

CHAPTER-12

THE CHOLAS AND HOYSALAS OF DWARASAMUDRA



After studying this chapter you learn :

- About expansion of chola empire and the contributions to different fields.
- About the establishment of Hoysalas, contribution to religious, literature, art, and architecture field.

THE CHOLAS (850 C.E. - 1279 C.E.)

After the Pallavas, the Cholas secured a firm hold on many areas in Tamilnadu, Andhra and Karnataka and ruled from the 9th century to the 13th century. To them goes the credit of spreading Indian culture in foreign lands. They constructed grand temples.'Brihadeeshwara' temple is their contribution. They became famous by encouraging Tamil literature.

The Cholas were under the Pallavas for sometime and later became independent. According to Sangam literature, Karikala Chola is the founder of this dynasty. Vijayalaya Chola revived the kingdom and made Thanjavur as his capital.

An important king among the Cholas was Rajaraja I. He was a brave and great warrior. He was an able administrator. As the founder of the Chola empire, he strengthened its foundations and expanded his kingdom. He overpowered the Cheras, Gangas and Pandyas. He built a naval force. He captured Sri Lanka. We can see the domination of the Tamilians in Malaysia and Singapore. Their influence in the political, economic and cultural activities of those countries can be seen. They began overseas trade which continued till date. The Brihadeeshwara temple built by Rajaraja Chola I in Thanjavoor, is a very famous one.

The Chola empire weakened during the period of Rajendra Chola III, and the Pandyas could overpower them easily.

The Contribution of the Cholas

The Cholas had set up an able and efficient administrative system. The kingdom had been divided into mandalam, kotwangi, nadu, kurram or community of villages and tara-kurram. There was a committee of villagers called Ur in every village.

The foremost quality of the Chola administration was the development of the self-governance of the village. The grama sabhas were the first sabhas. Tara-kurram was a village. Every kurram had a village committee named mahasabha. This was also called perumguri and its members perumakkal. The members were chosen through election. Only Sanskrit scholars and rich people were allowed to stand for election.

One-sixth part of the land yield was being collected as tax. Special attention had been given to the irrigation system. The Cholas constructed many lakes, and the Bellandur lake near Bangalore is one of these. They built a huge pond in Gangaikonda Cholapuram.



Brihadeeshwara temple, Thanjavoor

The Cholas were Shaivites, and they built many Shiva temples. The Brihadeeshwara temple in Thanjavur is 500 feet tall and it is in a courtyard 250 feet wide. Its shikara is 200 feet tall. The Choleshwara temple was built by Rajendra Chola.

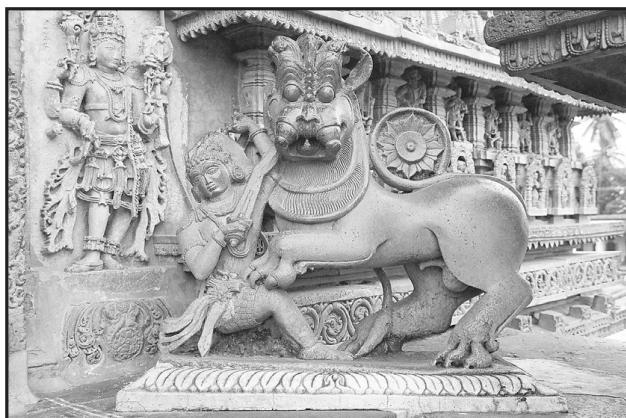
The Aprameya temple near Channapatna, the Choleshwara temple in Begur near Bangalore and the Mukteshwara temple near Binnamangala are the temples built by the Cholas in Karnataka. The temples used to function as economic and cultural centres. The idols of Shiva, Ganapati, Vishnu, Durga and Kartikeya of this time are famous.

The Cholas established many agraharas to encourage education. The Uttaramerur agrahara is famous among these. The temples were centres of education. They were also centres of religious activities. This was a period in which Tamil literature found an all-round development. Noteworthy works are Ramayana written by Kamba, Periya Purana composed by Sekkilar and Thirukkadeva's Jeevaka Chintamani.

THE HOYSALAS OF DWARASAMUDRA (984 C.E. TO 1346 C.E.)

After the Chalukyas became weak in Karnataka, it was the Hoysalas who became strong. The founder of this dynasty, Sala, on the order of a Jain monk, Sudatta, fought with a tiger and, killed it near Sosevuru village (today's Angadi) in Mudigere taluk of Chikmagalur district. It inspired the people to exclaim 'Hoysala!', and he established this empire. These kings made significant contributions to literature, education, art, architecture and irrigation.

Vishnuvardhana was the important Hoysala king who came after Nrupakama, Ereyanga and Ballala. As a great king of this dynasty, he won Gangavadi from the Cholas and earned the title 'Talakadugonda'. In order



The emblem of the Hoysalas

to commemorate this victory, he built the Kirtinarayan temple in Talakadu and the Chennakeshava (Vijayanarayana) temple at Belur. He tried to expand his kingdom but was defeated by the Chalukyan king Vikramaditya VI.

Ramanujacharya could not spread the message of Vishishtadvaita sect in the Chola kingdom and came to Bittideva's (Vishnuvardhana) court, and under his patronage, spread his faith in the whole of Karnataka.

This kingdom declined during the reign of Ballala III. During the same period, the Vijayanagara empire came into power.

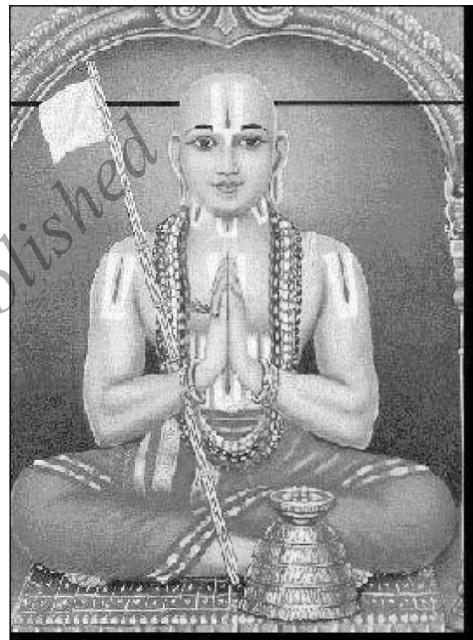
The Contributions of the Hoysalas

The Hoysalas had brought into practice provincial system of administration. The power of rulling was given to the Princess, Queens and the Royal family. The officials looked after the administration of the nadu and vishayas. In the villages, there used to be the representatives of the government like the gowda, senabova, talawara and others.

In order to encourage agriculture, the Hoysalas built innumerable lakes like the Shanti Sagara, Ballalaraya Samudra, Vishnu Samudra etc. In the cities, there used to be guilds among the people following different occupations. Land revenue was the main source of income for the kingdom. A unique feature of this society was that the king used to have a special army of guards called 'garuda'. When the king died, these guards would also sacrifice their lives. (suicide squads)

Agraharas, mathas and temples were centres of education. There were excellent educational institutions at Melukote, Salagame, Arasikere and other places. Here study of the Vedas, Vedashastras, Kannada and Sanskrit used to be carried on.

Kannada literature flourished immensely. Rudrabhatta wrote



Ramanujacharya

‘Jagannatha Vijaya’, the great poet Janna wrote ‘Yashodhara Charite’, Harihara composed the Champu poem ‘Girija Kalyana’, Raghavanka authored ‘Harishchandra Kavya’ and Keshiraja wrote ‘Shabdamanī Darpana’. Even in Sanskrit, memorable works composed were Sreebhasya by Ramanujacharya and Parasharabhatta, composed Sri Guna Ratnakosha.

During the period of the Hoysalas, different religions like Jainism, Buddhism, Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Veerashaivism and Srivaishnavism were encouraged.

This poem from the Belur temple advocates communal harmony:

యంత్రమాస్యము తారిలిహళరీటిడిపి
కివంతినీచూద్దు బ్రద్ర ఇలిచ్చిపూనాశదపశ్చరీల్సైయ్యాభకాశి ల్రురు
శ్రీలింగా జ్యోతిస్తున్నాయి వ్యాపారాయి వింపనాలువాం
వితుషలం ఉణికేరిశ్శువా॥

ಯಂತೆ ಶೈವಾಸ್ತವ ಮಹಾಸತೇ ಕಿವ ಇತಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮದೈತಿ ನೇದಾರಾಂತಿನೋ ಚೌಡಾ ಬುದ್ಧಿ ಇತಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಿಕವೆಂಬುದು ಕರ್ತೇರ್ವತಿ ಸ್ನೇಹಾಯಿಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹತಾಶ್ಚೈತಿ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಜೀವನಕಾರಣಿತಿ ಕರ್ಮವೇ ಏಂದು ವಿನಿಮಾಂತರಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಸ್ವಾರ್ಥಾಯಂ ಪ್ರೋತ್ಸಾಹಿತಾಗಿ ವಾಂಭಿತಪ್ಪಲಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಕೃಷ್ಣರ್ವಸ್ವದಾ ||

ଶ୍ରୀ ପରୁ ଶିଖନେମୁ, ସେହାଙ୍କିଂକଳୁ ବୁଝୁଣେଇଦୁ, ଜୋଧୁରୁ ବୁଝୁଣେଇଦୁ, ପ୍ରମାଣଲ୍ଲି ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧରାଦ ନୈୟାଯ୍ୟକରୁ କର୍ତ୍ତ୍ତ୍ଵଚେଂଦୁ, ଜ୍ଞାନରୁ ଅର୍ଥନେମୁ, ମୁଏମାଂସକରୁ କମ୍ବଚେଂଦୁ ଯାଇପନ୍ତିନ୍ତିଷ୍ଠାନରେ ମାତ୍ରାପରିରେ ଅପନେଇ ଆଦ—ତ ଶ୍ରୀ କେତ୍କପନ୍ତିବ କରିବି ନିମ୍ନଗେ ଇଷ୍ଟାଧିକାରୀଙ୍କୁ ପାଲିବାରେ.

The architecture of the Hoysalas is world-famous. The Hoysalas got their innumerable temples built in soap stone. There are five features that can be seen in all their temples. They have the star-shaped sanctum sanctorum, upapeetha (jagati), decorative panels, shikara and pillars.

There are beautiful idols of Madanikas (Shilabalikas) on the brackets of the pillars of Chennakeshava temple at Beluru.



Chennakeshava Temple, Beluru



A shilabali-like

The military general, Ketamalla, built the Hoysaleshwara temple at Halebidu. The Keshava temple constructed by Somadandanayaka at Somanathapura is famous. There are many temples and basadis in Arasikere, Govindanahalli, Doddagaddavalli and Bhadravati. All these are noted for their extremely delicate carving. The Hoysala architecture has influenced all other architectural styles of the later years. Dasoja, Chavana, Jakana and Dankana were some of the famous sculptors of this time.

EXERCISES

I Fill in the blanks :

- 1 The capital of the Cholas was _____.
- 2 The committee of the villagers in every village during the period of the Cholas was _____.
- 3 The most famous Chola educational centre or agrahara was _____.
- 4 The temple in Begur near Bangalore built by the Cholas is _____.
- 5 The army of bodyguards during the time of the Hoysalas was _____.
- 6 The poetic work written by Raghavanka _____.

II Answer in brief the following questions :

- 7 Who was the founder of the Chola kingdom?
- 8 Write a note on the significant features of the Chola administration.
- 9 Describe the encouragement given by the Hoysalas to literature.

III Activities :

- 10 Discuss in class the visit you paid to a nearby temple.
- 11 Learn more about the Belur *shilabalikas* from your teacher.

IV Projects :

- 12 Visit Belur and Halebidu and write a project-report on it.
- 13 Learn in detail about Hoysala art.

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