The Panchayat System   under the Cholas Studies from Inscriptions

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INTRODUCTION

The Chola kingdom of the sangam period extended from modern Trichy to southern Andhra Pradesh. There capital was first located at Uraiyur and then shifted to Tanjore the history of Cholas falls in the four period the early Cholas the interregnum period medieval Cholas and Chalukya. The Kingdom is very ancient there have been references made in Mahabharata and even in Asokan inscriptions. Among the early Chola rulers mentioned in the Sangam to literature the most marked is Karikala.[1] He is credited with constructing a Dam on the River of Kaveri. It is considered to be earliest dam in the country he carved out an Independent kingdom of his own towards the end of the second century.

In ancient Tamil Nadu all the activity were done systematically. In all matters such as administrating the village. Demaracating land boundaries, maintenance the temples they took care that the rules and customs were strictly adhered. Stone inscription written in the Pallavas greater characters commerce from this period. A fact which suggests that with the conquest of chaunisam the Pallavas must have erected their dominion further south of Kanchi into the Cholas Country land adopted the administration with Sanskrit language later stone inscription.

A large number of stone inscriptions and copper plate grants are the pillars of in constructing the history of medieval Cholas. Leadership and Visions, King such as Rajaraja-I and his son Rajendra I extended the Chola kingdom beyond the traditional limits of Chola Kingdom. A famous work composed in the regional language around this time under the Cholas was the Tamil Version of the Ramayana was composed by Kamban.Who also describes the village administration system seaside the uttrramerur inscriptions speaks about the village administration of the parantaka chola-I Uttramerur Inscriptions speak about the village administration of the Chola's period.

VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

This autonomous self-sufficient village administration helped to maintain the continuity of life and tradition besides holding the society. It was the primary of all the body of politics. The validity of its institution is well attested by hundreds of inscription from all parts of the country. A careful record of the boundaries of a village and of the industrial estates in it was maintained the villagers met periodically to consider in it were matters of common concern and for the settlement of diorites.

The administration grew from timed and tentative improvisation to the more elaborate and complicated machinery of committees and officials that we find described in the Cholas inscription of the 10th and 11th centuries. In this evaluation of Tamil country appears to have been more progressive than the rest of south India.[2] The village had a headman. He was variously called mutuda kilan gramabhojaka etc. He was leader and the mediator with the royal government. In the inscriptions the village administrations have also been particularly mentioned. The village administration three types of assemblies, they are the Shaba and Samiti. Was the common type. The Shaba was an exclusively and assembly of villages. Samiti was elders and given as gifts the gracility   and all the land in such village belonged to them. The village assembly (i) Regulated irrigation of right (ii) Administration chartable endowments (iii) Maintained tanks and roads. In the Deccan we come across many references to the Mahajanas of village who were in charge of the local administration under the leadership of Ground as (Headman) the royal officials stood in closer relation to the working of the village assemblies here than in the more autonomous township of the Tamil country.

THE VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION OF CHOLAS

The vast portion of Southern India called as the Tamil Country ruled by the Cholas for a long time down to the 13th century was popularly known as Chola Mandalam being the eastern part of the Tamil land it was also called Kunapulam (Eastern Region) the Chola empire comprised the entire district of Tanjore and part

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[1]. Atlantic – Publishers , Ancient History of India, 2013 PP.176-179.
[2]. Noboru Karashima, State and society in Medieval South India from Studies from Inscription,850-1800 AD,OUP,New Delhi,1985,pp.97-99.

of Tiruchirappalli South Arcot and Pudhukkottai districts of today. One of the most striking features of the Chola organization was the efficient local administration in villages in the sabha denoting the village assembles they were known large number of chola inscription. The sabha it was learnt was an assembly associated with the Brahmin villages called Agraharam (or) Chathurvedi Mangalam. The members of the sabha were called Perumakkal and Thiruvadiyar.
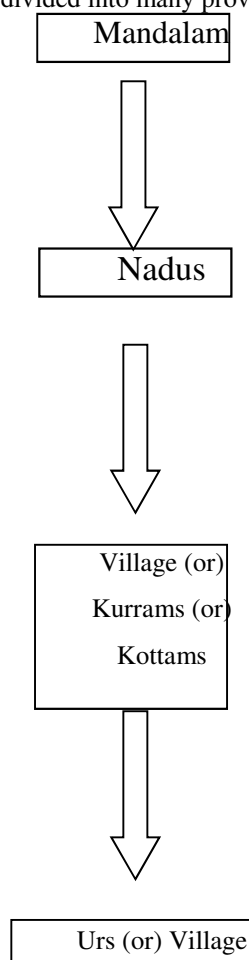
The Ur or Sabha had an executive body known as the ruling group. There was learning by Brahmins as Bhattas among the ruling party of this body. The village assembly functioned through its committees called Variyam, Variyam as root meaning selected or chosen. Every village or town was divided into several the numbers of families developed upon the extract of the village.

According to the Chola inscription of Parantaka-I dated 919 AD and 929 A.D, Uttiramerur a model village in the Chengalput District It has sudden rules and it had 30 wards regulations of Panchayat They are (or) Families those days who had their own house and lands. (ii) Who were between 35 and 70 years of age. (iii) Sound of education (Knowledge of the Vedas) who were guilty of incest the taking beribes.[3] Sinners were declared ineligible every ward were written on the polling day. The old and the young would meet in a public place conduct their election in the presence of an official from the kings government.

The system of Chola administration was highly organized the efficient the Cholas had three major type of administration divisions called (i) Central Government, (ii) Provincial Government, (iii) Local Government have been well appreciated by many historians and rulers.

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Chola Empire was divided into many provices. They ware called mandalam.

footnote:

[3]. Burton Stain, state and society in medieval south India, oxford university press Delhi-1984.p,45.

There was an elaborated administration machinery comprising various officials called perundanam and sirudanam.[4]

TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS:

The Chola was.divited the state into many territorial divisions for the administrations purpose The mandalams were again subdivided into several smaller divisions known as Valanadus. Valanadus comprised a number of Nadus which were also known as kurrams and Kottams. Mandalams, valanadus, and Nadu may correspond to our modern divisions of the States, Districts and Taluks respectively. Chaturvedi mangalam, a smaller division comprising several villages resembled the modern municipality, Ur or Taniyur a self-governing village was the smallest unit of administration under the Cholas. Large townships fromed separated kurram by monarchy was the form of government under the Cholas.

LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

From time immemorial ideas of Local Self-Government – Prevailed in India to for greater extent than any where elsc in the world. The villages and towns were small states in miniature where all the Local needs for sanitation, communications, the administration planning were served by assemblies of the Village people with a Chief executive officer.

During the Mughal empire these self governing organisations almost entirely disappeared from towns and greatly decayed in Villages, the British government tried to keep up the Village assemblies wherever they were in working order and revived them in place where they were wanting. But they were confronted with the task of evolving a definite system of local government both for the vast rural areas as well as for towns.[5]

KINGSHIP AND GOVERNMENT

The Chola empire was for administrative purposes of village. The region extending to the south of the Kaveri was called the Tenkarai Nadu and the land to its North was known as Vadakarai Nadu. It was during the region of Rajaraja – I. It is learnt there were such Mandalams which were all named after his titles and the entire Chola kingdom. Monarchy was the from of government under the cholas. King ship was hereditary the appointment of heir-apparent of Yuvaraja by the ruling king of country.

ZILA PARISHAD:

Rajasthan was the first state to Panchayat Act 1959 Oct. 2 adopt a three-tier system. Now almost all states have adopted the three – tier panjayat system that is Panchayats at the bottom samiti's as an inter mediary level and the zila parishad all the top.

At the bottom there should be the village panchayats the panchayat should be grouped together from a higher level of government called the sanities, the various samitis in the district should have a higher level of government called the zila parishad the three level government should be organically the linked with democratic bodies.

CONCLUSION

The Panchayat Raj system under Cholas one of the important component for the development of modern Panchayat Raj System. The Cholas inscriptions reveled the Village administration of the Cholas. Paranthaga Chola's Utiramerur inscription explained about the administration of Cholas, including the election, about the qualification of the members and the disqualification of the members.

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