found pertaining to *dasabandam* inam tenures right from the fourteenth century. In Rayachoti taluk of the Cuddapah district alone 5,700 wells were found and half of them were under *dasabandam* inam tenure. The mahajans of a village in the Bellary district were granted an *agrahara* for having constructed a tank and the land under the tank was made free from all taxes (SII Vol. IX, 440). In the Anantapur district, one *Rayaparaja* made a gift of land and a channel to three Brahmins on conditions that they would convert the valley adjoining the field into a tank and call it *Narasambudhi* after the name of the king *Narasingaraya* (SII Vol. IX, 472). A tank in a village situated in the Anantapur district breached at three places, two persons repaired the breaches at their own cost, for which they were granted a plot of *kattungodogi* land by the agent of *Venkatadrinayaka* (SII Vol. IX, 597). An inscription from Ahobilam registered the grant of *dasabandam* land in a village in the kurnool district to a *mahamandaleswara* by the trustee of the temple, who was agent of another *mahamandaleswara* having constructed the tank *Konasamudra* (SII Vol. IX, 199). Three records from the Madakasira taluk of the local chiefs of Anantapur district registered gifts of land *kattungodogi* by the local chiefs to certain guards for having repaired the tanks at their own expense (ARE 1917 Nos. 32,49 and 50).

The tank irrigation being the major contributor for the agricultural development, there were many edicts issued by the rulers to their subordinates and to the villagers to maintain the tanks in proper condition. A number of inscriptions related to the *meras*, that is, quantities of grain to be contributed by the village (one kuncham on each putti) for the upkeep of the tanks. An edict executed in 1538 stated, "we have ordered that the tank *meras* of the various villages collected in the prescribed manner should be spent for the maintenance of the tanks of the respective villages. Therefore, whether the village under *sandhata* and *amardar* or *lessee*, or whoever be the ruler, the grain collected as

tank *meras* must be spent on the tanks. If, not doing work to the tanks and channels with the grain realised as tank *meras*, any subject, or if any *Kapu* or *karnam* obstructs, or if an one removes this inscription, he will be considered to have been born to the *vetti* of this village and to have given his wife the *vetti* of this village" NDI Vol. II, Nellore). This revealed the fact that right from the rulers to the peasants, everyone was interested in construction and maintenance of irrigation systems to promote agriculture, which was the main occupation of the majority of the population and therefore *dasabandam* inam tenure became a prominent and integral part of the pre-British rural scene.

There were other kinds of grants made for socio-economic services (Sundararaja lyengar 1921 : 140-141). They were, the *allot*, a grant for the service of collecting ryots for the performance of customary labour, the *annaikkaram inam*, for the service of preserving *anicuts* and keeping of cattle from destroying the reeds that grew there. The *bandela inam* was for inferior servants who prevented cattle from straying into the fields and destroying the crops. The *nirumunakainam* was for diving into water and opening and shutting the sluice of a tank. The *nanal inam* was for planting reeds for protecting the *anicuts* and irrigation channels. The *sagubadi* was a land grant for head ryots with a view to encouraging their cultivation of lands owned by the state. All the above grants show the importance given to agriculture in a tropical country. Moreover, the dryness of the Ceded Districts caused the emergence of too many grants for the maintenance and construction of irrigation systems. Even the company administrators recognised the importance of these tenures and allowed them to continue. But they tried to put an end to the 'socio-political holdings', which resulted in antagonism between the socio-political *inam* holders (especially the poligars and the kattubodi peons), and the Company rule.

The size of the *inams* were so large that the Company officials often mentioned them in their reports and they appeared in every annual revenue settlement as separate entities. According to Campbell, in the Ceded Districts, "The alienations were so extensive that the lands liable to the payment of the Government revenue were little more than half (PBR 8 Mar. 1824 Vol. 997 ; 205). The rough calculations made by Munro on *inam* lands indicate that inam lands constituted one-sixth of the total area under cultivation and such lands were worth somewhere between one-fourth and one-third of the estimated total revenue resources of the Ceded Districts. This amounted roughly to

11,85,195-20-09 *Pagodas* out of 39,54-417-23-70 *Pagodas* (PBR 4 Sep. 1807 Vol. 451: 7063). One of the reasons for the prevalence of **extensive** land grant **system** was the lack of a centralised and establish money economy. The Districts (having been portioned out among the poligars and other revenue officials under various Rajas or Sultans of Mysore, Golconda and the Marathas) failed to have a centralised **monetary** system. In the Cuddapah district alone, Munro, in his report on Mint and Currency, noted seven different kinds of Rupees and fourteen types of pagodas then in circulation (PBR 3 Aug. 1812, Vol. 578 : 8713-8733; See also Ambirajan, 1978 : 232). Many of the poligars minted their own money.

During the Vijayanagara period there was a definite increase in the use of money. One of the administrative reforms of Harihara II, was with regard to the currency system. He issued an order that taxes must be paid in money instead of kind (Sturrock 1894: Vol. 1 : 95). This made the use of money an important and necessary means of exchange and led to the minting to coins of different denominations (E.I. Vol. III : 125; E.I. Vol.: VII : 58). The foreign Travelers' Accounting and the inscriptions show the circulation of a large number of coins of different denominations that were prevalent in the Vijaya-nagara period. Though there was an increase in the usage of coins, the department of mint was not centralised and properly organised. Abdur Razzk and Barbosa observed in their tours, the existence of a number of mints in various towns in the kingdom (Elliot ed. 1867-77, vol. IV : 10) The private individuals were granted the right to issue coins and the light to own private mints. *Lakkanna Dandanayaka*, a Viceroy under Devaraya II, issued coins in his own name. The *nakaraparivaras* were also empowered to issue coins. Such local currencies appear to have been in use only in the localities concerned and hence gave some difficulty to the people. Ceasar Fredrick who had bitter experience of this system remarked about it; "When we come into a new governor's territory (of Vijayanagara), as every day we did, although they were all tributaries to the king of Biznagar [sic], yet everyone of them stampd a small coy nee [sic] of copper so that the money we took this day would not serve the next day" (Purchas 1965, Vol. X : 99). The increase in the number and variety of small denominations like the *panam* and the *tore*, suggest the expansion of market relations and the commodity production. But this was very limited and by and large, the land revenue was still collected in kind. The

scarcity of the various metals (silver and gold) was one of the reasons for this. When the British introduced money payment for land revenue in the ryotwari tenure, the ryots felt difficulty in acquiring the coins.

The principle of assessment was another important aspect in the land revenue administration. In the pre-British times due to lack of uniform and centralized monetary system, the land revenue was collected mostly in kind. It was known as **warum** or asara system. The term *Warum* implies a share of the produce, or the rate by which the division of it was made between the cultivator and the state, whereas *asara* would mean revenues paid in kind. In this, the land revenue was paid in kind on the "sharing" basis. The percentage of share was fixed as land revenue and under this agreement the Government usually sought to receive its due on the actual fields under cultivation. In case of money payment, the money value was computed only after the state's fixed percentage of grain had been set aside.

There was not much information available on the land revenue settlements in the pre-British times. Colin Mackenzie collected a statement from a *karnam* in 1810 in the Kurnool district. In that, measurement of land and amount paid as rent was described. It was the only statement (Chetty, 1886 : 43-44). Immediately after assuming the charge as principal collector, Munro made an impressionistic survey of the available old records of the native governments and expressed his views on the revenues of the Ceded Districts on August 12, 1801. Due to incomplete information that he possessed and also as he was new to the districts, he himself expressed his inability to inform the Board completely about the matter. Also there were no native Government records to establish the land revenue settlements and the amount collected by the native governments as far back as tradition would carry. The above information, however, is not to be depended upon. The land appears at all times, Munro wrote, to have been considered the property of the sovereign who divided the produce with the cultivator in equal proportions, but committed the circular share for a money payment at a price unfavourable to the cultivator (CDR 2 Oct. Vol. 629, : 261-270). The *kamil* (assessment in Rayadurg and Harpanahalli of the Western Ceded Districts, which were reduced by the Bijapur kings, appears to have been settled without any survey. But in Gurramkonda, Cuddapah and other Eastern districts, it was found upon an actual survey based on the principle of an equal division

of the crops, that the Government share was committed for a money rent by taking the estimated gross produce of different sorts of dry and wet land and converting it at the average price of the preceding ten years. The ryots share after the deductions (i.e. for land revenue, charities, famines and for *karnam's* charges etc.) amounted to less than half. The Mohammedan rule, according to Munro, was more ruinous to the region ; the *amildars* and other revenue collectors with their fraudulent accounts extracted more revenue accounts extracted more revenue from the ryots than what they were supposed to extract (CDR 2 Oct. 1801, Vol. 629 : 264). The poligars and their military peons on the other hand ruined the country by plundering. In other words, the State machinery which was in operation to collect the land revenues was faulty and therefore, Munro strongly advocated the remove of the intermediary agency in the land revenue administration. The intermediary agency' was represented in the form of the poligar, the *kavilagar* and the *amildari systems* in the Bellary region.

The Third important aspect in the land revenue administration was administrative machinery which was adopted to collect the revenues by the 'central' and 'local' powers. It actually reflected the relationship between the State and the agrarian society. The administrative machinery either could be an imposed one on the rural structures, or the local 'local powers' being powerful, forced the Central Government to accept their position in the ruling as collectors of revenue. In the dry-tracts of Rayalaseema both both types were present. The "power of middle-order" i.e. Nawabs of Cuddapah, Kurnool, Gooty and the *jagirdars* of Banaganapalle and Adoni etc. belonged to the first category. Their centres of power being in the townships, they largely depended upon the *amildars* to collect the revenues from the villages. As seen earlier, the poligars in their days of origin (i.e. during Vijayanagara period) were in the same strata. Most of them were implanted by their overlords on the villages to collect the revenues; but in course of time the poligars became the local elite groups. The *patels* and other rich peasants also acquired the poligarships in some places. The second category, i.e. the local elite who forced the Central power to accept them in the revenue administration, comprised the landed peasantry or *patels* and *karnams*. They being so powerful and dominant in the villages, the central power and its agents could not but accept them into their administrative machinery. In order to satisfy these rural elite or local powers, the

central powers worked out a system of land grants (otherwise called *inams*) for the socio-political services rendered by them to the royal authority.

Among the service tenures mentioned in this chapter, the **Socio-Political Holdings** were of vital importance for the survival of the Central Power. The prominence and the numerical strength of this type of holdings, gave feudal character to the Medieval South India. The Medieval Andhra Polity from Kakatiyas to the Vijayanagara was dominated by the warrior class. Iturton Stein named this type of polity as 'tributary' overlordship (Stein 1979: 189). The tributary overlordship indicted the pyramidal power structure, wherein 'Lord-Vassal' relationship became the character of the polity. In India, unlike in Europe, the caste-based society being a peculiarity, added a new dimension to this relationship (Moore 1967 : 304-325). Stein preferred this term to 'feudal' for various reasons. He gives at least three reasons for not using the term 'feudal': (a) the 'fief' as a constituted political sub-region of a private military authority was largely absent in the medieval south; (b) Lord-Vassal relationship of feudal Europe and Japan was missing from the medieval south; and (c) there was lack of sufficient evidence to support the development of a feudal politico-administrative structure in early medieval south India (Stein 1980 : 366-385; R.N. Nandi 1984 : 33). The tributary overlordship was a highly localized one, unlike in Europe, and therefore, affected the hierarchy of the pyramidal power structure.

The absence of a perpetual bureaucracy which always reflected the Central Government's authority, the lack of strong personal loyalties which could overlook caste and other interests, and the non-existence of an universal and centralized institution such as European church which acted as an integrating force and which contributed to the stability and perpetuity of the European feudal polity, caused the medieval south Indian tributary overlordship to remain purely a local or regional phenomenon (Stein 1979: 1859-190). The local or regional warriors having considerable influence and authority over their regions forced their overlords to recognize their power in their localities. All the local chiefs helped the central or royal power in performing military, financial and police duties for which they acquired lands, sometimes villages, as grants in lieu of their services. This system gradually resulted in parcellisation of sovereignty and loss of control over the local

chiefs by the central authority (I.D.Kosambi coined the term "feudalism from below" to denote the similar kind of power structure (Kosambi 1975 : 353-405).

The grants which were made to individuals for **politicomilitary** services in the South can be traced from the fifth century A.D. onwards on the basis of **inscriptions** of early Pallavas. The system of military grants and over-lord and vassal relationship matured and was completed in the tenth-thirteenth centuries in Andhra. The **Kaakatiyas** of Warangal once the feudatories of Kalyani Chalukyas usurped power and began to **rule** Andhradesa from the early years of the 12th century. Rudramamba or Rudramadevi (A.D. 1202 - 1289) introduced the new system of military and fiscal administration known as **nayamkara** system. According to **nayamkara** system the king assigned villages to the **nayakas** in lieu of salaries for military services. Prataparudra, the grand son of Rudramadevi (A.D. 1289 -1323) further strengthened the system by organising it well, and also entrusted the **nayamkaras** with the revenue powers. The similar system of military organisation was later adopted and modified by the Vijayanagara rulers as **amaranayamkara** system. In **amaranayamkara** system the **nayakar** became more independent and had a formal ties with the Central Government. The term **amaranayamkara** meant an office (**kara**) possessed by a military chief (**nayaka**) in command (**amara**) of a body of troops. According to Nilakanta Sastri and T.V.Mahalingam, the **amaranayamkara** system was a system "from above, where the king divided the country into provinces and districts and granted each to a noble man on terms of military services. The king also transferred to the **nayakas** the rights over the soil in return for military and financial contribution. "The **nayamkara**", wrote Mahalingam, "was therefore an office and nothing more". Burton Stein and a few others differed with K.A.N.Sastri and T.V. Mahalingam. Though they accepted the importance of **nayakas**¹ role in rendering military services in 'War-State' of Vijayanagara, for them **amaranayamkara** system meant "a change in the local leadership".

They were linked to the **nayaka** rulers by ritual sovereignty. Like the **amaranayamkars** they rendered military service to kings, like the revenue farmers they paid rent on their estates. Thus, the **poligar** combined in himself the functions of the **amaranayaka** and the revenue farmers. The concentration of these two powers in the same groups accounted for the extraordinary power wielded by the **poligars**. As the

'poligarships' became more common and wielded more power and independence in exercising their functions, the aspirants for poligarships grew in number and added to the already prevailing confusion in demarcation of their jurisdiction. The Britishers were interested in collecting the revenues from all sources to the maximum extent possible. We shall see this in detail in the next chapter. As soon as they possessed these vast tracts, they made a detailed survey of land and other sources of revenue. Thomas Munro's intention was to locate the proprietor of the soil, so that he could collect the land revenue directly from him. In other words he was interested in following the ryotwari system of land tenure which was adopted in Baramahal by Col. Read and where Col. Munro worked prior to his appointment as principal Collector of the Ceded Districts. In the process of his land survey and preliminary tours he found an intermediary group which was basically parasitic in nature that stood between the State and the actual cultivator and were enjoying the status of petty chieftains or Rajas. Munro after his preliminary survey wrote "on enquiring into the causes of the decline of the revenue of the Ceded Districts, the readmission of poligars appeared to be one of the principal" (OBR Vol. 62 : 2). Among the poligars who were unevenly distributed, there were various ways of acquiring the poligarship. Based on the roots of the poligarship, the poligars can be divided into five types. The first category those of the poligars who received their villages at first as *inam* as a personal allowance for the support of their rank. The best example of this was the poligar of Owke in the Kurnool district. The poligar Ramakrishna Raja's predecessors were servants of the Vijayanagara rulers who bestowed on him a *jagir* in AD 1450 (DBR Vol. 62: 47); The Second type of poligars were more turbulent and powerful than all others and attained the poligarship through usurpation and self proclamation. The poligari family of Rayadurga descended from the *delvoy* of Vijayanagara, which on the dissolution the royal authority seized penukonda and Condrippay, but penukonda was later taken away by the Vijayanagara rulers and, instead were given seventy five villages in Rayadurga. Similarly the poligar Basavappa Nayaka of Harpanahalli whose ancestor was Dadappa, the *taliari* of two villages in Harpanahalli, with the disintegration of Vijayanagara empire collected a few followers and seized a part of the neighbouring territory, and after the decline of Bijapur rule, extended the territory from 37 villages to 460 villages (OBR Vol. 62 : 36-44). The third *poligars* who received their villages at the usual rent, partly as a *personal jagir* and partly for the

military service. The Chitvi poligari family derived their descent from Timmaraja of Multi in Gurramkonda, who served under Isol Raja with 2000 peons and 300 horses. He rented the *paraganas* of Sidhout, Chinnur, Badvel and Porumemilla. His descendants, for services rendered to the Isol Raja were raised to the command of 5000 peons and 700 horses and were allowed to collect rent from more *parganas*. They paid their establishment of troops from the revenues and remitted the balances to the sovereign. They thus established themselves as poligars (OBR Vol.62: 46). The fourth category of poligars comprised those who were commoners or a body of peons who paid in money and not by the *jagir*. After being absolved from military services, they became the rentiers of the districts and finally by holding these districts for a number of years, during the times of confusion, they declared themselves as the poligars and the term of *peshcush* (tribute) was substituted for that of rent by their overlords. The poligar of *Nossum* in Kurnool and the poligar of Mallayal in the Cuddapah district were the best examples of this category. Ancestors of both the poligars served under Vijayanagara kings as military chiefs. Taking advantage of the decline of Vijayanagara power, they gradually became the renters of the territories and later became independent and received the recognition as poligars by paying tribute to the Nawabs of Hyderabad (OBR Vol. 62: 44-55). The final category consisted of those who were merely renters assessed at the full *kamil*, but by taking advantage of the negligence or weakness of the central power, they rose to the rank of the poligars. As for instance, the kallibunda poligar in the Cuddapah district was merely a rentier under the Golconda Nawabs. After the fall of Golconda Nawabs's of Cuddapah became more independent. In those times of turbulence and turmoil the renter of Kallibanda ascertained independence and declared himself as the poligar (OBR Vol. 62-53). Thus, the five categories of the poligars numbering eighty in total, were ruling over the Bellary region at the time of the advent of the British. Among the five categories, the second and the fourth were more powerful and militant ones. The poligars of Rayadurg Harpanahalli and Gurramkonda were basically military chiefs and usurped power by taking advantage of the weakness of their overlords. These provinces were situated in tracts of black cotton soil and were surrounded by the mountain ranges and jungles. All these areas were well situated for tank irrigation because the black cotton soil was more fertile than any other soil in the ceded districts. This generated more revenues from the land. The jungles and hills have a natural

protection from the attacks of overlords. Hence they became independent very soon after the fall of Vijayanagara imperial rule.

According to Munro, in Gurramkonda every head of a village became a poligar and though his income was not perhaps above two or three hundred *pagodas*. He was regularly installed with all the form of the prince of an extensive territory and had his nominal officers of state subsisting on small portions of land. The poligar antapah of the Bellary district was subjugated and his property seized by the British. At that time, he was said to be owning huge amount of jewellery and coins of silver and gold. He appears to have appropriated, like many other poligars, many lands on his personal account as *inams* (PBR 10 Aug, 1807 : 5980-91; Fifth Report Vol. III: 99). Their struggles against the sovereign power produced frequent civil wars throughout the eighteenth century. There were two main motives for their constant rebellion; the one 'self-preservation' and the other expansion of their *pollams*, or estates (Fifth Report Vol, III :89). The weakness of the central power, the bad faith on their governments, and the arbitrary and treacherous conduct of their officers drove the poligars to seek their safety in resistance. This resulted in the growth of the poligar militia. A large number of military peons were maintained by the chiefs and petty poligars also maintained small bands of military men. There were three kinds of military peons under the poligar contract who were generally called the *kattubodi* peons which meant simply 'contract peons'. The first category consisted of those paid entirely in money and who had no other means of living and they were least numerous; the second consisted of those who enjoyed service lands, but who were, otherwise traditional farmers rented their lands and regarded the *inams* as only a secondary; the third received the service tenure but had no lands of their own therefore confined themselves to the cultivation of their *inams*. Each description received a *batta* or payment when called out beyond the limits of their villages. The second and third category of peons were numerous in every poligar militia. Since they all held and cultivated land under the poligar contract they could be classified as 'peasant peons' or 'peasant-warriors'.

The usual allowance of land to a common peon in the dry zone of upland Rayalaseema appears to have been an *ailed* valued at six *pagodas* as annual rent and to

the head man who had parlies of ten, fifty or hundred, as it might happen, a piece of land from nine to twenty four *pagodas* rent (Fifth Report Vol .III :90). It also appears that prior to the conquest of Hyder Ali, the poligars in generar kept about six *kattubadi* peons for every hundred star *pagodas* of gross rent in their respective districts. But every peon had relatives who were able to bear arms, and he was required to bring them into the field in cases of emergency. The poligar, when attacked, was, usually by this means,able to assemble a force equal to double the number of his fixed establishment of the *kattubodi* peons. Therefore, by this calculational a poligar holding a district yielding a gross rental of *star pagodas* ten thousand maintained six hundred peons and at times of emergency he would double that number, when the poligars recovered their districts they filled up the deficiency partly with their own ryots and partly with peons collected from other provinces who were paid in money (OUR, Vol. 62:11).

By nature the poligars' militia was not a homogenous unit. Among the three categories of peons mentioned already none were good in warfare. They all used low grade arms and armaments. The paid peons who held no service tenures, were to a certain extent skilled and professional in their warfare, but since they were paid peons, they lack loyalties to the poligar. If their poligar was losing the battle or if the other poligars promise to poay more wages they did not mind switching their loyalties. Their interests were only upto the subsistence level. The other two categories of peons were 'peasant-warriors'. Their ties with the land (their cultivating fields) were more stronger than to the poligar under whom they held land as service tenure. They served the poligar as long as he safeguarded their service tenures. But the phobia of loosing their service tenures under a new poligar also made them protect their own poligar. The poligars, on the other hand, to protect themselves from being uprooted from their position, struggled to satisfy the interests of the *kattubodi* peons by way of making allowances and giving more lands under the service tenures. They even jointly plundered the neighbouring villages or waged wars and extracted booty which was eventually taken away by the poligar and a small share was distributed to the *kattubodi* peons as bonus. This lead to the frequent civil wars within the poligars.

The poligar villages were divided into two, the one *mujera* which meant, inferior villages, and the other *moza*, superior villages based on the size and revenue generating capabilities of the villages. As for instance, Ranganagarapalm pai Nayaka, the poligar in the Cuddapah district, initially received *mujera* or inferior villages for 29 *cont. pagodas*. Later under Aurangzeb, the family received *moza* or superior villages for 210 *Cont. pagodas*. This was an example for the increase of status and power of the same poligar, but under different regimes (GBR Vol. 62:58). The power and position of the poligars was generally based on the holding of these villages. The more number of *moza* villages he held, the more powerful and prominent did he become. The poligars used to make annual settlement with the ryots, the poligar Hundi Anantapur Siddappa Nayaka's ancestor was a Diwan under the Vijayanagara rulers and became a powerful poligar. Tipu Sultan had taken the poligar to Srirangapatnam as prisoner, who was later on released. After his coming back to Anantapur, he still retained the status of the poligar and made annual settlements with the ryots. This was an example to show the poligars direct relations with the ryots as renters of the region (OBR Vol. 62 : 43). Many poligars themselves rented the villages and lands privately to the individuals. And this became a common feature in the poligar system through which they derived an income which remained unaccountable, hence untaxable (or rentable). By this process the poligars strengthened their private exchequers. Those poligars who had direct heritage with the kings of Vijayanagara or at least those who had served under the vijayanagara fillets as commanders-in-charge etc, Under the influence of their overlords and who had to impress their overlords by exhibiting their revenue and administrative skills, tried to generate more revenues by providing irrigation facilities such as construction of tanks in their villages (Gribble 1875 : 89). But many poligars who acquired the poligarships later or whose successors had little interest in developing their irrigation facilities due to lack of time, and resources (because of loans etc.) laid their villages waste (uncultivated). Munro's statistics showed that at least fifty percent of the poligar villages were kept as waste or uncultivated and yielding no income to the state. It is interesting to note here that many poligars left half of their villages waste. One of the poligars, out of 50 villages left 28 villages waste; another out of 7 left 3 villages waste. This suggests two things. Either the poligars poligars themselves registered half of their villages uncultivated to evade the payment of rent or, their oppressive measures

of collection of land revenue left the ryots with no other option, but to evacuate the village and to migrate the neighbouring villages. In either cases, the central power was at a loss (OBR Vol. 62, *Passim*). Therefore at times of distress and in need of revenue they resorted to plundering the neighbouring villages or to levy indiscriminate revenue assessments and collections from the ryots, which, according to the revenue administrators of the British, ruined the country (OBR Vol. 62 : 2).

On par with the polligar system, another system known as the *kavaligar* system prevailed in the ceded districts. Both the systems were intermingled and closely interconnected. The *Kavelgars* literally meant 'guards'. Their primary duties were to ensure safe journey to merchants who were passing through their villages for which they received remuneration. The *kavali* was divided into the *munni kavali* and the *nyal kavali*. The *munni kavali* was a certain allowance on the circar revenue both from the land and customs, not less than five percent and more than ten percent was enjoyed by the greater poligars. The proportion which fell on the land usually collected in one *kisi* at the harvest season. The *nyal kavali* was held by the inferior poligars. It was an allowance of one crore of grain on each crore of grain sown, and one half to one *aparinjee fanam* on each plough. The money was usually collected in one kist in November or December and the grain when it was harvested. The collections were made by the poligar peons, two or three of whom resided constantly in each village for this purpose. The *kavaligars* had also an *inam* in every village of one ~~vees~~ of dry land and one crore of wet land and on the customs, he received what was called *moolves* or one sixth of an *apparanycefanam* per gonny. He usually exacted nearly double this rate and robbed the merchant who refused to comply with his demands.

The *nyal kavaligar* every where augmented privately his *inam* lands and the *munni kavaligar* who had originally none, soon found the means to procure more than the other. He forced the inhabitants to transfer to him gardens and other well cultivated spots without any compensation by confining them till they subscribed bonds which he had ordered to be prepared (Reddy 1986 :112-113).

The poligars often combined the *kavaligar* office, though a separate one with the poligar office and held them together/There were instances, where the *kavaligar*

became rich by misusing his office and acciured the poligarship by dethroning the poligar who was in power, or by declaring independence in his jurisdiction, became a petty poligar and paid a tribute to the superior poligar. To illustrat this tendency in **them the** poligars Kummarapur Gurappa Nayaka, Shittiwariipalem Baswappa Nayaka, Yerrawaripalem Timmappa Nayaka, Yellamundali Mallappa Nayaka and Modicheruvu Chinneppa Nayaka - were some of the best examples (OBR Vol. 62 : 57-59). There were also examples of certain poligars who lost their poligarship but retained their *kavaligar* office and continue in their villages as the *kavaligars*. The system of *kavali* made the kavaligar or the poligar to acquire more stolen property and oppose the Government by engaging their army (peons). They all maintained horsemen to collect the customs from the merchants and from the inhabitants. Often these servants and the *talairs* (village watchmen) collected customs without the knowledge of their *kavaligars* and poligars. The poligars and the *kavaligars* themselves collected the customs and fees illegally. If the party refused to pay the amount demanded by them, they resorted to robbery. The merchants and inhabitants were afraid that they would not get back their stolen property because the poligars also held the police duties. And unless they pay enormous amount of money to them they would not get their property back. According to Munro, the system of *kavali* made the *kavaligar* and the poligar to turn up into thugs and bandits (OBR Vol 62 : 26).

It should also be observed here that the structural relationship between the two groups of the rural elite [i.e. the poligars and the *kavaligars* on one side, the *patels* and the *karnams* on the other side] was predominantly based on 'conflict'. The *patels* and the *karnams* were basically traditional village officers who were authorised to collect the revenues and to regulate the land revenue administration in their respective villages either by the village *panchayats* or by the central or royal power. The poligars on the other hand being military oriented, gave support to the medieval 'War-State' of Vijayanagara, and thus secured the position of 'renter cum revenue Collector, in the provinces (Satyanarayana 1986 : 307). In due course, they became prominent in the power structure and restored to illegal extraction of revenues. This led them into conflict with the *patel* and the *karnams*. The *kavaligars* and the poligars regularly sent their peons to every village with an order to the *patel* and the *karnam* to pay the amount. If

the latter tried to gain time, the former sent some more of their servants to commit thells in the village and if this had no desired effect, they frequently abducted the *patel* and *karnam*, beat them and kept them in confinement till they paid up what was due and also used to impose heavy fines. They also compelled the *karnams* by threats to make over to them large tracts of circar land and to enter them in thier accounts as waste. Some of the poligars even took active part in boundary disputes and property litigations. They either reported themselves to the spot with a body of armed followers who were paid by the village people during their stay or they deputed a vakil with a party to see to it that the decision would not be contrary to their opinion. The right of settling the land disputes traditionally was in the hands of panchayat or village assembly under the headship of the *patels* and the *karnams* which often resulted in confrontation and conflict with the poligars. The alliance between these the two groups of the rural elite arose out of fear and compulsion. The poligar and the *kavaligar* system faced with an opposition and resulted in the *pate l-karnam* alliance with the amildars and the tahsildars, the revenue Collectors of the Government (Reddy 1986 : 115).

Further the Nawabs of Carnatic practised the *amildari system*, in those lands where the poligar authority was not present and the same system existed in the Ceded Districts too. The sultans of Mysore, Hyder Ali and Tipu popularised the system in their country and in the territories which were annexed by them (BRP from Munro to Read 14 Feb 1796). According to this system, extensive tracts of lands, often wide provinces were framed out for a certain number of years to individuals who sub-rented them by villages to the *patois* to collect revenues from the cultivators as they pleased. As long as the king (royal or central power) was supplied by his amildar as much money as he wanted, he seldom enquired into the means that were used to obtain it, or cared by what breaches of duty and irregular practices, they enriched themselves. As they in general, purchased their posts by giving bribes to some one at the seat of the Government, and as their continuance in office was uncertain and precarious, they did not leave any opportunity to make illicit gains (Fifth Report Vol. III : 56-60).

The amildars derived their revenues either from the public revenue or from a private assessment. The amildars usually wished that rent should be low, because the lower they were the higher he would be able to gain the incomes through illicit private

assessments. In this case he would escape from being discovered. The patels and the karnams also supported this illicit private assessment arrangement of the amildars, for various reasons. Firstly, the amount of illicit private assessment would always be less than the amount they had to pay as rent; secondly, the antagonism with the amildars would give them the opportunity of evading payments by way of keeping them as outstanding balances; thirdly, if they allowed the amildar to follow illegal means to gain incomes, the amildars in return would not have any moral stand to question the misappropriation and miscalculations of the land revenue collections done by the patels and the karnams. Moreover the rich ryots of the village also dared not to complain against their patel or karnam for they were the most influential persons in and out side the village and the patels and the karnams promised to get low rents and favourable assessments at the time of leases to their villages (mostly the rich ryots benefited out this).

CHAPTER – IV

MUNRO AND THE INROADS OF COLONIALISM

In the previous chapter, we have seen how the Post-Vijayanagara society was late medieval period in the Bellary region during the transforming itself to glare up to the colonial future. In continuation of that, the present chapter concerns with the responses of the traditional processes of power vis-a-vis the British colonial policies, and to evaluate as to how the various local structures were incorporated by an alien to spread colonialism in this region. The following discussions, therefore, revolves around two basic issues: firstly, the policy of the British, especially that of Thomas Munro, in dealing with the Poligars, whom the colonial masters found to be a threat for their rule, and the measures they had adopted to subdue their uprisings in the entire Rayalaseema and secondly, the colonial policies related to the agrarian aspect. It may be mentioned here that this crucial period of the British rule has been referred to as the period of 'experiment' in the case of the Bellary region, since it was still a time when the colonial state was yet to gain its ground in the intricate matrix of the Indian sub-continent.

As noted earlier, the Bellary region, became the western most part of the four Ceded Districts (comprising Bellary, kurnool, Anantapur and Cuddapah) of the erstwhile Madras Presidency after they were handed over to the East India Company by the Nizam of Hyderabad. The districts thus ceded to the Company by the Nizam's Government in October 1800 were for the purposes of defraying the costs of an 'augmented subsidiary force' stationed in Hyderabad (The Fifth Report V.3:27). Subsequently, Thomas Munro was appointed the Principal Collector of the Ceded Districts (hereafter CD) between AD 1800 and 1807 (Stein 1989:1397).

Even the hardest critics of Munro's pacification policies in these districts had to concede that he made an almost instant success of his task of creating order and a reliable revenue from a turbulent and large territory, and therefore established himself as a first class "political manager". This was done in close co-operation with Josiah Webbe, his sponsor in Madras, being the Chief secretary. While Munro must have realised that his proposal for a grand army to liberate the peninsula south of the Krishna •

he had hoped for a freer hand to conduct things than Webbe was ready to allow. Munro received his initial appointment and instructions from the then Governor-General, Lord Wellesley, through Webbe. Webbe's advice to on 24 November 1800 was typical; it was to negotiate the order. Four subordinate collectors, he told Webbe, were too many; three would be better since there were three constituent parts of the Ceded Districts: Bellary (which included Anantapur then); Cuddapah; and Kurnool. Moreover, Munro wanted to directly administer one of the districts of the newly formed Ceded Districts himself, which could have reduced the usefulness of subordinates even further. But he did see the point of Webbe's suggestion about assistants: 'your desire is I conceive to train up a number of young (European) Collectors, and is actually one that should be pursued where it does not lead to serious inconvenience? Also, care was needed to avoid the appointment of Indian subordinates who might 'intrigue with poligars' (Stein 1989 : 91).

At the outset, Munro must have found the political conditions of the region a fitting reflection of this hard land. An indication of the difficulties posed by this territory may be gained from the fact that it had been ceded to the Nizam by Tipu Sultan in 1792 as part of the spoils won by the Nizam, who was an ally of the Company in its penultimate conflict with Tipu Sultan. The tract had proven difficult for him, but he was able to pass it off as more valuable in revenue than it actually was when he was forced to cede it, as Munro was to discover shortly after taking over its administration. Another indication of potential difficulties of the region was that Colonel Arthur Wellesley was sent with British troops to occupy it and to establish order prior to Munro's civil administration. Military occupation was announced as completed by January 1801, particularly in the heartland of the Vijanagara kingdom that was later to be called the Ceded Districts including Bellary (Regani 1963 : 184-186).

When the region was about to be occupied by the Company, there was a general concern about the level of military expenditure that might be required. In informing Colonel Arthur Wellesley of Munro's appointment as 'the sole Collector' of the newly acquired region in October 1800, Josiah Webbe, Chief Secretary of Madras and Lord Wellesley's principal agent there, also conveyed the Governor-General's orders to his brother to deliberate with Munro so that they might enter the region together. He also

commented on the high costs of the occupation force: This is expensive, I acknowledge, but if you are determined to conquer all India at the same moment, you must pay for it' (Hardwicke Papers, Ad Ms. 29239, 10 Oct 1800, Cf. Stein 1989:83).

Nor was the matter one of cost alone. Lord Wellesley had solicited the views of military advisors and of Lord Clive, Governor of Madras, about the force to be sent to the region for its pacification and occupation, and he was told that forces were dangerously low in the Presidency. Troops involved in the final assault against Tipu Sultan at Srirangapatnam were considered in poor condition for what might prove a difficult task in the dry tracts. This meant that soldiers would have to be drawn from elsewhere in the Carnatic and Northern Circars, reducing garrisons there to a critical level. The Governor-General was warned that when troops had been drawn off from the Northern Circars to comprise part of the Mysore invasion force, rebellion had broken out. Reducing Company garrisons in the Carnatic was seen as an invitation for a general poligar uprising there. The defeat of Tipu Sultan had certainly reduced 'serious danger from a foreign enemy (!) in India', but the dangers of rebellions were thought to be present in Malabar, Dindigul, Ganjam and Masulipatnam or the modern port town of Machilipatnam in the Krishna district of Coastal Andhra (See, *Home Miscellaneous Series*, V, 402, Clive to Wellesley, 18 Sept. 1800). The perceived precariousness of Munro's entry into the region, with its 'unsubdued' and armed inhabitants, conveys a good deal about the confidence which the Governor-General and advisors were prepared to vest in him.

Munro was directed to introduce regular government into a territory hitherto unsubdued and to suppress the evils arising from the weakness of the (Nizam's) government. To accomplish this daunting task meant that he must cope with some 30,000 armed retainers of poligars who roamed the countryside (Raghavaiyengar 1893:24). Almost everywhere these local chiefs or poligars had constituted such government-local and sub-regional as there had been, and which were essentially patrimonial in nature. Of their military capacities Munro spoke clearly and consistently with disdain. However, he was wary of esteem and local political influence of such chiefs, as he had encountered them in the Bramanhal and accordingly he saw them as potential dangers to his rule in the region. It may be recalled here that prior to Munro's appointment as the principal

Collector of the Ceded Districts, he had served as a civil administrator as a 'mature twenty - eight years old and an experienced India hand in Baramahal and Kanara (Stein 1989:24). The methods he devised for dealing with these dangers held implications of their own for his career as a civilian administrator.

The care with which he proceeded against poligars in the Vijayanagara heartland is illustrated in his first instructions to William Thackeray one of the subordinate collectors assigned to him, in December 1800. In Adoni division, where Thackeray was to serve, 'a state of anarchy' had long existed. The inhabitants there, he told Thackeray, had been 'plundered not only by revenue officers and Zamindars, but by every person who chose to pay a *nazzernamah* (gift to the ruler) for the privilege of exacting money from them... and the heads of villages having on the same terms been permitted to carry on a continual predatory warfare against one another.' Still, Munro reassured him, all powerful poligars of Adoni had been driven off, and there was therefore no actual danger of organized opposition, even though rumors of this always circulated (See MC, F/151/10 : cf 1-5; eg Stein 1989: 84). More immediately, a source of civil disorder were former soldiers of the Nizam's forces in the region who were seeking to collect arrears of their wages on drafts (*tunkhas*) against the revenue collections of many villages, as this is how they had been paid by the Nizam's officials (Regani 1963: 184-196). But by far the most serious menace to order were the poligars, and towards these local lordships Munro devised early and stern measures for their subjugation, which brought him into conflict with higher authorities.

Poligars, according to the thinking of his superiors in Madras and Calcutta, were to be divested of their political and military capabilities, but were to be considered as candidates for landed enfranchisement under the settlement principles of Bengal that were to be extended to Madras. Inams, lands alienated to privileged holders subject to payment to a small quit-rent (*jodi*), were to be validated, not by the collectors, but by 'courts of law', again in accordance with Bengal regulations.

Inams were to be resumed by the Company if found invalid, as it was expected many were. Under Munro poligars were eliminated in a manner so ruthless and devious that rare criticism of him occurred. Inams, on the other hand, were never subjected to

judicial review in Munro's time, nor diminished, but rather were used by him to win the allegiance of powerful local interests, beneath the level of the poligars, in what Frykenberg aptly calls the 'silent settlement' (Frykenberg 1971 : 37-54).

The new British rulers of south India in the late eighteenth century knew little of this history. In the various territories which they took under their control they merely saw powerful, armed, local authorities who stood in the way of their own political objectives. All such opponents were lumped together and treated according to their willingness to accept without the deprivation of their local authority

Well before Munro assumed control of their Ceded Districts, the Company's position with respect to these authorities or poligars had become set. Annihilation was to be the fate of most, certainly all who opposed the British (Rajayyan 1968 : 35-42). The high costs of the various ensuing campaigns against poligars in the far south during the late eighteenth century, culminating in the widespread uprising of 1800-1, produced some circumspection within the Madras government by the time Munro was instructed about his tasks in the region. The Court of Directors and the Madras Board of Revenue had come to favor more leniency towards poligars. In addition to this prudent reconsideration of policy, the Madras Governor had been instructed by the government-General, Lord Wellesley, late in 1799, that the Bengal regulations of Cornwallis were to be established in Madras, in 'poligar countries' and elsewhere. This meant that on lands under poligars the latter were to be 'confirmed in them, in the most full and solemn manner'. For if there were to be Zamindars in Madras, they would have to be created mainly from the local lordships of poligars (See The Fifth Report V 3:336).

The Poligars of Rayalaseems were prospective candidates for Zamindari enfranchisement under the Madras regulation of 1802. As already mentioned according to a survey conducted by Munro and his staff during the first two years of his administration of the region, there were some eighty families of these local authorities who, a hundred or fifty years before had controlled two thousand villages, nearly one-sixth of the villages of the whole of what were to be later called the Ceded Districts. They claimed to have exercised authority in their '*palems*' (*palaiyam* in Tamil) from

(Appendix 5 a,b,c,) the seventeenth century, and some at least could provide convincing evidence of this from temple inscriptions of that earlier time, evidence for which is extant still (The Fifth Report, V.3: 350-82).

About this time there were others who expressed that poligars be given an appropriate position within an emerging civil society in Madras. Lionel Place, Collector of the Company's *Jagir* in Chingleput, shared this view in 1795 when writing about one 'Papa Raju', poligar of Covelong:

The conduct of this old man who has attained the age of 90 affords an example of probity which is rarely met. [especially in relations between Indians and agents of the European companies in Madras) and the uprightness of his character has established an almost unprecedented reverence from the Natives who on many occasions refer their disputes to him...for the justice of whose decisions appeal has never been made to me (PUR 'Settlement', 6 Oct. 1795 : 29).

Place's was one of the few voices in Madras that had any good to say of poligars. Therefore, the MBOR apparently had to give a serious thought to Wellesley's instructions that these chiefs were to be vested with permanent rights in their lands unless there were strong and particular reasons against. There remained considerable consternation in Madras about the treaty of 1792 between the Company and the Nawab of Arcot stipulating that the Company was to assure that poligars observed all older 'customary ceremonies' honoring the Nawab. To the MBOR, Munro's belligerent opposition to poligars must have seemed reasonable and may account for the considerable indulgence which he enjoyed in pursuing his tough policies towards these local chiefs.

Immediately after arriving in the region, Munro had outlined to Webbe how he intended to tackle the poligar authority. Poligars had been driven off and had not been permitted to return, Munro wrote: we had best go quietly to work, establish ourselves firmly in the country and conciliate the inhabitants a little before we begin with them...Elsewhere, where poligars were pre-sent, it is my intention to examine the revenue of the districts of all poligars as I go along without dispossessing them, but

giving them however to understand that any opposition on **their** part will be deemed rebellion (Wellesley Papers Ad. M.S. 13629, f. 153).

Two months later, on 31 December 1800, he expressed exasperation to Webbe that he might not be able to reduce the poligars in the manner he preferred because the military officers in the Ceded Districts have apprehensions in using force against them. To this he was averse. Fears of a rising of poligars in the region were alarmist, he wrote. Most poligars had been expelled from the Ceded Districts by Haidar Ali's brother-in-law, Mir Ali Riza Sahib, and 'John Company Bahadur' is at least as strong as Mir Saheb ever was... Besides, he wrote to Webbe a few days later, Company ibices, being mostly cavlary in the legion, not suited to the task and would only rally around the **presently** divided and discordant poligar froces. For the moment, Munro thought, it was best to proceed slowly, and

it would be decorous before we begin with them to have some reasons to produce such as might be worked up into a manifesto after the fashion of modern Europe. As the whole gang of them was expelled by Hyder and Tipu though restored by the Nizamites I am for turning every last soul of them adrift again... But tho' this is what I would do if there were no one to call me to account for oppressing fallen royalty, I see many obstacles in the way at present (Wellsley Papers Ad, MS. 13629 : ff 166-168).

Munro's ironies (the fashion of modern Europe' and 'fallen royalty') tell us something about the confidence between the two men, and the congeniality that Munro had for the aggressive policies of Lord Wellesley which Webbe was pressing in Madras. but these remarks, and other of the early months of 1801, also demonstrate Munro's sensitivity to the shoals in the political waters he was attempting to navigate in this new and difficult posting. This applied most seriously to his actions against poligars. In purging the Ceded Districts of poligars he knew that he had to appear to be following a procedure which satisfied a growing sentiment in official Madras that a Bengal-type of settlement, which had been ordered by Wellesly, was correct and could be made with poligars. This was also a procedure which would make it appear to Munro's employers in London, still smarting under Burke's lashes, that justice was being done in India. As to the actual reduction of poligar authority, which Munro saw to be in competition with his own authority, he suggested the following 'bold line' to Webb:

contrive some means of giving me the military command [of the CD], weed out the useless military dogs above, raise some regiments to make me a Lt Col and then Majors might be easily got to work under me. I am certainly a better general now than I shall be in twenty years. My Civil situation gives me the means of procuring information that no military man can have, and I am also more interested in bringing matters to a speedy decision than any another military man.

Did this mean that Munro, like his military colleagues (of whom he seemed not to think much), sought a military solution to the problem of poligar authority? It would seem not, at least at this time, for the actual policy which Munro was proposing was not a military but a political one. However, he feared that the independent Company military in the region could well spoil his plan. This was to permit the eighty or so poligars to remain in their territories and not directly challenge their authority. Instead, he proposed to increase the level of tribute (*peshcush*) demanded from each to a theoretical maximum previously demanded but never collected by Hyder and by the Nizam's regime. At this high pitch of demand, Munro reasoned to Webb (as previously John Sullivan had reasoned to Lord North), poligars could not pay their troops and maintain their military capacity and also pay the tribute to the Company. When, as he expected, they defaulted on the latter, they could be deposed and expelled legally. He concluded this proposal to Webb with: 'I am convinced that it is possible to expel them all and to hang the great part of them' (Cf Stein 1989 : 88; also see Beaglehole 1966).

So smitten was Munro by this approach - and he might have been encouraged in this by Webb - that he wrote to his friend later in the same month, April 1801, with an even more audacious proposal, explicitly military now, and one that would clear the entire Presidency of poligars. This involved the same tactic of increasing the tribute demanded from all poligars, but also being prepared with an adequate force when their joint resistance exploded. This force, Munro specified, should consist of nine regiments of cavalry and thirty-two of infantry, one-third of which was to be European. To the manner that he could reasonably expect from Webb, Munro added: 'I am afraid you will say that this army is rather intended for conquest than defence, but if you are attacked by a Native Power you can only oppose him... by invasion' (Gleig V.3, 1830 : 23-27).

Not surprisingly, to Munro's superiors in London, his poligar policy appeared cynical and aggressive, and he found himself in danger of being returned to military duty in disgrace. He appears to have been severely attacked for his treatment of the poligar of 'Vimlah' (Vemulakota village, Pulivendla taluk, Cuddapah) district. Munro had deprived this poligar of this territory after ordering that the poligar's fort be forcibly seized by Company troops in May 1801. His reasons for this action were that the poligar was an old, blind man who had been set in place as a puppet by the head of the armed retainers of the poligari family, and he was prevented from attending Munro's office as he had been ordered repeatedly to do. So a second reason for Munro's action was that relations between him and the poligars of the region were stalemated and, according to Munro, required a demonstration by the Company that its authority would be established. His violent action against a pathetic old man became the focus for widespread criticism of his poligar policy as a whole (Gleig V.3 1830 : 45-48).

The Madras Governor, Lord Clive, had given full and explicit approval to Munro. He accepted Munro's concern that if he made no move to reduce some of the more intransigent poligars in the region, the commander of the Company army there, Duglad Campbell, would have launched an action against all poligars, something which Munro believed could only exacerbate conditions. Josiah Webbe, chief secretary of Madras, had written in November 1801 approving Munro's move against the 'Vimlah' poligar, an approval which put him in opposition to some in Madras. As usual, Webbe's tone was heavily ironic:

the refractory spirit of the rebellious polygars will yield to gentle care of the native prejudices, timidity, and ignorance of European maxims: the halcyon times will return when jamabundies shall be settled through the more natural channel of the native dubashi, conversant with the manners; the crooked sword into a scythe shall bend. In sober truth I fear that all our plans for a vigorous government within [the] conquered country are frustrated...(MC,151/5, Webbe to Munro, 9 Nov. 1801)

Another friend and counselor Mark Wilks, was not supportive, but fearful of the consequences of Munro's ruthlessness. He advised his friend to go slowly, for, he feared that the uprisings of poligars in the southern part of the Presidency against the Company authority could become more general; there was, he said 'a last struggle for savage independence'; the effects of Company policy had made mortal enemies of every

Mussalman in the Peninsula and now we are proceeding to the same point with the Hindoos? (MC, 151/5, Wilks to Munro 11 May & 2 July 1801).

A judgement yet more harsh and dangerous came from the Court of Directors:

it is our positive injunction, that force be never resorted to against the Poligars... unless in case of actual rebellion, until every lenient and conciliatory measure has been tried without proper effect... It is our anxious wish to owe the obedience of Poligars and others of our Tributaries to their confidence in our Justice rather than to the dread of our power (Cited in Beaglehole 1966 : 65).

'The Directors found Munro's actions objectionable, and they absolutely opposed 'so dangerous and indirect a means' as to set the tribute demand so high that poligars must default and thus lose their lands: that such a principle of conduct should have suggested itself to Major Munro's mind, is to us a matter of surprise and regret.. [for] it is our wish to uphold and preserve the poligars in their rights and enjoyment in the soil whilst we gradually aim at the reduction of their military power and wean them from feudal habits.' The Madras government was declared to be at fault for giving its approval to Munro's deceitful poligar policy, and Munro himself, they said, should be removed from his office and never again employed in any Revenue Post in future which the violent and mistaken principles of his conduct seem to render him unqualified to fill' (Beaglehole 1966:65).

Against those harsh recriminations Munro's defence was prompt and creditable. His instructions and support from Lord Clive had been unambiguous and sustained with respect to poligars. He did not seek nor expect special instructions with regard to the 'Vimlah' poligar. That action was justified by the circumstances and proved to be salutary, for, from the time of the deposition of that chief, not only did the poligars come into line with Company authority in the dry tracts of Rayalaseema, but Munro successfully negotiated the surrender of rebellious poligars in Arcot in the Tamil country. He also applied to Clive's successor, Bentinck, for intervention against influential members of the Madras establishment who opposed his poligar policies. The strictures of the Directors against Munro and their call for his dismissal were not pressed, though the odor of that affair lingered in Madras among many who viewed

the 'Vimlah'¹ incident as a part of larger problem involving military collectors, an issue which also came to a head in 1802 (see Beaglehole 1966 : (>5-67).

Having pacified this turbulent region and survived the criticisms of his means and the attack upon military collectors, two complex and **taxing** processes mainly occupied Munro from 1800 to late 1807. These were, first, the establishment of the ryotwar system of revenue administration there and polemicizing for its adoption elsewhere and second the provisioning of Arthur Wellesely's army in the war against the Marathas from late 1802 to early 1805. While it was the first of these, together with his later judicial reforms, that earned for Munro much of his enduring fame as the humane and just face of British imperial establishment and deepened his friendships with many important people not least with Arthur Wellesley, the future Duke of Wellington. The irony of this is that the usual focus upon ryotwar and its administrative implications, and its tunnel-like view of the focus upon ryotwar and its administrative implications, and its tunnel-like view of the future Munro system, neglected to notice that, shortly after Munro's departure from India in late 1807, the system that he had labored so hard to create was dismantled and replaced by the [village lease system. Only when the village leases proved a failure thus Munro's system was restored to by a reluctant Madras establishment, at the insistence of London. However, his contribution to this war against the Marathas-a major turning point in early British imperialism in India-is scarcely noticed in the official or scholarly discussion of Munro in the Ceded Districts. Yet the victory over the Marathas in 1805, to which bullocks and grain from the region contributed so much, made the British the supreme power in the subcontinent, and most importantly in the Delhi heartland of Mughal authority.

For Munro, concerns about empire and administration were absolutely linked, as we know from his earliest letters to his father from India. Thus it is not difficult to see why a system of revenue administration based upon a mass of small peasant holders, under the close administrative scrutiny of a large body of revenue officers and tightly controlled by British officials, would have commended itself to him and other Company officials-like Josiah Webbe-in the Madras of 1800. Even if he were not already won

over to this sort of **scheme**, as Munro had been in the Baramahal by 1797, the objective conditions of the CD might have urged something like **ryotwar** upon him. The Poligars of the Ceded Districts (eighty poligars) their 30,000 or so armed followers, villages fortified, armed, and a history of at least thirty years of marauding armies coursing over the tract-all counseled an arrangement like that which had been evolved in the Baramahal ten years earlier (Stein 1989 : 99).

That plan, as rephrased by Munro in September 1797, contained the essential elements of **ryotwar**. These were: an annual settlement with small farmers who were permitted to add to or freely **reduce** their holdings of the previous year; villages and taluks (districts') jointly liable for revenue failures of individuals; and no additional taxes to be demanded for improvements carried out by farmers. The rules he had introduced into the central division of the Baramahal in 1797 did differ in some respects from later formulations of **ryotwar**. Several of the 1797 rules pertained to provisions for cultivators to take up lands on lease for longer than a year, as then favored by the MBOR. Another stipulation was that all were to pay the same revenue for the same land, a provision substantially altered by the inam settlements in the Ceded Districts and elsewhere. A third prohibited remission except for the cultivation of commercial crops such as cochineal and mulberry (Arbuthnot 1881 : 50-51). **Munro's** underlying political concerns about the central division of the Baramahal, even **before he** fell into line with Read about annual settlements, were evident in the middle of 1794, when he declared his intention to exclude any possible role or influence of leaders of peasant castes, [also called **karaikarj** and small cultivators from pre-existing political and economic networks'] (The Bramahal Records, Section 1, Management: 220).

Thus, when he was appointed to Kanara, Munro had in mind a method and an approach, if not a wholly operational administrative system, and he perceived no difficulty in assimilating what he found in Kanara to his conception. This was remarkable, for almost everything about landholding and the social and environmental conditions of agriculture in kanara were different from those of the Baramahal of his past region of his **future**. Nevertheless, after fifteen months in Kanara he brought away the

conviction that landed property existed there in the form of the **small** estate, and a notion that the Kanara **jenmi** was the same as the small farmer of the Baramahal. This last conceit formed the basis of his persuasive and successful reports of May and November 1800. But the central contribution of his Kanara experience to his view thereafter was that small landed property was ancient in India and could become common again, provided the large intermediate land holders of the Bengal scheme were not installed in Kanara and the revenue demand was moderate. This conception he incorporated into his Kanara reports and carried with him to the Ceded Districts in October 1800, from whence, in the following several years, the **complete** Munro version of ryotwar was issued.

Historical writing on the development of the ryotwari system is too voluminous to recapitulate here. The existence of two major works on the evolution of Munro's programme makes such a task unnecessary, and our purpose is to draw attention to aspects of this evolution under Munro's hands between 1800 and 1807 which appear not to be adequately noticed by Nilmani Mukherjee or T.H. Beaglehole, or by official commentators the subject (Mukherjee 1962 : 17-40; Beaglehole 1966 : 55-87).

The question is whether the state settled its revenue demands upon individual, or small cultivators as Munro claimed. Beaglehole avoids this question and seems to accept, with most official commentators, that Munro's claim was valid, even though Munro himself almost always added that evidence on the point is absent. On the other hand, many of Munro's contemporaries with a much experience and ability such as John Hodgson and Lionel Place-and some modern scholars who have studied the question, have been persuaded that the base from which the revenue was passed, from the point of production to whatever stood for 'state authority', was more likely to be a village or a set of villages (later called a 'mootah'). Munro's critics in the early nineteenth century had only a slim basis in inscriptional evidence to refute his claims about the historicity of ryotwar as a system of direct relations between state officials and cultivators. But where this was cited, as by Ellis in his report on 'mirasi', the effect was telling and might have been devastating upon Munro's position, had not the major **decision** been

made for ryotwar by the time ~~that~~ Ellis' work was published, in 1818. Moreover, Munro's critics, such as Hodgson, made skilful metaphoric use of Munro's elegiac 'village republic' (Stein, 1989: 101).

In the 1808 report of the MBOR, of which John Hodgson was the most influential member (and the most often cited in the document) the decisive argument to the Madras Governor, Sir George Barlow for replacing ryotwar with village leases began with the following proposition:

The country is divided into villages. A village, **geographically**, is a tract of country comprising [sic] some hundreds or thousands acres of arable or waste land; a village **politically**, is a little republic, or rather corporation, **having** within itself, municipal officers **and** corporate artificers; its boundaries are seldom altered; and though sometimes injured, or **even** devastated by war, famine, and epidemical disorders, the same **name, boundaries, interests,** and **even** families. continue for ages (The fifth Report, V.3, Report of 25 April 1808 : 431).

The later sections of the report echo Munro 'The village (Mozawar) system is, at least as old, as the age of Menu... Every village with its twelve *ayagandees* ...is a petty common-wealth...and India is a great assemblage of such commonwealths (The Fifth Report, V. 3 : 435) It is important to keep in mind that Munro himself, in his late reports on the Ceded Districts, acknowledged that more than a third of the villages of the region had a corporate form of organization similar to mirasi in Chingleput and Tanjore, in which they settle among themselves the exact proportion of the whole rent that each individual is to pay'. This was the '*veespuddi*' (visabadi) system which presupposes a group of persons entitled to enjoy the major benefits of landed income and to stand jointly responsible for a tax placed upon the village as a whole. It must be granted that Munro's reiteration of the historic character of ryotwar was never the principal argument for ryotwar; hence, it should not be given exagge-rated significance by those who wish to understand that historical context. However, Munro's history should be appreciated for the rhetorical contribution that it made at the time, when he was confronted with over 200,000 individual cultivators of the Ceded Districts to pay their annual land revenue, ranging as he wrote later, from Rs. 10 to 10,000 (Stein, 1989 : 102).

As compared with the Baramahal, and certainly with Kanara, the Ceded Districts presented Munro numerous problems of ticklish nature. Where as in the Baramahal, an

annual settlement involved 80,000 pattadars, that is farmers who engaged to cultivate particular fields for the year and at a fixed revenue rate, in the Bellary region the number was about 209,000 in 1804. In Kanara heavy monsoon rains mired the few roads. In the Ceded Districts, on the other hand, welled rivers that traversed that territory, and made ascent to upland villages difficult, the 26,000 square miles of the region made it necessary for an administrator of the diligence of Munro to move about incessantly. During the administrative year 1805-6 (fasly 1215), Munro's correspondence provides evidence of the following itinerary: late March 1805, Chitvel, late May, Anantapur; early October to early November, Rayadurg; middle November, **Hampi**, Bellary and two smaller places; early December, Adoni; early January 1806, **Harapanahalli**; late February, Rayachoti; and late May, Anantapur. There is no reason to suppose that this was an extraordinary year for him (Mukherjee 1962 : 24).

But there are two elements in the revenue administration of the Ceded Districts that go to the central conception of ryotwar, elements quite different from earlier ideas about it. These were inams and judicial problems. '

That almost half of the cultivation of the Ceded Districts then and for the next 150 years was under privileged revenue demand is at least anomalous, given the principles of ryotwar first articulated by Munro in 1797; that the average revenue demanded for inam holdings was 7 percent of that for the same land on full revenue mocks the expressed principles of ryotwar, though the reasons for this are clear enough. It was well recognized by Munro and his colleagues that the conditions of collecting the stipulated revenue from the region was the provision of a vast reserve of lowly taxed, prime agricultural land at the disposal of the wealthy peasantry. It was also recognized that access to inam holdings at very reduced revenue for inamdars was a means of fixing at least part of the Ceded Districts peasantry in its villages. This meant reducing their migrations, with the stock and skills they possessed, to the nearby on-British territories of Mysore and Hyderabad, or just as alarming from the view point of any collector, to neighboring districts under the Company. Where went the wealthy peasantry went the revenue, and it was by the revenue that careers were made and unmade in Madras. The inam element in the ryotwar of Munro's region meant that this system was a settlement with and for wealthy cultivators, those whom Munro called 'the

better sort of rayets' (the top 20 percent of farmers). This was not the egalitarian system it may have begun to be under Read in the Brahmahal and was claimed by Munro to be throughout his career, even as he also claimed that under ryotwar gradations of ranks in society were preserved in Inams, and this made Munro's ryotwar work, it seems clear, but inams also raised fundamental problems about the extant judicial system.

The new order being created by Munro depended on the recognition by established peasant communities that their welfare was best vested in the securities provided by the tall, hard soldier who represented the Company in the Ceded Districts, rather, than in those of the fierce old fighters who had previously ruled the countryside. Munro's inam policy was meant to make such a decision inevitable, for these respectable peasant communities of the Ceded Districts were the major beneficiaries of the inam policy (Stein 1989 : 103).

The word *in am* is Arabic; it designated a gift, usually of landed income, as an honor of mark of distinction from a ruling authority, and it was often accompanied by a document, *sandad-in am*. This Arabic word entered South Indian usage, ironically, from the Marathas in their seventeenth-century expansion over the southern peninsula. Adopted by the British, the term underwent a change, being extended in meaning in one sense, and contracted in another. *Inam* came to encompass all extant alienation's of land revenue. In this the British took a single technical term of previous administrative usage and applied it to all cases of revenue privileges which they additionally asserted were conditional, not permanent. The usefulness of such an adoption should not be minimized. As a gloss for a variety of entitlements which in the various Dravidian languages implied a moral component, inam as a technical term was contracted in meaning by the denial of moral content and by the view of a wide-range of prior grants as contingent, utilitarian, and service-connected alienation's which could be resumed at the discretion of the state. For the Madras establishment, the example of Tipu Sultan was a precedent. His official policy of disallowing various prior alienation's of landed income, including those for support of Hindu shrines and religious persons, while extending those to **Mulsim** institutions and persons, was inspired by his consciousness of being a Muslim sovereign-as were his nomenclature

changes in calendar, titles, and currency. Somehow, Munro's superiors in Madras or in London appear to have not noticed the cognitive disorder of, on the one hand, justifying the wars against the Muslim Mysore state on the basis of its religious oppression, while, on (or with) the other hand, seizing all of the privileges of sovereignty that Tipu Sultan had possessed (Stein 1989 ; 103-104).

Munro collected a mass of information about inams in the **Ceded** Districts, and regularly sent it to Madras. Among his first instructions to tahsildars in the Adoni taluk, anticipation of his young assistant Thackeray's assuming charge of it, was for all inams to be carefully examined and information about them sent to Munro's office. However, neither he nor his superiors in Madras ever undertook to consider the entire matter of inams, nor seriously to question or justify their continuation at a level which was seen as massive in his most complete statement about them in 1806 (MC, F/151/106 : ff 57-70, Cf Stein 1989).

Inams then comprised 44 percent of all of the cultivated acres in the Ceded Districts and, though less clear, paid a mere 7 percent of assessed revenue for fields under inam holder (inamdars). Moreover, Munro had reported in 1801 that the potential revenue from inam lands in the region constituted 54 percent of the total land revenue actually collected. Such a glaring fact could not have been missed by the *MBOR* nor eventually, by the Court of Directors in London. The latter called for explanations in 1804, and they repeated the call in 1811, suggesting that their earlier queries had gone unanswered. Even then, little of anything official was undertaken on the inam question in the Ceded Districts and this was quite desultory considering the singularity of the concern for revenue by the Company, then and later. In fact, no reductions in inam holdings (nor even serious questions about their appropriateness) were entertained until quite late in the nineteenth century, by the Inam Commission. Even so, by the end of the century about half of the revenue-yielding lands of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies was under privileged revenue demand, and the inam category was not wholly abolished until after independence, in 1950 (Robert 1982).

Some judicial regulations and procedures impinged upon the operations of ryotwar and the resumption of 'unauthorized' inams, according to Munro. He claimed that most litigation's arose from these two causes and also that the courts were hopelessly unprepared to deal with cases arising under both. Partly, this was because revenue regulations in Madras had been set in anticipation of a permanent, Zamindari settlement, with respect to which annual settlements with individual cultivators were antagonistic; and partly it was because the court system, which was established with the same anticipation, lacked the expert knowledge and experience to deal with problems involving either the revenue or inams. At the same time, he was to carry on a debate, through official and unofficial channels, with his superiors in Madras on the same matters. This was with William Petri, President of the MBOR from AD 1800, who was respectful of but not wholly persuaded by Munro's ryotwar arguments. The second person with whom Munro debated was Bentinck, Governor of the Presidency, who, while convinced by Munro on ryotwar, was too much the politician to attack a judicial system promulgated by the great Cornwallis and impatiently pressed by the Governor-General, Richard Wellesley.

When Zamindari revenue regulations were extended to Madras in 1802, it was provided that the land revenues of as yet unsettled districts of Madras should be made permanent as Zamindar estates; or, if that was not possible, under leasehold estates; or, failing that, under an annual ryotwar settlement until a permanent system could be established. These were the provisions of modified Zamindari worked out for those parts of Avvadh which had been ceded to the Company in 1800. To Petrie, Munro protested against the too hasty construction of revenue estates in Madras as yet insufficiently known to predict whether or how they would work: 'It is really an extraordinary method of proceeding-first to deprive yourself of the means of acquiring information, and then to sit gravely down to pursue your research' (Bacghole 1966:76-77). Bentinck needed no convincing about the inappropriateness of the Bengal-Awadh revenues scheme for Madras and had determined in June 1805 to see Wellesley in Calcutta to protest against its introduction in Madras. But on the matter of the Bengal judicial system he opposed Munro and the MBOR, both of whom protested that these judicial arrangements as being best for Madras. Accordingly, the courts were introduced in all of

the districts of Madras in 1806, even in territories like the Ceded District's which were not fully surveyed for revenue purposes.

Nevertheless, Munro continued his opposition to a judicial system which he was convinced was in conflict with an equitable and constructive revenue administration, for him the central pillar of British rule in India and one best realized through ryotwar continued this struggle for another eight years before his views prevailed. The reasons for this obsessive opposition were of two sorts. One line of reasoning was public and turned on practical as well as principled difficulties of a judicial system whose procedures were considered by him as inimical to indigenous custom and social realities. On this most conceded that Munro was correct. His arguments were advanced in reports beginning in 1807. The other reasons arose from his realistic apprehension of the politics of policy determination in British India. This was knowledge that he did not possess ten years before in the Baramahal, when he adopted ryotwar and gave to that mode of revenue administration a voice that it had not previously had. The second reason was, in many ways, the guiding one for his long and successful opposition to the Company judiciary.

After the first few years of the Ceded Districts administration, Munro had come to understand that the single, great requirement for enduring British rule over India was the construction of a unified conception of sovereignty derived from and therefore appropriate for India. This understanding was not nearly so perfect as it was to become by 1824, when it received eloquent expression in his Minute of 31 December, but the kernel of that understanding was planned by 1806. Believing as he did that British rule rested on land revenue administration (Appendix 6), and believing further that the principles of ryotwar were best calculated to establish that foundation, he had become convinced that the usual reason for rejecting ryotwar—that it was at odds with established principles of jurisprudence as derived from British law and experience—must be attacked at the highest political level. His opposition here was formidable; the arrogant confidence that British institutions provided the essential means for ruling India according to the still hallowed Cornwallies. His attack upon the Bengal system was unrelenting—against its zamindari revenue regime and its A wadh M odifications,

as well as deeper Anglicized commitment of which law was the center piece. Munro launched this attack upon all levels of the system of Company policy determination, and the center of his attack was against the existing legal system, with respect to which ryotwari could never be made to fit. Ryotwar in Munro's hands would not change; the law must.

More immediately, however, in the few years that he remained in the Ceded Districts and India, Munro pressed his argument on the incompatibility of the court system with normal administration because it not only ignored but also contradicted many Indian customs and realities. An example of this line of argument is found in his letter to the *MBOR* on 15 May 1807. There, he began in an interesting way by denying the relevance of some of the reigning historical authorities, 'Manu' (Manu) and Abul Fazi, on a matter where they had previously served him. In attempting to determine the proportion of the gross produce which actually went to the cultivator and that which was taken by the state. Munro questioned the relevance of Manu and Abul Fazi in that spoke of the state receiving a low one third to one-sixth as its share of gross production. And yet it was necessary for Manu to require that any landholder who failed to cultivate his land should have it taken and given to another. Munro asked why, 'if the share to the state was low as claimed, a landholder would not quite happily cultivate his land, and concluded that the assessment in ancient times was not low but high. Still, practical experience of the Company's officials every-where in Madras, except on the Malabar coast, was that one-third of gross production was all that a cultivator could pay to the state and still realize a sufficient profit from farming to make a land a valuable asset. The benefits of a moderate revenue demand in increasing land values and private property in land would be greatest under a ryotwar mode of settlement than under either a zemindary or mootadarry (village lease) settlement (Stein 1989 : 106-107).

Regardless of the mode of settlement, however, the existing judicial system was a barrier to progress. There were then, and there would continue to be, long delays in actions involving property owing to the formal procedures of the courts as then constituted. It was vexatious for cultivators to attend often distant zillah courts, for this interfered with cultivation. He argued that bribery, the concomitant of delays in suits

any Judge can possibly be... Then, in late 1807, on the eve of his departure to Europe, Munro delivered a farewell exhortation to Bruce on the subject of the relations between revenue and judicial officials. He reminded Bruce that the existing regulations were not well adapted to a permanent settlement of the revenue, and 'still less for a Ryotwar one', for they led inevitably to a clash between both kinds of officers and therefore required the prudence and good temper of both. Bruce was urged never to impede the 'Collector and to act towards his revenue successors in the Ceded Districts you would have them act to you if they were judge'. If differences arose, Bruce was to work them out with his revenue colleagues, for Government dislikes being troubled with petty disputes' and forms bad opinions of those involved.

Though grateful to have the sympathetic Bruce, whom he warmly recommended, Munro had made efforts to avert any appointment or court in the region. When Bentinck had written to him in April 1806 for advice about where the new zillah court should be located in the Ceded Districts, Munro had responded that no place in the region recommended itself. Cuddapah, the most central place, was also the hottest in the Ceded Districts and Rayachoti, another proposed site, was rejected as unhealthy. Munro suggested that Nellore might be a better place for the Ceded Districts court. Though this would place the court some seventy miles outside the Ceded Districts, that was not a problem. The people of the Ceded Districts are a more hardy and travelling race than those on the coast; in any case, the major consideration in locating the court should be the convenience of the judge, not the Indian litigant. This might have been viewed as disingenuous in the light of Munro's criticisms of the court system as taking cultivators from their fields for the treks to and long absences at distant courts. In any case, the Nellore suggestion was rejected and the court was set up in the Ceded Districts under the compliant Bruce, leaving Munro free to refine ryotwar practice through the training of others. William Thackeray was one of the first, and he remained devoted to Munro's interests on the whole throughout his very long career. In 1806, now an experienced ryotwar collector, Bentinck was considering Thackeray for a judgeship in Ceded Districts. However, he was instead appointed the judge of Masulipatnam, but remained available to Munro as a spokesman on matters judicial revenue relations and on ryotwar in general from 1806. At that time, Bentinck designated Thackeray as his expert companion for a

projected tour of the residency to determine, finally, whether ryotwar should be adopted. Though Bentinck later decided that he could not undertake the tour, he set Thackeray that task. Immediately, Thackeray applied to his mentor, Munro, for guidance on how he should proceed and what questions had to be seriously considered. Thackeray appears to have fully shared Munro's antipathy to the intrusion of the courts in 1806. He wrote to Munro in May 1806, thanking the latter for his advice on how to proceed with the tour and passing the news that three more judges were to be appointed within the month. However, one of the three new appointees was to be James Cochrane, another of Munro's proteges from the Ceded Districts and thus another ally (Stein 1989 : 109-110).

In all, a good number of young Britons in the civil service of Madras passed through Munro's hands while he was in the region, and many of them in their turn became collectors who trained another cohort of men dedicated to the Munro system. The awe in which Munro was held by his juniors was obvious and earned by Munro's experience, confidence and ability. That there was also affection is attested by the correspondence that exists. We have seen that Munro was reluctant to have junior men assigned to him the Ceded Districts because, as he argued, it would not ease his administrative tasks and it might inhibit his political ones. But once there, Munro proved a patient teacher and a supportive superior. This may be best judged from the full correspondence with Peter Bruce which has survived, but it is found with respect to his other trustees as well, and on a great variety of topics (Stein 1989 : 110).

Ryotwar and its operation was the obvious topic of importance. His instructions to Thackeray, when the latter assumed responsibility for the Adoni division in 1800, comprise among the clearest exposition on ryotwar that Munro ever constructed. Thackeray was told that the 'patals' were answerable for the revenue of their villages and jointly with other headmen for the districts in which their villages were. They would settle with 'inferior rayets' partly in grain, but mostly in money, and any surplus over what the headman contracted to pay to Thackeray's revenue officials was to be retained by the headmen, since they were collectively liable for revenue deficiencies. On the last,

Munro cautioned not to be harsh on the collection of deficits from village headmen; they were not to be weakened 'materially'.

Munro provided Thackeray and his other assistants with their initial staff of Indian subordinates, and any changes in their stalls were to be made by each of them after having interviewed candidates carefully. He told Thackeray that the inhabitants of Adoni were to understand that he, not Munro, would 'manage the country'. One way to assure the last was for Thackeray to maintain a double office staff; one 'cutcherry' made up of Marathi speakers, and the other of Kannada speakers. This, he said, would stimulate competition and minimize cabals against him, and it would ensure that there was open communication regarding government business.

It is by general and unreserved communication not merely with your own cutcherry, but with such of your tahsildars or inferior servants as appear to be men of capacity, and by receiving all opinions, and being guided explicitly by none, that you can restrain every person in office within the line of his duty, guard the rayets from oppression, and the public revenue from deflation, and preserve in your own hands an perfect control of the country (MC F/151/10, 1.5).

The great expanse of waste-uncultivated, but cultivable land and the Ceded Districts were to be healed as a special problem by Thackeray. The policy of granting such lands, on lower revenue through issuance of a 'cowle'(kaul) to expand cultivation in the country was to be carried out with caution. Thackeray must recognize that the prime objective of the ryot was to maximize his money income and this was necessarily in conflict with the collectors objective of maximizing the revenue. While the government wanted to increase the cultivation of wasteland for added food and industrial raw material, not to speak of revenue was most likely to conic. Similar care had to be taken with the grant of production loans from the revenue, or 'taccavi', to be repaid at the time of harvest. Munro wanted that unless care was exercised, these production loans were used by zamildars, shcristadars and other revenue officials to improve their own lands while being shown in their records as loans to others. Munro's method in both matters was to insist that accurate records be kept, to constantly query cultivators about cowels and taccavi, and to frequently inspect their proper application in person. Tank repairs was another matter on which fraud could occur, especially for funds for such repairs be

accompanied by detailed surveys. As to the construction of new tanks to replace badly silted ones, Munro was discouraging: 'scarcely any place where a tank can be made to advantage.. has not already been applied to this purpose (The fifth Report V.3 : 204).

Other matters on which Munro instructed all of his assistants had to do with inams, poligars and trade. Some attention has already been given to the first two. On inams Munro usually answered queries from his assistants by relating how he dealt with particular kinds of inams, and essentially by counseling the renewal of inams where there was some proof that these had existed for a considerable time. On poligars, once he had completed his draconian measures against them, he advised that these chiefs should be supported. When Bruce informed him that the allowance of the poligar of Chitvel, Rs.(500, had been stopped owing to an action by poligar 's wakil(agent) in Madras, it was Munro who decides that the allowance should be resumed and the wakil investigated for swindling the poligar and punished (MDF 151 12 Munro to Bruce 12 June 1806). On the Company's trade in the Ceded Districts and the operation of the Madras Board of Trade's commercial residents in the CD. (Appendix - 8) Munro became increasingly critical of their interference with free commerce and their exploitation of the region merchants and artisans. Still he maintained a scrupulously correct position in instructions to his juniors. In 1804 he sent them a circular about an impending visit to the region of the commercial resident, J.Greenhill. He said it was their responsibility to ascertain that all engagements entered by weavers were voluntary, but once made they must be enforced. No sales of cloth by weavers was to be permitted until contracts with the Company had been fulfilled. However, coercion by head weavers, often using Company peons and even soldiers, was discouraged. (On the other hand, however, Munro was quite prepared to interfere with market arrangements if necessary. Accordingly, he sent a circular to his assistants in 1804 with the instruction that because of the grain scarcity of that year of drought and crop damage, and with large procurements to meet the needs of Wellesley's army in Maharashtra, all sales of the region's grain outside the territory notably in Raichur north of the Tungabhadra, were to be curtailed (MC f 151 10, 7 August 1804).

Many of his instructions and much of his supervision pertained to matters involving Indian subordinate officials. (Appendix - 7) Their large number which Munro took to be a strength of ryotwar and his critics its weakness-occupied much of his time. Munro often stripped his own staff of its best people to supply the initial staff of his new assistants. in effect, he was conducting a double training process during most of his time in the region, that of young British Chilians and Indians. His consistent instructions to the former was that they just depend upon and support their Indian subordinates.

Being acutely conscious of his own dependence upon Indian subordinates. Munro was aware of how much greater it was for his assistants. The balance between encouraging his European subordinates to carry out their responsibilities in an independent manner to be seen to be managing affairs in their jurisdictions and interfering with his own superior experience was a delicate one which Munro managed admirably. This is brought out in an exchange with Bruce in 1806 when the latter complained about an exchange of letters between this sheristadar, Hanumantha Rao, and Munro. Munro hastened to sooth: 'sorry that my correspondence with your servants should have given you so much uneasiness, and that you should have supposed that my writing to them proceeded from any want in confidence in you. There was no assistant with whom he was more pleased that Bruce, he said, and the correspond- ence with Hanumantha Rao had arisen over some matters in Munro's division of the Ceded Districts, not about Bellary. The delicate sensibilities of all involved was very much in Munro's mind and in his instructions. To Bruce, in 1804, he had written that Hanumantha Rao was to be in charge of settling the revenues with the ryots and that Bruce should inspect such arrangements and determine that all increases or decreases in revenue were justifiable. But you should take care not to do away (i.e. alter) in the presence of rayets what he has settled, because this would lessen his influence so much that he would not be able to make anything of them. You should hear the complaints or objections of the rayets against the settlement, but never make any alteration unless on the fullest conviction that it is right. The vulnerability of European officials to their trusted Indian subordinates was widely recognized. The young Alexander Read, who had served under Munro briefly in the Baramahal and had succeeded him in Kanara (along with another

Munro protegee. John G. Ravenshaw), refers to this in a letter to his younger colleague James Cochrane before the latter joined Munro in the Ceded Districts. Read wrote that when taking up a new posting in a district not yet permanently settled, it was an accepted practice for the collector-designate to bring 'as many of his own people fit to serve as amildar as possible'. He should also bring an able *peshkar*, or head (office) man, a good seerishtadar and one or two clever gomasthas'. These were to replace 'corrupt' officials that were found in the new post and persuade of the people of the district of the 'fairness' of the new regime. The worst scandal that could beset a ryotwar collector was the loss of control of his district to a cabal of revenue servants. The wreckage of careers of company collectors strewed the revenue history of Madras from this cause, and, as Munro knew it was one of the persistent reasons for the resistance of governments in India and London to ryotwar (Stein 1989 : 112-113).

There were other hazards of which Munro sought to make his European juniors aware and to have entered into their executive calculations as collectors. One of these given thought and expression by Munro to early in his Ceded Districts administrations the proper level of revenue to be demanded from the cultivators. In September 1802 he wrote to Thomas Cockburn, an old friend and senior official of the MBOR from 1793, on his perceptions of the pressures that affected the level of revenue demanded.

The desire that men at the head of affairs usually have of seeking the country, or atleast the public income, flourishing under their auspices, will most probably compel me to proceed too rapidly, and bring revenue to a standard four or five lacs below the point to which it ought to have reached. If I am ever left entirely to my own judgement it is possible enough that I may have sufficient resolution to follow the wisest course. I may get nervous as I get older, and become afraid of the of censure. If I leave room for my successor to raise the revenue, it would be said that I allowed the inhabitants to defraud Government. If I raise all that the country can pay, and he could raise no more, it would be said that I had oppressed the people for the sake of exhibiting a high settlement. However, I shall, for the sake of assisting the public want of money, press the rails rather more than I ought to do (Gleig Y 1. 1830 : 334-335).

Other matters touching revenue and the welfare of cultivators were not within the power of the collector to totally control in a place as poor as the Ceded Districts, but still efforts were to be made to minimize revenue losses. Thus, he wrote to his assistants in 1802 that there was a period in most years, from early in April to the middle of July

(the lunar months of Chaitra, to 'Jaisht' or Jyestham) when poor peasants desert their villages and even their taluks, looking for easier terms of landholding. This was called the 'kalawedi' season (Tamil: Kalavadi, meaning sweepings from the threshing floor). Then, village headmen sought to lure poor fanners from elsewhere by offering low revenue demands, and this encouraged the 'spirit of emigration...(and) hinders the improvement of land, warned Munro. Therefore, each assistant was advised to instruct village headmen and accountants that no cowles were to be granted to non-resident cultivators at rates lower than standard, even if the migrant cultivators were indigent, or in a of what was called 'nadar' (Wilson, Glossary : 250). Vigilance for the Company's revenue and concern for career must override other considerations.

In the light of this, Munro's warnings to his assistants were unceasing. To Bruce, again, regarding reportedly large loans made by the sheroif or money-changer attached to the latter's office, Munro wrote that 'if the sheroff is much involved in debt I should not think him a safe man, for he will be endeavoring to speculate on the coins of the kist (revenue installments paid into the collector's treasury) (MC. I² 151 11, Munro to Bruce, 7 May 1804). To all of his such-collectors he had written in 1802 that he had taken the precaution of canceling the outstanding debts of tahsildars because many were found to be the result of bribes for their appointments then. He urged his assistants to do likewise so that they and other Indian officials were under no obligations which might suborn them. He also advised that they guard against future debts and presents involving such officials for the same reasons of the corrupting consequences of such practices. To his orders that each assistant was to have a dual staff of servants using Marathi or Kannada or Telugu, he added to exercise care in the appointment of 'crakoons' (karkun), subordinate registrars and writers. They were often, he said, appointed at the recommendation of Zamindars from among their kinsmen, but should be independent men who might be 'useful as spies. In view of Munro's later strong advocacy of a 'native agency', i.e. major administrative responsibilities for Indians, such suspicions and minute scrutiny of Indian subordinate officials who were so essential for the operation of his method may seem contradictory. However, then and later Munro insisted that the venality of Indian officials was inversely proportional to their rewards in money and

honours, and he urged that the Company increase both. In any case, the embarrassment of a scandal involving his Indian subordinates never happened to Munro during the fifteen or so years that he served as a collector, and one reason for this was the close supervision he exercised (Stein 1989 : 114-115).

It is difficult to think that Munro's plans could have progressed as far as they did during most of his time in the region without Lord Bentinck's warm support as a balance against a usually hostile Board of Revenue. Perhaps it was with an eye to bolstering Munro's reputation in London as well as his own strong confidence in Munro and his methods that Bentinck arranged for the son of the then President of the Board of Control, Lord Minto, to serve as assistant under Munro in the Ceded Districts. Writing to Munro in 1806, Bentinck had reported that his old friend Minto had suggested that his son serve the Company in Madras city, but the Governor urged instead that the young man, whom he described to Munro as 'energetic and intelligent', should learn about India, and the best means for this was to work with Munro. Minto agreed that his son should become 'an able revenue servant', but the plan was scrapped when Minto was appointed Governor-General late in 1806. In these arrangements involving Minto's son, William Thackeray may have had an influential role, for in 1806 Bentinck had come to depend upon him and to see him, perhaps, as Munro's surrogate.

Thackeray had been singled out to be Bentinck's special advisor on the permanent settlement of Madras revenues and to accompany him on a tour of the Presidency to determine, finally, which mode of settlement was to be adopted. Thackeray had then been in Company service for thirteen years and had sound knowledge of the Company's commercial operations. This he gained in the Northern Circars before joining Munro in the region in 1800, and subsequently when, following his three years there as a revenue assistant of Munro's, he was for three additional years judge of the zillah court in Masulipatnam. Regarding the tour Thackeray wrote to Munro: "I shall have an opportunity of discussing revenue matters, and it is a good thing to know the best system": then, plaintively for so seasoned an official:

I therefore beg of you to write me your ideas of the best way of settling the country permanently as they call it. You used to write to me a great deal... I wish that you would again. . . . and write me an Indian utopia, or a scheme for managing a country in India.... If you could do this, it may do much good, and I may have an opportunity of explaining your principles of govt. and expatiating on their benefit in such a way as to produce good (MG F 151/9, Thackeray to Munro, 30 January 1806).

Three months later, as plans for the tour matured, Thackeray again wrote requesting some queries by which to inform himself on the relative merits of permanent Zamindari and ryotwar systems. He said that there were doubts expressed in Madras about the appropriateness of ryotwar and again pleaded: 'if you desert me now, I shall look foolish'. During the ensuing months of 1806 Thackeray wrote frequently and with growing assurance about the tour. He thanked Munro for the suggestions the latter had sent. Out of these Thackeray said he had 'Compiled a pretty dissertation on permanent Ryotwar settlement which is not worth sending to you though the Board of Revenue are engaged in refuting my principles.' Thackeray's notes on ryotwar had been passed to the MBOR by Bentinck, for their comment - 'bones for the Board of Revenue and Bengalees [i.e. those in Madras who favored a Zamindari settlement there] to gnaw at... it is all your sentiments and most likely your words in many places' (MC. F 151 9, 5 May 1806).

Objectors to Munro's ideas as reformulated by Thackeray were led by John Hodgson of the MBOR. According to Thackeray's report there were two major objections to ryotwar. One was its failure to attend Regulation XXX of 1802 which specified the protection to tenants by Zamindars. To this Thackeray remarked: "Neither I nor any other judges nor the natives here [in Masulipatnam] can make out exactly what the devil said regulation means..." The other objection was its presumed social leveling. Proponents of a Zamindari settlement insist that 'we must have a nobility in the country and regular gradation of society.... ryots composing the base, the Zamindars above them all like the apex of the pyramids'. Thackeray concluded with the news that he intended to propose a public debate, with himself supporting ryotwar and Hodgson taking the zamindari position (MC. F/1519, 16 June 1806).

Shortly after this, he was raised to the MBOR by Bentinck. Thackeray wrote that Bentinck actually favoured Munro for this appointment to the MBOR, as its president but that appointment 'would have brought down a terrible storm, and you are certainly needed in the Ceded Districts'. Bentinck, he assured Munro, is very strenuous for ryorwar, however not another soul here supports it though 'the Court of Directors... seem to have some idea of its utility'. In the end, Thackeray undertook the tour of the Presidency without Bentinck, who had become engulfed in the aftermath of the Vellore Mutiny of July 1806, an event which ended, for the time, his Indian ambitions. Thackeray's report of 4 August 1807 with its support for a permanent ryorwar settlement is preserved in the Filth Report, as the final words its lengthy appendixes, a fitting place for perhaps the most eminent of Munro's apprentices in the Ceded Districts.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Issues related to state have always **remained** crucial to many historical studies, and this thesis is one of such an endeavour in that direction: **The** structure of the state, the social section that it represents, and the means of control that it adopts in the context of Bellary region with special reference to Vijayanagara and post-Vijayanagara is emphasised in this **thesis**.

An exposition of late **medieval** political **formations** during what may be described as the 'post-Vijayanagara phase' in south India with special relevance to **the** Bellary region (which -currently forms a part of the modern linguistic state of Karnataka) is taken as a parameter to study the pre-colonial socio-economic formation in South India.

Also, the present attempt tries to steer clear of existing categories or frameworks of classification like 'feudalism' and 'peasant state' by leaving the '**centre** and periphery' and **concentrating** on the 'intermediate levels of authority', a relatively neglected area in the studies on South Indian state. The social section which represented the intermediary levels of authority in this context appears to be **mainly** of hunter-gatherer and pastoral backgrounds such as the Boya Bedar poligars of Harapanahalli **and** the Kuruba poligars of Bellary, respectively.

The interregnum, following the decline of the imperial Vijayanagara empire (founded in AD 1336), and lasted for well over three centuries (when it collapsed Bahmanis made inroads in AD 1565) until the onset of British colonial rule, has not received due attention. It should be mentioned here that **simultaneous** with the emergence of regional powers, the Shiaite Muslims established (A.D. 1347) the **Bahamani** empire at Gulbarga, which soon broke into five independent kingdoms - Bijapur, Bidar, Berar, Ahmadnagar and Golconda. These five kingdoms, by exploiting the mutual rivalries among the native powers, extended their sway upto Raichur in the Krishna valley. By 15th century A.D. the **Rajas** of Vijayanagara succeeded to emerge as a strong political force and resisted the Muslim power in the south. Evidently, the perceivable gulf signalled

the end of a major political era with its medieval past through a political continuum into early modern times. offers many missing links. Most traditional historians on medieval south India ended their enquiries at the fall of Vijayanagara; and those dealing with the modern period stalled their writings preferably with the advent of the British, or in some cases with the national movement. Hence an attempt has been made in this dissertation to analyse some of the political processes in this interlude, which are largely uncovered. In salvaging the post-Vijayanagara history, this thesis has made sufficient use of, literary accounts, belonging to both 'little* and 'great traditions, and also to sources such as *Rajavahanavijaya* and *Amuktamalyada*, both attributed to Krishnadevaraya, to explain his political expediency in integrating the Boyas into the power structure as "frontier guards". Similarly, the local Kyfiats collected by Colin Mackenzie have been analysed to explain the social origins and role perceptions of poligars and Kavaligars, the sub-regional intermediaries of the supra-local power.

The post-Vijayanagara phase belongs to the twilight zone in the political evolution of south India, and so described variously as the 'nayaka period' in respect of Tamil country, or simply the late medieval period, or sometimes even as the 'late pre-colonial past' by some (eg. Frank Perlin). This categorisation provides each period with a particular identity. For too long, the British regime in the whole of the subcontinent has been treated as completely different from all prior states. As a comparative perspective, if we observe carefully, the spatial and temporal controls in the Vijayanagara as well as post-Vijayanagara phases were different from the much earlier Chola period during the same medieval time span. There can be no difficulty in agreeing with Stein (1989, see chap. II) that Vijayanagara represents a major shift in the locus of political power from the riverine wet zones of high agriculture in the Tanjore deltas (Cholamandalam) to the plateau or upland - dry zone of marginal agriculture. What is interesting note here is that the "activity space" and the cultural landscapes remained the same, and the shadows of the medieval legacy of Vijayanagara continued to persist in the dry Bellary region.

State formation is complex. The privilege extended to the unitary state formation almost always entails a unilinear power structure. If we reject the unitary conception of states, the other alternative that needs to be examined is the feudal formations. The unitary

state with a single administrative corpse, a centralised **concentration** of coercive means, and fixed territory does not comprehend all forms; it neglects those political formations variously called as 'feudal', 'patrimonial bureaucratic' or 'segmentary **states**.' This may have something to do with the conceptual models that may lead to the reconstruction of object (according to the parameters of its model) rather than to its interpretation'. Recognition of the fact that there may be principles of **statehood** different from the conventional unitary state opens the potential for **refining the** concept of state, **more** so, the late medieval state in south India. It is in this light that the present thesis has been **viewed**, to substantiate an argument that the late medieval state in south India was essentially a multi-centered state, characterised by divergent elements of power. **The** essential point here is that different, even conflicting principles of political association may exist in the same time and place, and among the same people, and that these different principles may also be understood as appropriate, or **legitimate**. That at least seems the possibility in considering the pre-colonial states of south India, and even early colonial state.

The power structure of the medieval state in this region was **multicentred**, based on patrimonial legacy and **prebendal** rights and properties. Through patrimonial legacy the peasant-warrior families, often referred to as the *sat-sudra* in the epigraphs, amassed considerable properties and control over the local resources. They actively participated in the state expansion strategies and acquired the newly found villages through the **prebendal** rights bestowed on them for which **they lent** their allegiance. The kings, for the sustenance of their settlement frontiers relied on the holders of the patrimonial rights. The mutual alliances and the **internicine** conflicts, the prime feature of the medieval polity, caused no political power to sustain constant boundaries for more than a century.

Even at the pan-Indian level, there seems **to be a common understanding** in regarding this near ending pre-modern phase. **During the past few years, several studies** have begun to probe **the complexities of the late pre-colonial regimes of the subcontinent**. These studies share certain dispositions which, whatever **their differences, require that they** be considered as a new historiographical view. **It is generally considered that** the century or so from 1750 to 1850 as a period of **transition from the extant old regimes in** various parts of the sub-continent to the colonial regimes **which were to dominate Indian**

history for the next century. The eighteenth century is a time of economic vigour, even development, and hence the conventional characterization of the time as one of chaos and economic decline is now being rejected. This is very much true of the pre-colonial Bellary region where the agrarian economy had been rigorously changing, giving rise to forces of commercialisation and market economy with widespread tank irrigation promoted by both the Muslim rulers, and the sub-regional intermediaries. But, the present thesis differs with their postulate in seeing early colonial-regimes as a continuation of prior indigenous regimes of the subcontinent. It is so because, here in the case of the Bellary Region, the British rule in the early nineteenth century constitutes a fundamental break with prior historical developments by dismantling old bastions of power on historical and political grounds, and by the introduction of an altogether new agrarian reform, namely, the ryotwari system by the British as elsewhere in the Madras Presidency. Perhaps what may be lightly said is that the inroads of colonialism were made possible by the volatile political situations prevalent in the entire Rayalaseema with the dictatorial, autocratic local potentates and fluctuating central authority, which was often changing hands.

And the reasons for tailing upon Bellary for such an exercise do not merely rest in its medieval legacy as the 'epicentre' of Vijayanagara ruling systems, but even in the most turbulent centuries that followed thereafter, during the late medieval period as the bastion of pre-colonial politics dominated by poligari strongholds forming the core of patrimonial regimes in this upland Deccan plateau. It may be recalled that the poligars numbering around eighty as reported by Munro held sway over the whole of Rayalaseema until the British subdued them in about A.D.1800. And not that alone. Even during the colonial period this region acquired a place for itself, comprising the four Ceded Districts of Anantapur, Kurnool and Cuddapah, besides Bellary. It was where Thomas Munro dealt with the problem of poligars most successfully, only to show that, conversely, Bellary reflects a typical picture of 'physically dry, yet politically fertile landscape'!

It is logical to consider some of the salient features of the political formations of the period under study with special reference to Bellary region in one such a political continuum as detailed above.

The thesis has brought to light certain specific sociopolitical institutions evident in the Bellary region in the aftermath of the imperial decline of Vijayanagara. It was essentially the poligari system, with its roots deeply seeped in the hunter-gatherer and pastoral backgrounds. Unlike the earlier kingdoms of the medieval south, the post-Vijayanagara phase presents a marked difference in so far as the polity is concerned. When the royal authority weakened, especially at the time of change of dynastic rule, the dominant lineages of the peasant warrior groups annexed their prebendal rights (which they had acquired from their erstwhile overlords for extending military and political support) to patrimonial legacies to defy the royal authority. And the subsequent Muslim rule that followed was very weak, and failed to retain the status of the previous Vijayanagara ruling system. During the same phase, Bellary region came under the hold of those other than the Bahmani sultanate also, including the Marathas, the Mughals as well as Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan, the Mysorean warlords. Resultantly, this led to instability in the state mechanism due to recurrent changes in the administrative and revenue policies of each ruling authority. As for instance, when the Marathas came onto the scene, they had introduced a special revenue called the *Chant*. However, the poligars remained indomitable throughout, ever increasing in their hold of local dominance. Presumably, this great instability caused by the recurrent changes in the ruling strata with the indomitable, and almost autocratic political intermediaries represented by the Poligars may have given way to the inroads of colonialism by the beginnings of nineteenth century.

Further, the unique ethnic and regional character of Bellary region also partly contributed to this specific historical development in the political evolution of Bellary as the natural habitat for hunter-gatherers and pastoral agriculturists, who, in turn became the sub-regional intermediaries. Although, with the royal initiative. This also suggests to substantiate an argument that the historical influences of a region's 'ecotype' have a direct impact on its political as well as socio-economic systems.

Parallel to the poligari power pockets, there came into existence during the same phase, the amildari and Jagirdari revenue systems evolved by the successor Muslim rulers. These were essentially created to form revenue bases for the state, with the help of those deputies drawn from the ruling strata. They apparently have their similarities

in the Mughal administrative set up, envisaged in the contemporaneous zamindari and mansabdari systems. The core of patrimonial regimes transitional in nature thus evolved were not altogether independent either. They had been ever evolving from one of subordinate status to that of semi-independence. In other words, they were only hinting at sovereignty, never claim it fully, with their legacies still connected to the earlier Vijayanagara kingship.

The dry ecosystem of the Bellary region inevitably led to the parcellization of sovereignty in such a specific character that the holders of patrimonial possessions and rights turned semi-bureaucratic powers and forced the overlordship to accept their sway in their own territories. With the result, the revenue resources were augmented by these sub-regional intermediaries as and when necessary and proclaimed almost 'little kings' status. Ironically, the ritualisation of kingship manifested by these sub-regional powers as homologous to the central power. These holders of patrimonial and prebendal right like the sovereigns of the empires did claim ritual status by demonstrating it through royal paraphernalia such as *dhamka* (big drum used to announce the arrival of the kings) *chatri* (a decorated umbrella to hold while the king is in procession), *dandam* (gold studded hand stick ritually exhibiting the royal power as judge), *rat ham* (a chariot used to take the king in procession) etc. Similar to the kings these sub-regional intermediaries also maintained body guards, militia and held public courts. The poligars of Bellary Like their counterparts in Tamilnadu virtually enjoyed autonomy in their provinces and hence their regime, in this thesis, has been described as 'little kingdoms'. The poligars of Bellary especially those who rose to power from the pastral and hunter-gatherer communities, such as kuruba and Boya in order to acclaim ritual status took prime lead in sponsoring the local gods and goddesses (which are popularly known as jatras). Even to this day the survivors of the poligar families, such as Bellary and Harpanahalli inaugurate the jatras by accepting the customary offerings locally known as *agratamboolam*, which symbolically represents that the god/goddesses bestowed them the blessings to rule.

The poligars of Bellary by following the religious, behavioural modes of the rural masses controlled tactically their territories. This made them ritually strong to enhance their revenue base by adopting similar strategies of their overlords by means of

tax-tribute-plunder matrix. The **revenue** collections of the poligars variously known as *shistu* (tax on the agricultural produce), *sunkam* (tax levied on merchandise passing through their territories), *Pannu* (levies on civil crimes and properties), *kavali rusumu* (tax levied on caravans), *chant* (a form of forced extortion from the neighbouring territories) etc., made the poligars to sustain in power. In order to publicise formal **allegiance** with their overlords, they made a payment known as *peshcush* (tribute to the central powers, be it Marathas, the Hindus, and the Muslim **Rajas/Sultans**).

This structure of the state of the pre-colonial Bellary in a way got misrepresented in the British records. The early colonial administrators such as Thomas Munro, Mark Wilks and Francis Buchanan represented the sub-regional intermediaries (poligars, Zamindars and jagirdars) as plunderers and bandicoots. They even went to **the** extent of showing **in** their records to the Board of Governors at the presidency headquarters, the poligars as unwanted elements in the power structure. In order to develop their logic the early colonial regime created a myth in the form of 'Village Community'. According this the Indian villages were represented as "self **sufficient** closed peasant republican agglomerations surviving in a state of static reciprocal norms and untouched by the political upheavals". In the Bellary and Cuddapah regions, Thomas Munro noticed village servants system prevailing. This system was locally known as '**ayagar**' system and **specifically** called 'panniddarayagars' (barabaloti in Maratha provinces) system. According to **this** system, the village survives by the services of Brahmin priest, *patel* (village headman) **Karnam** (accountant) *jyotishya* (astrologer) *chakali* (washerman) and *mangali* (**barber**) etc. These services were utilised by all sections of villages by paying customarily a **share** of crop, and therefore this system is also known as **mirasidar** (it comes from the root word *merah* which means share) system. These services are paid either by donating pockets of land at rent free and known as inams or a share in the produce.

The British records justified that poligars neither as mirasidars nor as inamdars but as plunderers **since** they do not fit into the reciprocity norms of the village community. Munro taking this exceptional view as a utilitarian champion advocated the removal of these intermediaries through formally legalising the land holdings by issuing a written document called the *pattas* (title deeds) through the ryotwari **system**. In fact, he strategically

manipulated the ryotwari system to strike at the very roots of the sub-regional Intermediary power groups. Instead of collectively facing the poligars, he isolated them and individually tackled by fixing their legal rights in their patrimonial and probendal possession.

Munros's wars with poligars of Harpanahalli, Chitradurga, Kudigi, Bellary etc., are the classic examples to state the intentions of the colonial regime. The powerful poligar regime was given a death blow and these positions were reduced to a kind of rural elite to whom Munro could always have access and blend them to the British interests. A careful examination of the documents of Bellary district reveal that most of the poligars were allowed to stay in their villages and continue as rich peasantry through an inamdari system which the scholars identify as silent settlement.

To surmise from the above discussion, the post Vijayanagara period witnessed the rise of sub-regional intermediaries as local potent power groups and their fall in the hands of the British through the ryotwari system. The multi-centred power structure of the pre-colonial Bellary was subjugated to centralised bureaucratic system of the British administration.

APPENDIX - 1 (a)

STATEMENT OF POLIGARS IN THE CEDED DISTRICT

f i s t r i r . t S l . N o ,		Name of Poligars	Remarks
Kumpile	1	Annagondy Timmaph raj	Pensioned
Harpanahalli	2	Harpanahalli Buswapah Nair	Holds a jageer
Kudligi	3	Jeremullah Mallekarjun Nair	Reaides
Bellary	4	Bellary Veeramah	-do-
Adoni	5	Kotacondah Chinamah and Timmanah	-do-
Adoni	6	Kapitral Seetamah and Chenamah	Pensioned
Adoni	7	Doodecondah Permall Nair	Manages his district
Adoni	8	Pundecondah Lall Munnee	-do-
Adoni	9	Darumcondah Raman Naig	Resides
Cumbum & Dupad	10	Buswapoor Nundekesloo Naig	Expelled
Cumbum & Dupad	11	Poolalcherroo Jelle Devakar	-do-
Cumbum & Dupad	12	Bolapillee Jelle Devakar	Imprisoned
Cumbum & Dupad	13	Dornal Sheshachepatte Nair	Manages his district
Cumbum & Dupad	14	Rawoor Soobah Nair	-do-
Cumbum & Dupad	15	Kusswerum Bode Mullanah	-do-
Cumbum & Dupad	16	Vencatadripollem Bode Veeramah	-do-
Cumbum & Dupad	17	Whoolagoodah Anatapah Nair	-do-
Cumbum & Dupad	18	Nellagoolah Venkatnursoo	-do-
Hundi Anantapur	19	Hundi Anantapur Siddapah Nair	Resides
Hundi Anantapur	20	Nuddemedoddy Vencanah Nair	-do-

APPENDIX - 1 (b)

Rayadurg	21	Rayadurg Venkatapathy Nair	Imprisoned
Nosum	22	Nosum Narasimha Reddy	-do-
Chitvel	23	Chitvel Comar Venkat Raghava raj	-do-
Koilecoonta	24	Cankee Ramkistum Raj	Resides
Koilecoonla	25	Hunmuntgood and Narnepoor	-do-
Koilecoonta	26	Singaputtan & Kalwaddah Mijil Mulla Reddy	Expelled
Koilecoonta	27	Bodyemanoor Boochanah	Resides
Duvur	28	Tipareddeypully and Adiredipilly	Expelled
Duvur	29	Mootyal Poor	Manages his district
Duvur	30	Wherapur Kugputt Reddy	-do-
Kamalapur	31	Bapatoor	Imprisoned
Yadiki	32	Talmurlah Konam Raj	Manages his district
Chennumpully	33	Pyapillee Kondul Nair	Resides
Chennumpully	04	Muddekarah Mallekarjin Nair	-do-
Wejurkaroor	35	Kammalapaud Gurapah Nair	Expelled
Gurramkonda	36	Ghuttam Ragonaut Nair	Manages his district
Gurramkonda	36	Buttlapoor Cuddriputttee Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	38	Sompilly Mullapah Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	39	Timalagoonda Chinna Cuddriputttee Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	40	Yellootah Vengapah Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	41	Kullibundah Kuddripah Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	42	Baanmullah Vencatadri Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	40	Koolapollem Nariaim Nair	-do-

APPENDIX - 1 (o)

Gurramkonda	44	Yenagoonata Pollem Cuddriputte Nair	Manages his district
Gurramkonda	45	Madanina Polley Meroh Nair	Resides
Gurramkonda	46	Muddanpulle Vencatapah Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	47	Peopully Papah Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	48	Tutt Soobah Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	49	Bompicherlah Veerapah Nair	Manages his district
Gurramkonda	50	Myllyal Vencataputtee Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	51	Dodipulle Bori Mullar Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	52	Muddancherruo Buswant Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	53	Kokunte Mullaph Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	54	Marellah Ramah Nair	Resides
Gurramkonda	55	Shittiwar Pollem Buswepah Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	56	Yenawar Pollem Timmaph Nair	Manages his district
Gurramkonda	57	Nulcharvo Chinah Nair	Resides
Gurramkonda	58	Rungangar Pollem Papy Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	59	Yellamundah Mullapah Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	60	Ganginchintah Moosul Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	61	Maddicherrvo Chinnapah Nair	-do-
Gurramkonda	62	Woodyananki	Manages his district
Gurramkonda	63	Yegavamearapahgoontah	-do-
Gurramkonda	64	Degavameerapahgoontah	-do-
Gurramkonda	65	Talpoor	-do-
Pulivendala	66	Talpoor Mopabal Khan	Imprisoned
Pulivendala	67	Kideree Allum Khan	Expelled
Pulivendala	68	Vemlah Vencataputty Nair	Imprisoned

APPENDIX - 1 (A)

Pulivendala	69	Loputmutlah	Manages his district
Pulivendala	70	Komanutlah	-do-
Rayachoti	71	Nangangoontah Nugg Nair	-do-
Rayachoti	72	Kalooopillee Kudderephtty Nair	-do-
Rayachoti	73	Chintalgoontah Dandah Narsimah	-do-
Rayachoti	74	Yedamanum Pollem Moosed Nair	-do-
Rayachoti	75	Nellamunum Pollem Vencatapy	Imprisoned
Rayachoti	76	Motjutlah Soobah Nair	Manages his district
Rayachoti	77	Kopugoondipully Dassi Nair	-do-
Rayachoti	78	Jellelmundah Singum Nair	-do-
Rayachoti	79	Moondeampam Bom Nair	-do-
Rayachoti	80	Ruttigherry Royapah Nair	Resides

Source: Munro's report to the Board, Old Bellary Records, 12 Aug. 1801, Vol. 62, (TNA).

APPENDIX - 2

CROPS PRINCIPALLY GROWN IN BELLARY DISTRICT

Crops	Area cropped in '000s of Acres	Adoni	Alur	Bellary	Raya- durg	Hospet	Hada- galli	Harpana- halli	kudligi
Cereals									
Paddy	41	1.5	0.1	0.7	6.2	0.6	0.6	1.1	2.4
Cholam	792	43.1	39.4	40.7	21.3	40.9	38.2	39.9	27.2
Korra	491	22.1	33.2	32.4	25.1	13.8	9.9	9.9	12.1
Cambu	78	3.2	1.4	5.3	10.1	4.1	0.5	0.5	3.6
Others	71	1.6	0.2	0.4	8.3	2.2	5.6	5.6	12.1
Pulses									
Horse-gram	98	0.6	0.0	0.5	7.5	8.7	9.2	6.4	11.6
Red-gram	39	1.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	3.7	3.4	4.6	3.5
Others	57	2.2	1.6	2.1	2.5	3.4	6.9	2.9	1.3
Vegetables & fruit trees	9	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1
Condiments & Spices									
	15	0.7	0.2	0.3	1.3	0.7	0.5	1.2	1.9
Industrial Crops									
Cotton	290	17.4	21.9	15.9	11.1	4.6	11.9	7.3	4.0
Sugarcane	8	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	5.0	0.2	0.5	0.4
Castor	103	2.2	0.5	0.6	3.8	2.7	10.2	12.6	16.0
Other Oil- seeds	34	1.5	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.5	3.5	6.0	2.4
Misce- llaneous	18	2.0	0.3	0.3	1.3	1.2	0.5	0.9	0.4

Source: Francies, Bellary District Gazetteer, (Madras, 1904), p. 12.

APPENDIX-3

SOU, TYPES IN BELLARY DISTRICT

Taluqs	Black	Mixed	Red
Adoni	65	..	35
Alur	77	15	8
Bellary	82	..	18
Rayadurg	27	54	19
Hospet	8	90	2
Kudligi	7	24	69

APPENDIX - 4

CASTF. COMPOSITION OF THE. KAVALGARS/ POLIGARS

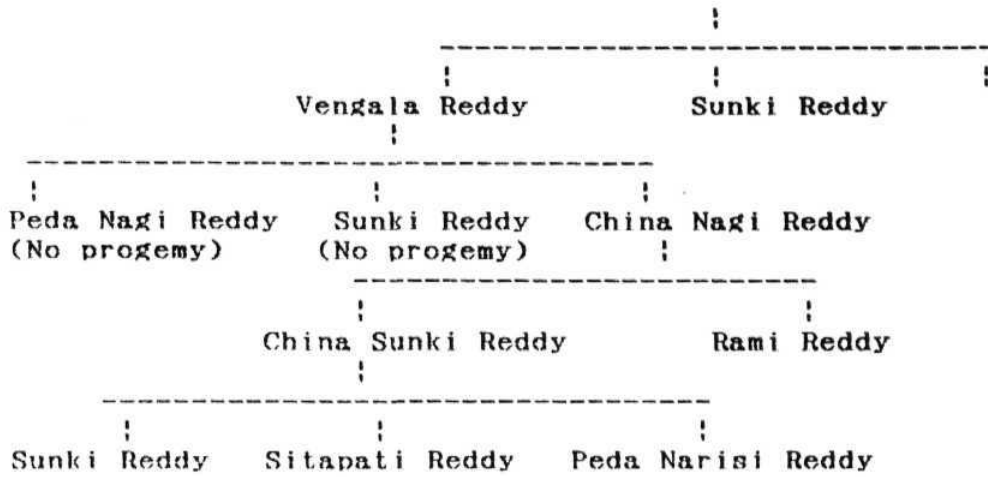
Sl.No	Name of the Pallem	Name of the kavalgar/palegar	Caste/ Tribe
1	Kothakota	Perumappa Nair	Golla or Yadava
2	Kappatral	Chota Maddappa Nair	"
3	Dudikonda	Mullappa Nair	"
4	Pandikonda	Rama Nair	"
5	Pandikonda	Venkatappa Naidu	"
6	Maddikera	Mallickarjuna Naidu	"
7	Aspari	Gurigiji Yellana Boyadu	"
8	Yakarlapalem	Parusha Rama Naidu	"
9	Manadappampalem	Bakke Yallam Naidu	"
10	Janulavarm	Basivi Naidu	"
11	Patturpalem	Duli Bsi Naidu	"
12	Palakondapa		
	Nayanipalle	Machineni kondappa Naidu	"
13	Konarajupallem	Yerrabasivi Naidu	"
14	Tonduru	Pedda Gopala Naidu	*
15	Chenmumpalle	Papa Naidu	"
16	Kondredupalle	Timmala Naidu	"
17	Kothakota	Chinna Gopala Naidu	"
18	Dasaripalle	Veeraneyini Siddappa Naidu	Yakar! Golla
19	Yakaralappallem	Veerneyini Vithalapathi Naidu	
20	Mude Reddypallem	Pedda Nagappa Naidu	"
21	Pullalacheruvu	Papa Naik	Doya
22	Baswapur	Nundikeslu Naik	"
23	Dollupalle	Jelli Baswappa Naik	"
24	Dornala	Jelli Diwakar Naik	"
25	Bodeyacheruvu	Rama Naik	"
26	Obalum	Venkata Naik	"
27	Charlakunta		n
28	Singasanipalle	-	"
29	Chanugondla	Venkanna Naidu	"
30	Porumamilla	Seshachalapathi Naik	"
31	Kappatrala	Pedda Naidu	"
32	Vulndakonda	Pedda Meddi Naidu	"
33	Adoni	Paramappa Naidu	"
34	Gongondla	Nallavenkappa Naidu	"
35	Kotakonda	Venkatappa Naidu	"
36	Gandikota	Jutungi Raidu	"
37	Chenampalli	Papa Naidu	"
38	Chennapalle	-	"
39	Yddulabandi	-	"
40	Pandilapalle	Venkatappa Naidu	Doya
41	Gooty	Ramappa Naidu	"
42	Yadaki	Yerrama Naidu	"
43	Tadipatri	Venkatappa Naidu	"
44	Teliki	Bebulli Venkatapa Naidu	"
45	Yedduladoddi	Papa Naidu	"

1	2	3	4
46	Kotakonda	Gujjala Paramappa Naidu	"
47	Panyam	Venkatappa Naidu	"
48	Goruvukallu	Pedda Ammi Naidu	"
49	Hulagondi	Uandappa Naidu	"
50	Dudepalli	Bori Malla Nair	Eakari
51	Eguva Marrappa Gunta	Venkatappa Naidu	"
52	Diguva Marappa Gunta	Thimmappa Naidu	"
53	Kalluru	-	"
54	Tumba	-	"
55	Pulichherla	-	"
56	Bangari	-	"
57	Gudipeta	-	"
58	Rompicherla	Veerappa Na Jr	Mutracha
59	Malyala	Venkatapati Nair	"
60	Madicheruvu	Baswanth Nair	" i
61	Chattivaripaller	Baswappa Nair	"
62	Malacheruvu	Chinna Nair	"
63	Sompalli	Mallappa Naidu	"
64	Batlapur	Vasanthappa Naidu	"
65	Kotapadu	Lanki Reddy	Kapu
66	Narsapur	Krishna Reddy	"
67	Uppaluru	Narasimha Reddy	"
68	Mandapampalle	Putamu Krishna Reddy	"
69	Racherla	Kaluru Buddha Reddy	"
70	Nallamanenipal	Venkatapati Naidu	"
71	Maddinenipallem	Modi Naidu	Kamma
72	Muttayalapadu	Krishnappa Naidu	Sale

APPENDIX - 5 (a)

GENEALOGY OF RACHARALA POLIGARS

Kanhuri, Budda Reddi (Sirdar) Caste: Kapu



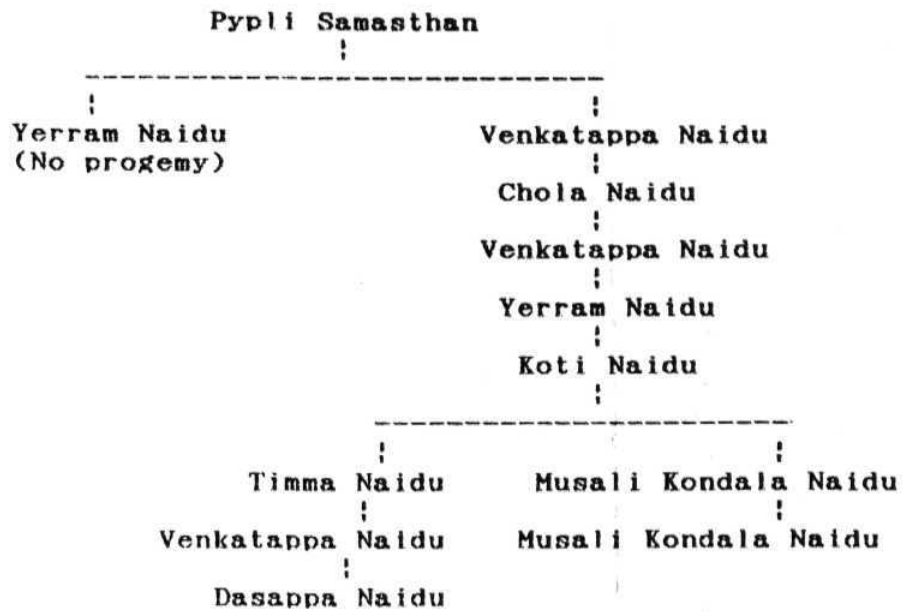
Kanhuri Budda Reddy (Position : Subedar; Caste: Kapu)



Source: Compiled from the Kaifiyat of Racherla, MMS, Vol. 120, No. 898

APPENDIX - 5 (b)

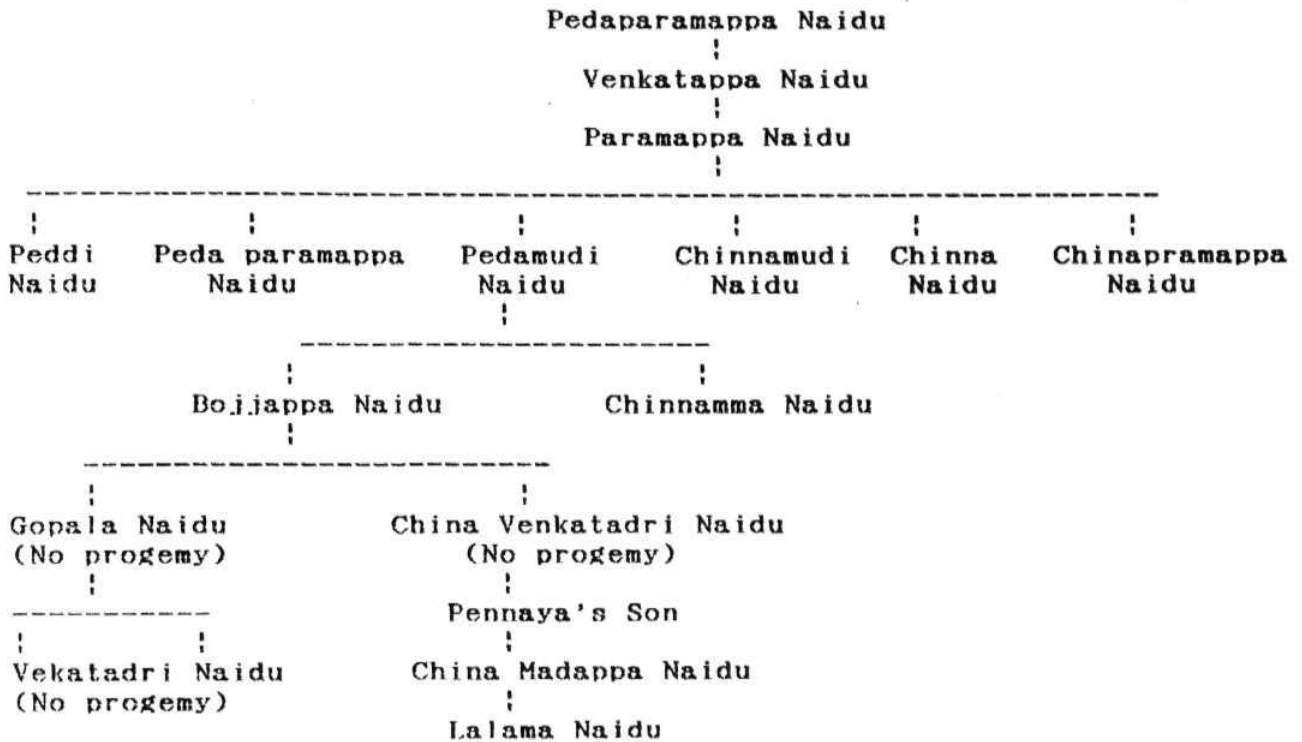
THE GENEOLGY OF PYAPLI POLIGARS



Source: Compiled from the Kaifiyat of Pyapli Samsthanan, MMS.,
Vol. 148, No.1159.

APPENDIX - 5 (c)

THE GENELOGY OF TERANAKALLU POLIGARS



Source: Compiled from the Kaifiyat of Ternakarth, MMS, Vol. 123, No. 930.

APPENDIX 6

LAND REVENUE OF CUDDAPAH DISTRICT COVF.RING PORTIONS OF BELLARY DISTRICT A.D. 1800 -1835

Fusly	Land Revenue	Fusly	Land Revenue
1210	16.05,622	1230	23,57,955
1211	20,66,787	1231	21,08,112
1212	21,71,052	1232	21,98,695
1213,	20,98,600	1233	17,76,382
1214	24,36,245	1234	18,99,055
1215	26,62,544	1235	19,61,129
1216	20,81,000	1236	20,26,197
1217	25,58,668	1237	18,07,135
1218	26,65,366	1238	18,55,317
1219	25,32,587	1239	18,36,840
1220	26,05,525	1240	19,52,386
1221	18,30,575	1241	18,69,139
1222	21,98,713	1242	13,93,988
1223	23,55,404	1243	18,70,735
1224	24,25,775	1244	19,04,409
1225	24,60,562	1245	19,12,474
1226	23,07,497		
1227	24,03,716		
1228	24,31,803		
1229	23,17,494		

Source: J.D.B. Gribble, Cuddapah District Manual, pp. **303-305.**

APPENDIX 7

I. LIST OF REVENUE SERVANTS EMPLOYED IN BELLARY

No.	Description	Pay per month		
		Pags	An	Ps.
1	Serintadar	40	0	0
5	Seristadar	28	0	0
3	English Writers	27	0	0
		(25	0	0)
1	Head Goomastah (for keeping treasury accounts)	11	0	0
1	Secondary Goomastah (for keeping treasury accounts)	5	0	0
1	Moonsphy	10	0	0
1	Head Shroff	6	0	0
1	Shroff	3	0	0
1	Moochey (for ruling cutting the papers)	4	0	0
2	Head Peons	4	0	0
20	Peons	30	0	0
1	Mafsatjea	1	11	20
1	Ink maker	1	33	60
3	Lascars	7	22	40
		228	22	40

Source: Collector Stodart letter to the Board, CDR, 30 April 1801, Vol. 629. pp. 105.

COMPRATIVE VALUE OF COINS CURRENT IN THE BELLARY DISTRICT
ACCORDING TO THE TREASURY AND BAZAARS RATES OF EXCHANGE

Names of coins (pagodas)	100 Star pagodas		100 Cont. pagodas	
	Treasury rates	Bazaar rates	Treasury parts	Bazaar parts
1 Star	100	100	83	82
2 Contriroe	120	120	100	100
3 Met tee	90	87	75	72
4 Sunkurk	91	89	76	74
5 Dahadree	92	92	76	76
6 Bangalore	94	94	78	77
7 Imsharee	97	97	81	80
8 Ahmaddee	22	22	19	18
9 Siddee	45	45	38	37
JO Sanarec Cash	78	78	66	64

Old Custom was to convert cont. partodan into star pagodas (120 cont. pags = 100 pags). Generally the shopkeepers and merchants used to keep their accounts in local currency. No uniformity in keeping accounts was followed. On the whole in the District 26 kinds of partods, 4 kinds of fanams, 26 kinds of rupees and 11 kinds paise were in circulation.

Company Rupees:

Treasury Rate	Bazaar Rate	
355	348	100 (Star Pagodas)
296	288	100 (Cont. Pagodas)

Source: William Chaplin's report to the Board, PBR, 3 Aug. 18 12, Vol. 578, pp. 87 18-8733.

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I Primary Sources :

- i. Board of Revenue Consultations
- ii. Proceedings of Board of Revenue
- iii. District Records
- iv. Miscellaneous Records
- v. Mackenzie Manuscripts (Kaifiyats)
- vi. District Gazetteers and Manuals

II Secondary Sources

- (i) Articles, Books and Journals

1 Primary Sources

- i) Board of Revenues Consultations
1800- 1805 (Vols. 100 - 146)
1812 - 1818 (Vols. 187-240)
1824- 1832 (Vols. 296 - 378)

- ii) Proceedings of Board of Revenue, Madras **1799-1857**. Volumes **217** to 2638:

These contain correspondence between the Board and Collectors and also between the Board and the Governor-in-Council. They include Annual Settlement Reports, Minutes of Governors, Special Reports etc.

- iii) District Records 1799 – 1835

Contain the correspondence between the Collectors and the Board and the **Boards** observations on the implementation of **the** policies by **various** Collectors **in** (their respective District and orders thereupon. The District Records of **Cuddapah**, Kurnool and Bellary **are** preserved *in* the AP State **Archives**, the Bellary District Records are **trasferred** to Karnataka **State** Archives.

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Hanumatgoond	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.102	No.640
Holalagondi	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.123	No.932
Kanala	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.104,	No.669
Kadumuru	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.104,	No.666
Kowthalam	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.117,	No.860
Krisdhnagiri	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.104.	No.643
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Panyam	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.120,	No.897
Pattikonda	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.122,	No.915
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Payapilli	Kaifiyat.	MMS.,	Vol.148,	No.1159
Samstaanam				
Racherla	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.120,	No.898
Revanur	Kaifiyat,	MMS.,	Vol.116,	No.859
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