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## CHOLA'S MICRO UNIT OF THE NADU ADMINISTRATION IN THE MUSIRI REGION FROM 9<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY TO 12<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AD

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### Abstract:

*This paper discusses how the chola's micro unit of the nadu administration was successfully done in the musiri region-bring about the musiri region-discuss the etymology of nadu- brings out how many nadus were existed-nadu,the assembly-explain the nature of the nadu region-describes the nadu-agriculture region of nadu-evaluate the functions of nadu-nadu Estimate.*

### KEY WORDS:

chola's micro , nadu administration , politico-geographical .

### INTRODUCTION

The Chola mandalam, whose territorial extent has been fairly determined above, did not come into existence until 1009. Earlier the Chola country was known by the name Chola-nadu (or Cholanadu) and was smaller in extent. Of the Nadu units mentioned, as belonging to the Chola-nadu until 1009.52 Uraiyur kurram is found to be the western most unit. Tiruvali-nadu is the northernmost unit and kulamangala-nadu is southernmost one. It is remarkable that not a single Nadu belonging to mala-nadu on the north bank of the Kaveri and to Konadu in the south, south western portion of the Chola country is mentioned as belonging to Chola-nadu. This cannot be attributed to paucity of inscriptional references to these Nadus. Many of these are mentioned in inscriptions before 1009, and either mala-nadu or ko-nadu is found to accompany them to indicate the bigger politico-geographical unit, instead of Chola-nadu. Therefore the chola's nadu micro administration is discussed in this paper as follows.

### The Musiri Region

Musiri Region covers the present Thuraiyur Taluk, Thottiyam Taluk and Musiri Taluk which formed until recently part of the old Tiruchirappalli District in Tamilnadu. However for convenience's sake, the present taluk divisions are followed in this thesis as all the existing epigraphs and other publications follow only the present taluks.

### Etymology of Nadu

The word 'Nadu' as well as Kurram may be expected to throw some light on the nature of the Nadir region. As a verb 'Nadu' means to seek after or to approach. But this meaning is not helpful since nadal (or nattam), not 'nadu' is the verbal noun of the verb nadu. On the other hand 'Kurram; may be taken to be the

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verbal noun of the verb Kuru which means to divide. Hence, Kurram could denote artificial divisions even if we concede for arrangements sake that the Kurrams were artificial division; they were only in the minority. There were thirty two Kurram of about hundred and forty total units in Chola mandalam.

### **Nadu**

The Nadu was larger political unit than a village. It had an assembly which also was called nadu and its member's nattavar. The Nadu (with its synonym Krraki) is the very key to the political geography of the Chola country. The Kurram is a synonym of the Nadu. The very fact was that the assemblies of both these units were called Nadu. The evidence from epigraphical records amply supports it. Thus in an inscription (A.D, 997) of Rajaraja I, the village Chiru – paluvur is said to be in Kunra-kurram and in the subsequent passage, it is stated, another village Tenpalan nadu was in the same Nadu. So, the Kurram is the synonym for nadu. A recent study takes the Kurram to be the major division and the Nadu, its sub division. This study reveals that the Valluvappadi Nadu, Pachchil Kurram, Alagarai Nadu, Mimalai, and Malanadu come under the nadu division.

The fertility and favorable irrigation conditions in Nadu, it seems, that it determined the number of villages it contained. Thus in the delta the Nadus contained relatively a larger number of villages compared with those higher up the Kaveri river. In the delta, the Nadus contained an average of village for every two square.

An attempt is made for detailed study of the basic territorial divisions and traces the territorial units of Musiri Region. There were so many territorial nadu units in the Musiri region. Such as

1. Mimalai nadu
2. Valluvappadi nadu
3. Alagarai nadu
4. Anmur-kurram
5. Kil-valluvappadi nadu
6. Mel-valluvappadi nadu
7. Pachchil Kurram
8. Vadavalli nadu

### **Mimalai nadu**

Mimalai nadu is the westernmost nadu belonging to the Chola mandalam to the north of the Kaveri River near Musiri. It was obviously called so because of its position to the west (Mi) of the hillock Ingoy-malai. It comprises three villages namely Jayangondachola Chadurvedimangalam or Mahendramangalam, Srinivasanallur and Thottiyam. This area was called Mimalai nadu during the Chola period.

### **Valluvappadi nadu**

The Valluvappadi nadu consisted of the present Musiri taluk and Thuraiyur taluk area, such as, Araychchi, Adanur, Angiyam, Mahadevi, Pundurai, (Present venkatacholapuram near Uppiliyapuram) Singalanthapuram, Tinnakonam, Thuraiyur and Valluvappadi. (Musiri) The period of Valluvappadi nadu is mentioned in the year 1184 A.D. of Kulottunga Chola II. During the period of Kulottunga Chola I 1098 A.D. this Valluvappadi nadu belonged to Karikalakannavalanadu.

### **Alagarai Nadu**

The territory of Alagarai nadu were Alagarai and Thirunarayanapuram. 'Alai' means waves and 'karai' means bund or embankment, the place which was embankment to a tank with waves. Another village Thirunarayanapuram inscribed the name in memory of God Sri Narayanan. At present the above area is situated to the west of Musiri.

### **Anmur-Kurram**

Tirunerkurram alias Tinnakonam was situated in Anmur-kurram. This village is situated to the east of Musiri. In the year 931 A.D. Chola king Parantaka I mentioned it as devadana in the eastern of Anmur Kurram.

#### **Mel- Valluvappadi Nadu**

For the administrative convenience, Mel-Valluvappadi nadu was established during the Chola king Kulottunga II and it was mentioned in the year 1214. It consisted of the following villages namely Kannanur, Kollikudi and Singalanthapuram.

#### **Pachchil Kurram**

Present Thuraiyur and Tiruvellarai (Thuraiyur taluk in Tiruchirappalli district) were situated in Pachchil Kurram. According to an inscription, this place is said to be on the banks of Kilp-palaru in Pachchil Kurram and also mentioned in the Karandai Tamil Sangam plates of Rajendra I. In 1194, during the reign of Kulottunga II, Tiruvellarai is found in Pachchil Kurram.

#### **Vadavalli Nadu**

It was situated between Mimalai and Pachchil Kurram, both of them belonged to Malanadu. The Mimalai was 10<sup>th</sup> century and the Pachchil Kurram was 956 A.D. of Arinjaya. The present Mahendramangalam, Srinivasanallur, Thottiyam, Thuraiyur and Tiruvellarai belong to this nadu. Tiruvellarai belonged to Vadavalli-nadu till the reign of Kulottunga I (1070-1120).

#### **Nadu, the assembly**

The Nadu has been taken to be a sort of territorial assembly, which functioned in the territorial unit known by the same name. It has also been suggested that the assembly might have been constituted by the representatives of each of the villages in the territorial unit coming together or by the more influential residents of the unit. And there is another suggestion that the assemblies of Brahmadeya, Devadana, Pallichchandam, Kunimurruttu, and Vettapperu villages and the Nagara were subjects to the administrative control of the Nadu.

#### **The Nature of the Nadu Region**

The elucidation of the problem of the Nadu assembly hinges to a large extent upon the question relating to the basis of the form of the territorial unit, Nadu. It is generally held that the Nadu was a unit of administration got by dividing the country for administrative purpose. The application is that the ruling people should have been instrumental for such a division of the country under their rule. There are two more related things to be considered to decide the nature of the Nadu units, their names and the headquarters.

The names of all the Nadus, excepting a few, are derived from the name of some village (or) other. Mi-malai Nadu was obviously called so because of its position to the west (Mi) of the hillock Ingoy-malai. Some Nadus which seem to have been named after some persons, for example Kurunagan Nadu.

#### **Nadu-Agricultural Region**

It is usually considered that 'Nadu' has the generic sense of 'land' (or) 'country'. But we have some good evidence from literature that 'Nadu' signified something more than this generic aspect. In a *Purananuru* verse, a Chera king is extolled as a scion of a family of benevolent rulers who had the good fortune of being obliged by the hills, the forests and the nadu under their rule. Here nadu is clearly distinguished from hills and forests, obviously implying that it denoted the civilized and inhabited space of the country. And this is supported by the *Pattinappalai* where - in it is stated, the Chola king Karikala created 'nadu' (nadu-akki) by clearing forests (kadu-konru). Taking clue from this, can it not be suggested that the nadu was basically an Agricultural region. If the suggestion is valid, then the nadus could not have been artificial administrative divisions, they could be only groupings of Agricultural settlements, whose formation would have been influenced by natural factors conducive to agriculture, like slope, soils, water supply, etc.

#### **Functions of a Nadu**

In some inscriptions, the nadus figure as nominal custodians of some charities made by some others. They are just invoked to protect them in the same way as the Panmahesraras (or) the Srivaishnaras are invoked in many other inscriptions. Rarely do the Nadus receive and administer endowments from

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private persons, by remitting taxes on receipt of the tax money. We get many references to donations made by the nadu mostly to temples. Its lands are donated; they are put under the category of nattiraiyili; The Nadu remit taxes on the land granted and take the burden of paying the taxes remitted. Regarding the functions of the Nadu other than the charitable acts, there is an inscription of Rajaraja II (c. 1149) where – in, it is stated that the nadu of Vada-panangadu-Nadu decided any offence against the property or person in the village of Ambanavar-nalvayalur should be punished by confiscation of some land in favour of the local temple.

#### **Nadu Estimate**

The basis of the political set up, be it a chieftaincy or kingdom, was the Nadu. The Nadu-s which evolved out of the groupings of agriculture settlements preceded any organized political setup in this area. Any powerful person able to command these groupings of agricultural settlements could become the ruling lord of the land. An indirect hint is available from a 12th century inscription. It is said that the consent of the Nadu along with that of the Udankuttam, was obtained for installing Rajadhiraja II on the Chola throne. The Nadu being the prime land holders of the respective territorial unit, nadu, were the chief spokesmen of the people of the region. For the Government of the period under study whose source of power accrued mainly from land revenue and whose interest lay largely in realizing the same, the nadu naturally happened to be the administrative unit.

That the nadu was not a state made, bureaucratic contrivance needs emphasis. What little inscriptional evidence there are available points to the fact that there was an imperceptible superimposition of state official over the already existing network of nadus imperceptible, because in most cases the influential land holder himself was the state official. The actual position and influence of the nadu in matters of assessment and collection of land revenue by the government are not clear as indicated above.

There seems to have been direct annual negotiations with each nadu on the part of the government which is indicated by the term ottu. Apart from this nadu- state nexus there do not seem to have existed other explicit bonds. Most of the functions of the nadu are locally based and were self- sufficient without state interference. That is, there was not much scope for a centralized bureaucratic system to function in the localities of nadus.

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