

History Part – 16

16] Chola Dynasty

Chola Dynasty Notes

After Sangam, the Chola became feudatories of Uraiyur.

Early Cholas

- The most of the information on early Cholas are available in Sangam literature.
- The other information is available in Mahavamsa, Buddhist text of Ceylon, Pillars of Ashoka and Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.
- The most famous king of early Cholas is Karikala Chola. He ruled around 270 BC. He had won the famous battle of Venni in which he decisively defeated Pandyas and Cheras. He is also believed to have won the whole of Ceylon.
- But the most important work of karikala chola which he did as a king was to build world' earliest water-regulator structure in stone at Kallanai on River Cauvery. It was built for agricultural purposes.

Later cholas or imperial cholas (900 -1200 AD)

These later Cholas are termed as “Imperial Cholas” because they exercised control over Sri Lanka and Malay Peninsula. thousands of

inscriptions in temples tell about their administration, society, economy and culture.

Vijayalaya Chola (850-871 AD):

- Founder of Chola Dynasty.
- He captured Tanjore from the Pandyas and made it the capital of the Cholas.
- Vijayalaya built Thanjavur town with temple for Goddess 'Nishumbhsudhini'(Goddess Durga).

Aditya I (871-907 AD):

- Extended the work of Vijayalaya by occupying the territories from the Pallavas. Aditya defeated the Pallava king Aparajita and annexed Tondaimandalam

Parantaka Chola I (907-955 AD):

- Was the first imperial Chola also called as maduraikondan.
- He defeated Pandayas and the ceylonese ruler.
- But he lost the Battle of Tokkolam with Rashtrakutas Krishna III. This loss undermined the glory of the Cholas and they entered a dark phase of thirty years from 955 AD – 985 AD.
- Parantaka I built temples, provided golden roof on Vimana of Nataraja temple at Chidambaram.

- The Uttaramerur inscription describing village administration under Cholas belong to his reign.
- This loss undermined the glory of the Cholas and they entered a dark phase of thirty years from 955 AD – 985 AD.

Successors of parantaka I

1. Gandaraditya - 949 -957 AD
2. Arinjaya - 956 -957 AD
3. Parantaka II - 956-973 AD
4. Aditya -956-966 AD
5. Uttama chola - 965 – 985 AD

Raja Raja Chola I (907-1014 AD):

- Greatest king in chola reign.Orchestrated the resurgence of the Cholas.
- He defeated the Pandyan and the Cheras.
- In 993 AD when Cheras sought support from the Sri Lankan rulers, the Cholas captured the northern portion of Sri Lanka and the capital- Anuradhapura was captured and they also raided another capital Polonnaruwa. Northern Sri Lanka was organized in the form of a province.
- Raja Raja Chola is also said to have captured the Laccadive islands and Maldives Islands.

- He also captured a few territories in Mysore from the Gangas and from the Chalukyas of Kalyani, although he maintained friendly relations with Chalukyas of Vengi.
- Raja Raja I developed the naval strength of the Cholas
- He re-organised the administrative system
- In 1000 AD he began the conduction of a land survey
- He adopted the practice of inscribing the historical inscriptions
- He began the practice of associating Yuvaraja or crown Prince with the administration
- He assumed the titles Mummudi chola , Jayamkondan and sivapadasekara.
- Raja Rajan conquered Vengi from Sathyasraya who ruled Kalyani and gave the power to Sakthivarman
- Raja Rajan gave up his daughter to Sakthivarman's brother Vimaladitya.
- He captured Gangavadi, Adigaipadi, Nolambadi, (Mysore) and Raichur
- He was a follower of Shaivism.
- Raja Raja I being a patron of Shaivism constructed the great Raja Rajeshwar temple (Also called as the Brihadeeswarar temple) at Tanjore in 1010.

Rajendra I (1014-44 AD):

- During whose rule the Chola Empire reached the peak of fame.
- He completed the conquest of Sri Lanka in 1017 AD and captured the whole of Sri Lanka and made it a part of Chola empire.
- He suppressed the rebellions of a captured portion of the Krishna Tungabhadra doab.
- He maintained friendly relations with Chalukyas of Vengi. His greatest achievement was Conquest of Srivijaya, Nicobar Islands, Kadaram and Malaya. He launched an expedition to Orissa and maintained matrimonial relations with the Ganga dynasty of Orissa.
- He then reached Bengal upto Ganga river in 1022 AD and defeated the Pala ruler of Bengal, Mahipala Rajendra I then assumed the title of Gangaikonda and founded a capital by the name Gangaikondacholapuram on the mouths of the Ganga river.
- His expedition to Bengal along the east coast was undertaken to establish Chola domination over the bay of Bengal that it was called the Chola lake.
- He sent two embassies to China for Promoting trade and commerce. He captured idaidurainadu (raichur Doab), vanavasi (kadamba capital), Kollipakal (areas in Hyderabad) and Mannai Kadakkam (Malkhed).

Kulothunga I (1071 -1122 AD)

- Kulothunga I was born to Ammangadevi the daughter of rajendran I and rajaraja of vengi started the chalukya chola line of rulers.
- He united vengi with the chola empire.
- He defeated the western chalukyas and captured the Kalinga. During his reign srilaka declared its independence.
- He is also called as sungam thavirtha cholam. He patronized great literary scholars like Jeyamkondan, ottakkuthar, pugazhendi and kambar.

Chola Administration

King:

- Was the most important person in the Chola administration. All authority rested in his hands.
- He often went on tours in order to keep better touch with the administration .
- The king was aided and advised by a council of ministers who held office at the pleasure of the king.
- Valanadu is the administrative unit of Chola country.
- Temples and matts acts as education centres during Chola period

Military Administration:

- The Cholas maintained a large army consisting of infantry, cavalry and elephants which were called the three limbs of the army.
- The venetian traveler Marco Polo says that all the bodyguards of the king burnt themselves in the funeral pyre of the dead king.

Revenue Administration:

- The Cholas paid attention to irrigation and used river such as Kaveri for this purpose.
- Raja Raja I conducted a land survey during his time in order to fix the governments' share of land revenue.
- In addition to land tax, income was derived from tolls on trade, taxes on professionals and also from plunder of the neighbouring territories.
- Senathipathi Marvan was involved in the Rajaraja chola period for the tax assessment (1001 AD).

Provincial Administration:

The empire was divided into principalities (under vassal chiefs) and *mandalams* (provinces under viceroys who were mostly royal princes) with further division of the provinces into *valanadus*(divisions), *nadus* (districts) and *Kurrams* (villages).

District Administration:

The provinces were in turn divided into divided districts called Nadus which were about 500 in number and were run by an autonomous assembly called Nattar.

Local Administration:

- Uthiramerur inscription tells us about the village administration of the Cholas.
- Sabha was formed to manage the village administration during the Cholas.
- There were two types of villages at the local in the Chola empire.
- One type of village consisted of people from different caste and the assembly which ran this type of village was called 'ur'.
- The second type of village was 'agrahara' types of village which were settled by Brahmins in which most of the land was rent-free.
- The assembly of this agrahara type of village was a gathering of the adult men in brahmana villages called 'Sabha' or 'mahasabha'.
- The affairs of the village were managed by an executive committees to which educated person owning property were elected by drawing lots or by rotation. These members had to retire every three years.
- These members had to retire every three years.

- The mahasabha could settle new lands and exercise ownership rights over them. It could also raise loans for the village and levy taxes.
- The self-government enjoyed by the Chola villages was a very fine system. However, the growth of feudalism tended to restrict their autonomy.

Chola Society

- Four fold varna system was absent.
- Brahmins had many privileges and were exempted from taxation and had control over religious and economics power. Chola emperors linked themselves to solar and lunar dynasties and claimed Kshatriya status and called themselves as Brahmakshatriyas. Trading communities claimed Vaishya Status and called themselves as kamati, Vanijiya, Chettiar.
- Rest of the society was divided into Sat Sudras (higher) and asat sudras (lower). Sat sudras or higher sudras were consisting of classes like Kaikkolas who were weavers and collected taxes on behalf of temple and also Saliyas who were also weavers and prepared clothes for the royal family. Vellalas who were the dominant peasantry also came under Sat Sudras.
- Asat sudras (lower sudras) comprised of paraiyans and chaklians. Untouchability was prevalent in chola Society. Slavery was prevalent in

Chola society and slaves were imported. The position of women was a mixed one with the queens called as devis and were respected and honoured, on the other hand devadasi system prevailed and ganikas (prostitutes) also existed in the society.

- The Chola society was marked by constant tensions between the Brahmins and Vellalas between the higher castes and untouchables, between the kaikkolas and Sollyas between Velangai (rights Handers) and Idangai (Left handers), between Mudali (land owners) and Adimai (slaves) and between Sharivites and Vaishnavites as is evident by the persecution of the vaishnavite Ramanuja by Chola ruler Kulottunga I.

Trade and Commerce

- Trade and commerce flourished under the patronage of Chola emperors. The Cholas developed links all over south India.
- They then brought Srilanka, South- East Asia and even China under the network of trade.
- There are references to 72 nagarams and many trade guilds. Most important of these were manigramam, Ayyavolu-500 (Five hundred Lords of Aihole) also called as Ainnuruvar, Nanadesi, Vira Valanjiyar, Vira Balanju and Anjuvannan. Mahablipuram were also known as nagarattars.

- Trading organisations formed fortified settlements called Erivirpattinams on trunk roads and were protected by army cantonments called Nilaippadai.
- Mostly barter system was employed in trade and commerce where even paddy was used as a unit of exchanges of gold coins such as pon, kasu, kalanju were used. Also, silver coins were used.
- Some Chola emperors sent embassies to Indonesia, Cambodia and China.
- The temples in Chola period, apart from religious activity were also centers of development of arts and crafts. Many stone cutters, weavers, potters, oil makers, bronze workers lived in temple complexes.
- Temples became centers of exchange of commodities.
- Temples also collected taxes from craftsmen, traders and peasants.
- Temple received land donations from kings and offerings from religious followers.

Chola Art

Music:

- Cholas contributed to the growth of both vocal and instrumental music. Instruments such as Kudamula, Vina, Flute were used. Devadasis were expert musicians and singers.
- Sakatakkottikal was the chairman of the group of musicians during the Chola period

Dance:

- Bharatanatyam acquired its basis from under Chola patronage based on rules of Bharatamuni in Natyasastra, a book on dance.

Drama:

- Various plays were enacted in the premises of the temples for the temples for the sake of entertainment of the people.

Paintings:

- Paintings on the themes of Puranas were painted on the inner walls of the Raja Rajeswara temples and gangaikondacholapuram temple and Nataraja temple at Chidambaram.
- A painting believed to be that of Marco Polo is in the Raj Raja temple (Brihadeeswarar temple) at Tanjore.
- Lord Shiva in cosmic dance from with celestial dancers is also found on the walls of Gangaikondacholapuram temple.

Sculpture:

- Bronze images of Nataraja (the dancing Shiva) are described as the cultural epitome of Chola period and are the best specimen of Chola art.

Chola Architecture

Chief features of Chola architecture are:

- Dravidian feature initiated by the Pallavas acquired the classical forms and features under the Cholas such as gopurams, mandapams and Vimanas.
- In the beginning, gopuram features was subdued and vimana features dominated but in the later stages, gopurams overshadowed the Vimanas.
- In the beginning, Vimanas were constructed in the cellular mode as in the Raja Rajeshwar temple (Brihadeewarar temple) at Tanjore where in the Vimana, various storeys were constructed in a graded manner. It had 13 storeys. In the later phase, vimanas began to be constructed in circular concept as in the Nataraj temple at Chidambaram.
- The Brihadeeswarar temple at Tanjore is surrounded by a rectangular wall protected by 8 vimanas which housed the 8 keepers of directions called Ashtadikpalas. The temple is dedicate to lord Shiva and is known as Dakshimeruvitankar. An enormous Nandi which is the second largest in India, carved out of a single block of granite guards the entrance of the sanctuary. The Brihadeeswarar temple at Tanjore is the Tallest of all the temples in India in the medieval period.

- Various public works as cities, roads, irrigation works and artificial tanks were constructed. Rajendra Chola I constructed a city, a water tank and a temple with the same name of Gangaikondacholapuram temple.

Cholas: Religion and Philosophy

- With the rise of devotional cults such as Shaivite and Vaishnavite cults from the 6th to 9th centuries A.D Buddhism practically disappeared from tamil country, but Jainism managed to survive.
- The Chola ruler were patrons of Shaivism. Raja Raja I assumed the title of Shivapada Shekhara and built the Raja Rajeswara temple. (Brihadeeswarar temple) at Tanjore and dedicated it to Lord Shiva.
- In the Chola period , Suddashaiva order appeared and the Vellala community supported this order. Kapalikas and Kalamukhas which were shaivaite orders also influenced the people.
- The Chola rulers such as Kulottunga I resented Ramunuja who was a Vaishnavite Saint who propounded the concept of Vishistadvaita. Ramanuja was though, successful in broadening the social base of the Vaishnavite Cults.
- Kampahateswara (Thirubhuvaneswara) temple Thanjavur Subramanya Temple
- Darasuram Airvtesvara Temple were the temples built by later cholas.
- Nageshwara teple is at kumbakonam.
- Koran ganatha temple was built by parantaka I.

- Temple for sun god is built by kulothunga cholan I.

Literature in the Chola Period

- Though Sanskrit was patronized by the Chola emperor, there were non significant original works in the Chola period. Most Sanskrit works were commentaries on older works.
- The language from dravidian root such as Tamil, Telugu, Kannada started drawing from Sanskrit and began evolving further.
- Much work was done in Tamil where Kambana translated the Ramayana from Sanskrit and Began evolving further.
- Jayangondar composed Kalingattuparani which is an account of Kulottunga-I's kalinga war in detail.
- Sekkilar composed his famous periya Puranam (Tiruttondar Puranam) during the times of Kulottunga II.
Pugalendi wrote Nalavenba (the tragic story of Nala and Damyanti)
- Seevaka chinthamani- thiruthakkathevar
- Ramayanam – kambar.Kulothunga chola III gave the title Kavichakravarthi
- ottakuthar – muvarula, Thakayagaparani, Kulothungan Pillai tamil
- Conversants has lived in Chola period Parimelazhagar , Ilampuranar , Nachinarkiniyar.

South Indian Kingdom - Chola Empire - Questions

1) Which city was the capital of the Early Cholas?

(A) Tiruchirappalli

(B) Thanjavur

(C) Uraiyur

(D) Poompuhar

2) Who is the famous king of the early Cholas?

(A) Karikala cholan

(B) Vijayalaya Chola

(C) Aditya

(D) Arinjaya

3) Who has laid the foundations for later Cholas?

(A) Karikala cholan

(B) Vijayalaya Chola

(C) Aditya

(D) Arinjaya

4) What is the capital of later Cholas?

(A) Tiruchirappalli

(B) Thanjavur

(C) Uraiyur

(D) Poompuhar

5) What is the reason behind the later Cholas called as imperial Cholas?

(A) Ruled over much larger than the early Cholas.

(B) Ruled over parts of southern India and Sri Lanka and Kadaram.

(C) The Cholas, including the Thondaimandalam, the Societies and the Kongan Nation.

(D) Cheras, Pandiyar and Chalukyas won the war and conquered Sri Lanka.

6) Which chola king was praised as 'Madurai kondan'?

(A) Aditya Chola

(B) Parantaka I

(C) Vijayalaya

(D) Raja raja cholamn

7) The Battle of takkolam was held between whom?

(A) Kandaram and Krishnan III

(B) Parantaka I and Krishnan III

(C) Parantaka II and Bhaskaravarman II

(D) Uthamacholan and Shakti Varman

8) Match the following

1) Gandaraditya - 956-957

2) Arinjaya - 956-973

3) Aditya - 949-957

4) Parantaka II - AD 965-985

5) Uthama Chola - 956-966

(A) 1 3 5 2 4

(B) 5 2 3 1 4

(C) 3 1 4 2 5

(D) 3 1 5 2 4

9) Who is the greatest king in the reign of Chola kings?

(A) Raja Raja cholan I

(B) Parantaka I

(C) Rajendran I

(D) Kulothunga Chola I

10) Which of the following is not associated with the Rajaraja chola I?

(A) Cheras, Pandiyar and Chalukyas were defeated by him and became the winner of the Mahinda V king of ceylon.

(B) Transferred the capital of Sri Lanka from Anuradhapura to Polonar.

(C) Defeated the king of Bengal Mahipala and founded the city of Gangakonda Cholapuram.

(D) Defeated the chera ruler Bhaskaravarman at kanthalursaalai.

11) Who defeated western chalukyas ?

(A) Raja Raja cholan I

(B) Parantaka I

(C) Rajendran I

(D) Kulothunga Chola I

12) Who was the Chola King known as Mummudi Chola, Sivapada Sekara and Jayamkondan?

(A) Raja Raja cholan I

(B) Parantaka I

(C) Rajendran I

(D) Kulothunga Chola I

13) Which of the following is wrong?

1) Raja Rajan conquered Vengi from Sathyasraya who ruled Kalyani and gave the power to sakthivarman.

2) Raja Rajan gave up his daughter to Shakthivarman's brother Vimaladitya.

3) Rajaraja followed the Vaishnavism.

4) He constructed the brahadeeswara temple at tanjore in 1010 AD.

5) He captured Gangavadi, Adigaipadi, Nolambadi, (Mysore) and Raichur.

(A) 1,2, 3 only

(B) 3 Only

(C) 1, 2, 4, 5 Only

(D) 4 only

14) Match the following

1) Idaidurainadu - Sri Lanka

2) Vanavasi - Malkhed

3) Kollipakkai - Raichur

4) Mannai Kadakkam - kadamba

5) Ilamandalam - Hyderabad

(A) 5 3 2 1 4

(B) 1 2 3 4 5

(C) 4 3 5 2 1

(D) 3 4 5 2 1

15) Who is known as Gangakondan , Panditha Cholan and Kandaram kondan?

(A) Raja raja cholan I

(B) Kulothunga Cholan I

(C) Rajendran I

(D) Virarajendran

16) During whose rule the Chola Empire reached the peak of fame?

(A) Raja raja cholan I

(B) Kulothunga Cholan I

(C) Rajendran I

(D) Virarajendran

17) What is considered the best act of Rajendran I ?

(A) He defeated mahipala ruler of bengal.

(B) He captured idaidurainadu , vanavasi, kollipakkai, Mannai kadakkam and Ilamandalam.

(C) He defeated Pandiyas and Cheras and Western chalukyas.

(D) Conquest of Srivijaya, Nicobar Islands, Kadaram and Malaya.

18) Which of the following is wrong associate?

(A) Rajadhiraja I - AD 1018 - 1054.

(B) Rajendran II - AD 1056 - 1064

(C) Virarajendra - AD 1063 - 1070

(D) Rajendran I - AD 1012 - 1030.

19) Who was the founder of Chalukya Chola clan?

(A) Rajadhiraja I

(B) Rajendran I

(C) Kulothunga Chola I

(D) Rajendran II

20) Which of the following statements is/are wrong?

1) Rajendran I won western chalukyas and captured Kalinga.

2) Chola king Parantaka II was with close friendship with and sent the business team in 1077.

3) Rajendra III was called as sungam thavirtha chola.

4) Kulothunga cholan I supported poets like Jeyamkondar, Otakoothar, Pughazhenthai Kambar.

(A) I only

(B) II, III only

(C) I, II, III only

(D) IV only

21) Why does the Chola Empire do not fall into disrepair?

(A) The rebellion of the Feudatories like Kadavarayas.

(B) the rise of Pandya Empire

(C) Pandya King Jatavarman Sundara Pandian won the Rajendran III of Chola.

(D) Kudavolai electoral system

22) What is the administrative unit of Chola country?

(A) Mandalam

(B) Urs

(C) Valanadu

(D) Cholanadu

23) Which inscription tells us about the village administration of the Cholas?

- (A) The Allahabad inscription
- (B) The Kudumyanamalai inscription
- (C) Uthiramerur inscription**
- (D) Thirubuvanam inscription

24) Which organization was formed to manage the village administration during the Cholas?

- (A) Variyam
- (B) Sabha**
- (C) Pon variyam
- (D) Pancha variyam,

25) Which of the following statements gives false information?

- 1) The system of variyams in the Cholas Administration system was in practice.
- 2) The number of variyams and members were identical in all villages.
- 3) The Practice of sati and devadasi were prevalent but there were no caste and sub caste
- 4) Habit of saving money called sirupadu is prevalent among men.
- 5) Weavers and metal steel industries were weakened during the Cholas.

- (A) 1 only
- (B) 2 and 3 only
- (C) 2 , 3 , 4 and 5**

(D) 5 only

26) Who was involved in the Rajaraja chola period for the tax assessment (1001 AD)?

(A) Nambiandar nambi

(B) Senathipathi kuravan

(C) Senathipathi Marvan

(D) Nachinarkiniyar

27) Which religion did the chola kings embraced ?

(A) Vainavism

(B) Jainism

(C) Buddhism

(D) Saivism

28) Details about the centres of learning centres are found in the inscriptions at?

(A) Ennayiram

(B) Thirumukkudal

(C) Thirubuvanam

(D) All the above

29) Which acts as education centres during Chola period?

(A) Temples, monasteries

(B) Palace, schools

(C) Kanchipuram, Thirubuvanam

(D) Temples and matts

30) Match the following

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1) Periyapuranam | - Kambar |
| 2) Seevaka Chinthamani | - Jayamkondar |
| 3) Kalingathu parani | - Sekizhar |
| 4) Ramayana | - Thiruthaka Devar |

(A) 1 2 3 4

(B) 3 4 1 2

(C) 3 4 2 1

(D) 3 2 4 1

31) Which of the following statements is /are coorect ?

- 1) The Saivite work Panniruthirumurai was compiled by Nathamuni.
- 2) The Vaishnavite work Nalayiradivya prabhandam was compiled by Nambiandar Nambi.

(A) 1 only

(B) 2 only

(C) Both (1) and (2)

(D) None of these

32) Which of the following books is not written by a Ottakuthar?

(A) muvarula

(B) Thakayagaparani

(C) **Jesus is epic**

(D) Kulothungan Pillai tamil

33) Who among the following conversants has lived in Chola period?

(A) Parimelazhagar

(B) Nachinarkiniyar

(C) Ilampuranar

(D) **All the above**

34) What is the specialty of the Cholas architecture?

(A) **Vimana**

(B) Gopuram

(C) Strains

(D) Pragaram

35) Which of these temples built by later Cholas?

(A) Thanjavur Subramanya Temple

(B) Darasuram Airvtesvara Temple

(C) Kampahateswara (Thirubhuvaneswara) temple

(D) **All of these**

36) Match the following

- 1) Nageshwara Temple - Kanchipuram
- 2) Kailasanathar Temple - Cholapuram
- 3) Vishnu Temple - Kumbakonam
- 4) Brahadeeswara temple - Kodumbalur
- 5) Aivar temple - Thanjavur

(A) 1 2 6 3 4 5

(B) 2 3 4 5 6 1

(C) 3 1 5 4 6 2

(D) 3 1 6 5 4 2

37) Which of the following statements is /are correct ?

- 1) The Saivite work Panniruthirumurai was compiled by Nambiandar Nambi.
- 2) The Vaishnavite work Nalayiradivya Prabhandam was compiled by Nathamuni.

(A) 1 only

(B) 2 only

(C) Both (1) and (2)

(D) None of these

38) Where is the Nageshwara Temple?

(A) Ellora

(B) Kanchipuram

(C) Kumbakonam

(D) Mamallapuram

39) Who built the temple of Koran ganatha?

(A) Raja Raja cholan I

(B) Parantaka I

(C) Rajendran I

(D) Kulothunga Chola I

40) Who built a temple in Kumbakonam for the Sun God?

(A) Raja Raja cholan I

(B) Parantaka I

(C) Rajendran I

(D) Kulothunga Chola I

41) How was the chairman of the group of musicians during the Chola period is called as

(A) Senathipathi kuravan

(B) Nayak

(C) Sakatakkottikal

(D) Viceroy

42) Which temple is also known as the Largest Temple?

(A) Nageshwara Temple

(B) Brahadeeswara Temple

(C) Moovar Temple

(D) Koranganathar temple

43) Who gave the title Kavichakravarthi to the Kambar ?

- (A) Rajendran I
- (B) Rajarajacholan I.
- (C) Kulothunga chola III**
- (D) Kulothunga chola II

44) The Periyapuram belongs to whose period ?

- (A) Rajendran I
- (B) Rajarajacholan I.
- (C) Kulothunga chola III
- (D) Kulothunga chola II**

45) What are the places famous for upalankal during Chola period?

- (A) Kanyakumari
- (B) Marakkanam
- (C) both (A) and (B)**
- (D) None of these