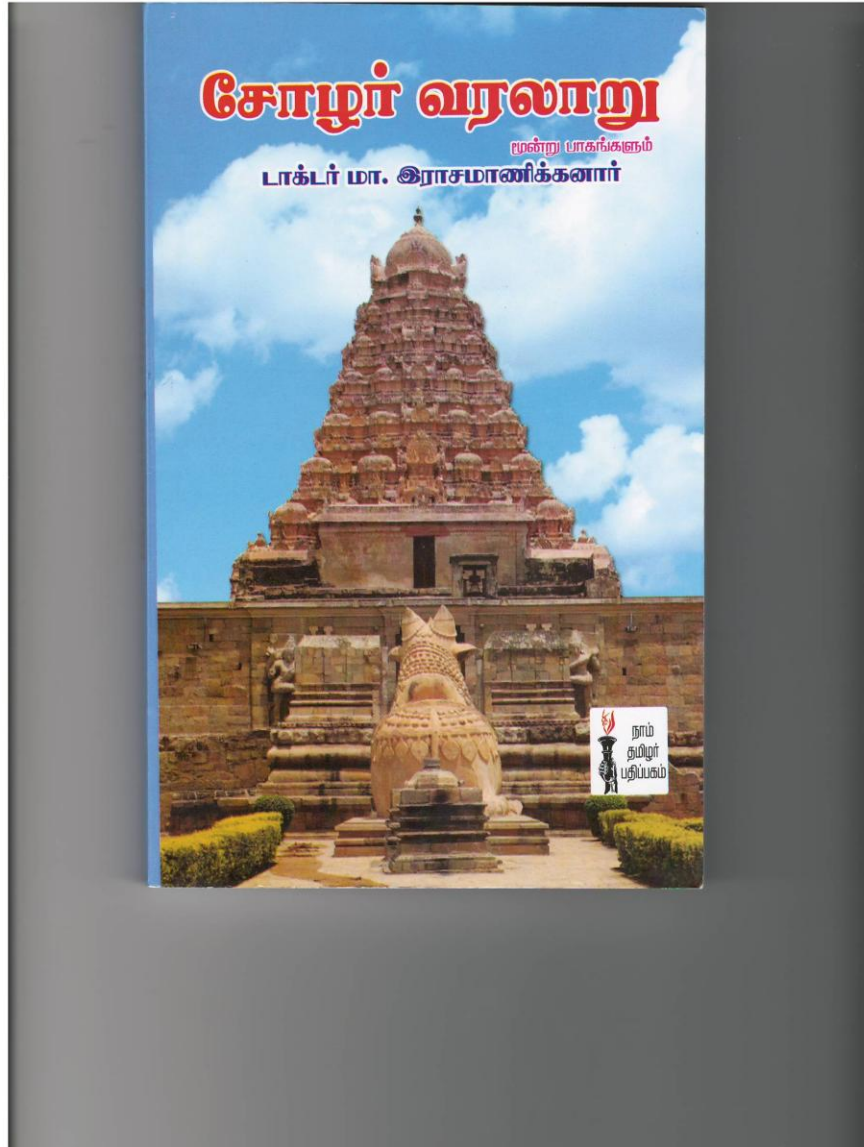


# History of Medieval Chozhas and their World Heritage Monuments

Anand

The Club

8-8-2020



Naam Thamizhar Pathippagam, Chennai, 6<sup>th</sup>  
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## முன்னுரை

தமிழர் நாகரிகம் சோழ அரசர்களால் மிகவும் உயர்ந்த நிலையை அடைந்தது; தென்னிந்தியா முழுவதும் ஒரே ஆட்சிக்கு உட்பட்டுச் சமார் முந்நூறு வருஷகாலம் ஒரே ராஜ்யமாக ஆளப்பட்டு வந்தது. நாடெங்கும் அமைதி நிலவியது. சிறியவும் பெரியவும் ஆன கற்கோயில்கள் கட்டப்பட்டன. அழகு வாய்ந்த சிற்பங்கள் அநகேம் கல்லில் செதுக்கப்பட்டன; வெண்கலத்திலும் வார்த்தப்பட்டன. நல்ல ஓவியங்கள் பல வரையப்பட்டன. கைத்தொழில்களும் வியாபாரமும் செழித்து வளர்ந்தன. ஜெயங்கொண்டார், சேக்கிழார், கம்பர், ஒட்டக்கூத்தர் முதலிய பெரும் புலவர்கள் பலர் இனிய நூல்களை இயற்றித் தமிழைப் பெருக்கினார்கள். இம்மாதிரியான பல காரணங்கள் பற்றிச் சோழ அரசர்களின் மேன்மையும் பெருமையும் இந்தியா முழுவதும், ஆசியாக்கண்ட முற்றிலுமே எல்லோரும் போற்றும்படி விளங்கின.

இந்த மேன்மை மிக்க நூற்றாண்டுகளின் சரித்திரத்தை விரிவாகத் தமிழில் எழுத வித்துவான் மா. இராசமாணிக்கம் முன் வந்திருப்பது ஒரு நல்ல காரியம். அவர்கள் தம் நூலை நல்ல ஆராய்ச்சி முறையில் எளிய நடையில் யாவருக்கும் பயன்படக் கூடிய வழியில் எழுதியிருக்கிறார்கள் என்பது சில பக்கங்களைப் படித்தாலே எளிதில் விளங்கும். நல்ல ஆராய்ச்சி நூல்களை அவர்கள் நன்கனம் சுற்றறிந்திருப்பதோடு, சுயமாகவும் ஆராய்ச்சித் துறையில் ஈடுபட்டவர்கள். ஆயினும் அவர்கள் வெளியிட்டிருக்கும் அபிப்பிராயங்கள் எல்லாவற்றையும் எல்லோரும் ஒருங்கே அங்கீகரிப்பார்கள் என்று அவர்கள் எண்ணமாட்டார்கள். அஃது அவசியமுமில்லை. நம் நாட்டுச் சரித்திரப் பகுதிகள் பலவற்றில் அபிப்பிராய வேறுபாடுகளுக்கு இடம் இருந்து கொண்டேதானிருக்கும். ஆனால் இம்மாதிரி நூல்கள் அவ்வப்போது கிடைக்கும் ஆய்ந்த தீர்மானங்களை எல்லோரும் எளிதில் அறிந்து கொள்வதற்கு வேண்டிய நல்ல கருவிகளாகும். இந்தச் சோழர் சரித்திரத்தைப் பலர் படித்து நன்மை பெறுவார்கள் என்று நம்புகிறேன்.

சென்னை யுனிவர்சிட்டி,  
14-3-1937

K.A. நீலகண்ட சால்திரி

## Timeline of Chozhas

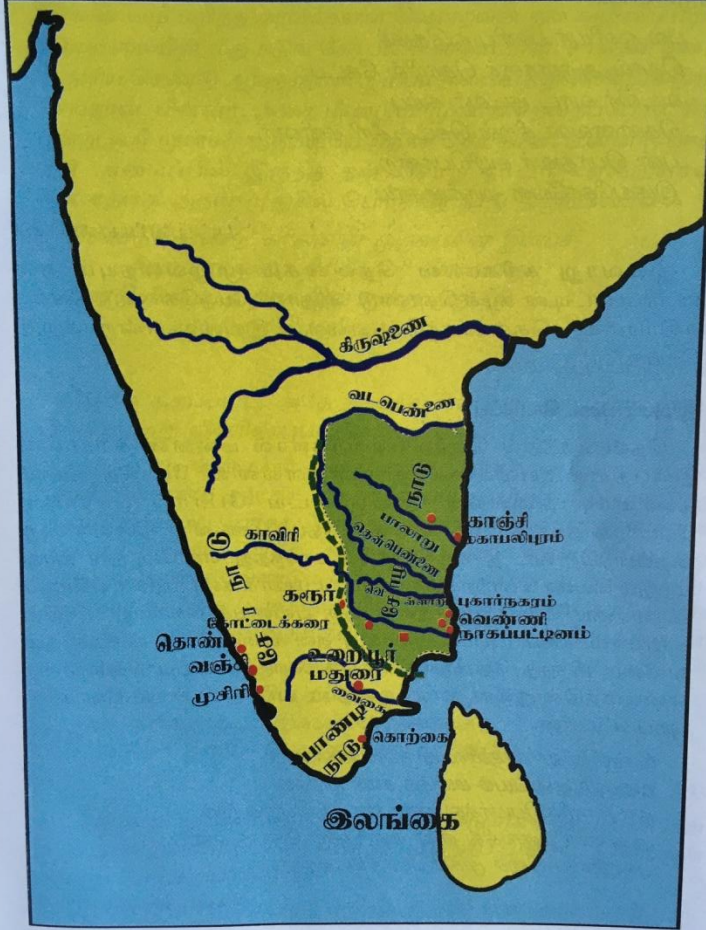
- Early Chozhas – 300 BC- 300 AD - 600 years;
  - Karikalan, the greatest, went to Himalyas, built oldest dam in India- 2000 year old
- Dark Ages- Kalabhras- 300- 850 AD - 550 years;
- Medieval Chozhas – 850-1100 AD – 250 years;
  - Rajarajan I and Rajendra I ; expanded territories; two world heritage monuments
- Later Chozhas – 1100-1300 AD– 200 years; one world heritage monument



Tamilakam in Sangam Age 600BC-  
300 AD (wikipedia/Purananuru)

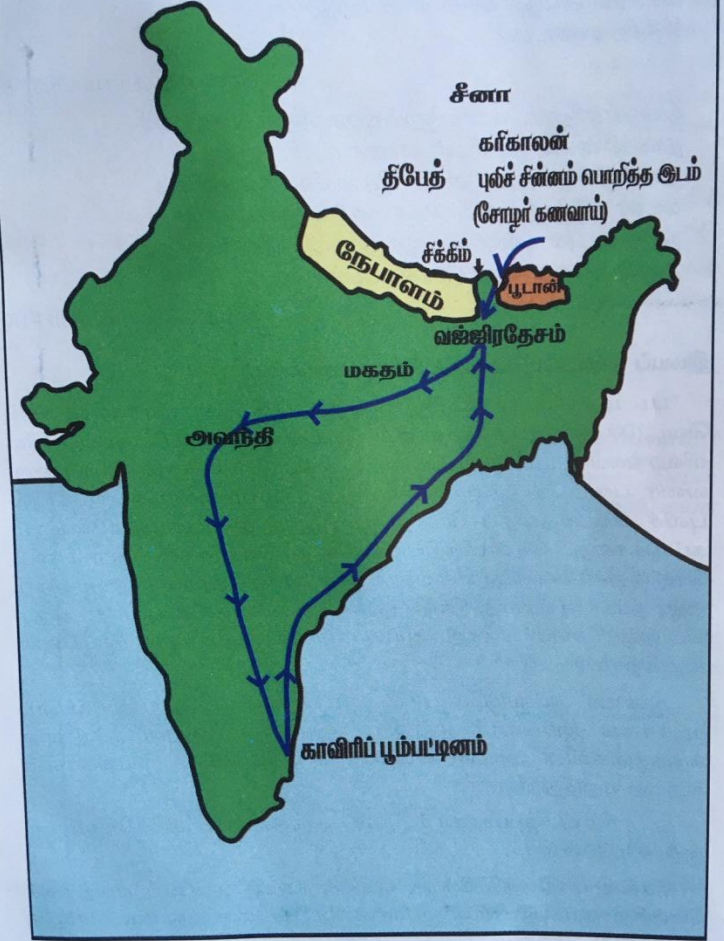


## கரிகாலனின் சோழநாடு (கி.மு.65 - கி.மு.18)



மூலம்: 'சோழர் வரலாறு', டாக்டர் மா.ராஜமாணிக்கனார்

## கரிகாலனின் ஆமயப் படைவெருப்பு



நன்றி: குடவாயில் பாலசுப்ரமணியம்

## Greatest of all Early Chozhas- Prize goes to Karikalan II



Kallanai Dam



Karikalan in bronze

Pictures from “Kallanai Dam”- Wikipedia

## DARK AGES

300- 600 AD and 600-850 AD

- Dark age refers to unknown history during that period of history
- We only infer their history little bit from copper plates and inscriptions but mainly from literary and religious references written long after
- There were martial hill tribes in Kalahasti (Andhra) in 300 AD
- Their business was to steal cattle from neighboring areas
- They were known as Kalavar, Kalabhras and Kalappirar
- Pallavas drove them out of Kalahasti and they ran to Thondaimandalam and then to Chozhamandalam and then to Pandiya Mandalam.
- Their migration resulted in confusion in Tamil land
- Periyapuram ( 12<sup>th</sup> century work!) has a reference to Kalabhara king ruling Pandya Kingdom from Madurai. Two nayanmars (out of 63) may belong to Kalabhras. Enlightening ethical literature was nurtured by the dark ages!
- A buddhist monk at kaviripoompattinam mentioned about a Kalabhra king ruling the Chola kingdom
- Not much known about them. They seemed to have preferred Buddhism and Jainism over Vedic Religion.
- Kalabhras weakened Cholas and Pandyas and ruled their kingdoms during dark ages. Palalvas weakened them and Cholas and Pandyas regained their rule
- Small areas were ruled by Cholas. They had their palaces at Uraiyur, Palaiyarai (near Darasuram) and Thiruvarur. They had marital relationship with Pandyas. Despite their status, they always supported the temples and services.

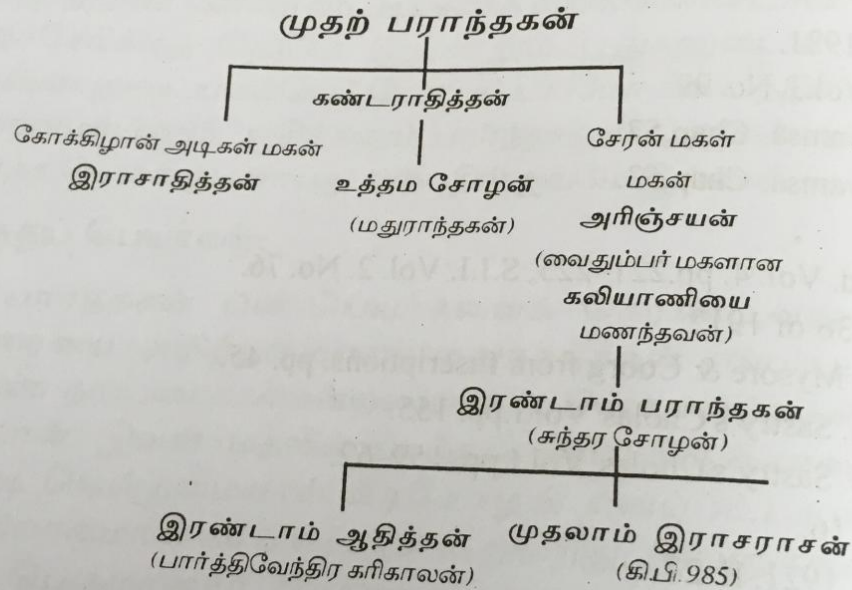


## MEDIEVAL CHOZHAS

Reference Time	Name of the king	Notable activity	Reference	Other comment
850-890 AD	Vijayalayan (the Chozha king who reestablished the glory of Chozha dynasty); Uraiyur was the first capital; Tanjore next.	Allied with Pallavas and defeated Kalappirar , ruling from Tanjore in the year 880 AD. Pandyas supported kalappirar and they also lost. Tanjore came into the hands of Cholas.	Thiruvalangadu Plates and inscriptions	Thirupperumbiam was the most notable battle for Medieval Cholas. They won the battle and made Tanjore their capital. By defeating Kalppirar, Pandyas and later, Pallavas they became the dominant rulers.Vijayalayan built a Durga temple in Tanjore.
880-907 AD	Adhitya I; S/O Vijayalayan; Tanjore capital	He defeated the Pallavas and captured Thondai Nadu; also captured Kongu Nadu	24 <sup>th</sup> year of rule was inscribed	His son married the daughter of a Chera King; Built several Siva Temples
907-953AD	Parantaka I; S/O Adhitya I	Defeated Pandyas ; war with many neighbors; waged war with Sri Lanka too but backed off.	Copper plates and stone inscriptions	He ruled for 46 years; Saivite; built Siva Temples; golden roof to Puliur Chitrambalam; also built a temple for his father
953-985 AD	Kandarathithan Uthama Chozhan and Arinjan Parantaka II	Thondai mandalam (Kanchipuram) came under Chozhas. Kandarathithan put golden roof to Chidambaram temple	Several inscriptions Veera sozhiyam-grammar book	Many temples received land grants.. Sembiyan Madevi (w/o Kandarathithan) hunted down the Paatudaith Thalangal from Thevaram and built Siva temples.

## MEDIEVAL CHOZHAS

Reference Time	Name of the king	Notable activity	Reference	Other comment
956-969AD	Adhitha Karikalan	He was killed by Pallavas or his own relative Uthama Cholan	Historical fiction- Ponniyin Selvan	It is clear that Parantaka Cholan gave Karikalan name to one son and Arulmozhi to another. Karikalan was the icon and Chozha pride.
985-1014 AD (947 AD born?)	Raja Raja I	Empire expanded; Brought the Karikalan era back;	Inscriptions and literature	Ever lasting contributions to literature, music, dance and sculpture. Gave a heritage monument to the World.



- Rajarajan's mother died with father in Udankattai Eruthal
- Kundavai was his sister
- Kandarathithan's wife is grandmother to Raja Raja
- Raja Raja was brought up by grandma and sister at Palayarai Palace

Vijayalaya 850- 890 AD



Aditya I 880- 907 AD



Parantaka I 907- 953 AD



Parantaka II 956- 973 AD



## Parantaka II 956-973 AD



## Raja Raja I 985-1014 AD







## Raja Raja I (985-1014AD)

- Born probably in 947 AD and died 1014 AD.
- Brought south india under Chozha rule (mummudi chozhan) and also parts of Sri Lanka;
- Captured Islands nearby (Lakadives and Maldives)
- Always won the war; Jayamkondan was one of his names; jayamkonda Chozhapuram is named after the victorious King; it is near Gangai Konda Chozhapuram
- Brought glory to Chola dynasty; golden age to Chozha empire
- He established sea trade with countries as far as China. Sent gifts to Chinese emperor for his birth day. Received Chinese visitors.
- He was a visionary. Meticulously inscribed his achievements and history; started a method of identifying the king in the introduction passage of the inscription itself (மெய்க்கீர்த்தி).
- He was a Saivite, he was tolerant of Vaishnavites, Buddhists and Jains. Financially supported them. Built a Vishnu Koil in Mysore; Buddhist Vihar in Nagappattinam; small kings were allowed to practice Jainism;
- Surveyed the temples mentioned in Thevaaram and upgraded them to stone temples.
- Built Rajarajesvaram on the site of his Sivan Koil. He was inspired by Kailasanadhar Temple at Kancheepuram.

# திருக்கற்றளி ஸ்ரீராஜராஜீஸ்வரம்



UNESCO Plaque



- Temple Area : 7.5 acres; surroundings including tank 60 acres
- 3 entrances; tall lingam (29'); tall Vimanam (216'); Monolithic sikhara (81 tons)
- Some idols were relocated; some were added by Naickers and Serfoji's
- Original Nandi is kept in the side mandapam; Nayaks built more massive one
- Odhuvar 48; Musicians- more than 75; dancers 400
- Raja Rajan gave 500 lb of gold and 600 lb of silver to the temple (as per inscription)
- 35 villages were given to the temple for its expenses. Temple owned 7000 acres of fertile land
- About 100 inscriptions are in the temple; 64 belong to Raja Raja.

## Raja Raja I

- He had 15 wives. Ulaga Madevi was the queen. Vanavan Madevi was the mother of Rajendra Chola I
- His sister was Kundavai and married to Vallavarayan Vanthiyath Thevan
- He liked his sister so much the inscriptions inside the Vimana belong to only two- Raja Raja and Kundavai. All other inscriptions are outside.
- He had three daughters
- As a respect to his grand parents, he built a temple Arinjilan esvaram for his grandfather and a Mandabam for Sembian mahadevi.
- He had 14 battalions of samurai type of guards- வேளைக்காரப்படை. வேல/வேளை means agreement. They agreed to give their lives to save the king and/or if any harm comes to the king because of their negligence.
- He had powerful army (thousands of soldiers) and powerful navy
- He had many titles including "திருமுறை கண்டான்". He saved most of the Thevaram scripts in use today from termites at Chidambaram temple. He catalogued Thirumurai thru Nambiandar Nambi (first three for Gnansambandar, and the next three for Appar and the seventh one for Sundarar)
- He hired Odhuvars to sing them; musicians and dancers to provide divine entertainment to people at the temple.





Raja Raja I with his guru Karuvur Thevar  
11<sup>th</sup> Century Painting- displayed in the  
Pradkshina Path around Sanctum Sanctorum

## Raja Rajan- The boy, the man, the king and the visionary

- Raja Rajan lost his parents in 973 AD and was brought up by his grandmother Sembian Madevi and sister Kundavai Nachiyar
- He knew his dad took the throne of his uncle Uthama Cholan and so when his uncle insisted he wanted to be the king, Raja Rajan agreed.
- Rajarajan had an interesting personality. He was skilled in warfare and determined to bring glory to his Chozha dynasty by waging battles with kings who do not cooperate. He also wanted to be as benevolent as his predecessors and involved in religious, art and literary activities.
- He was an able administrator. He surveyed the whole country and divided into districts. Appointed able people to administer. Same way, identified able men to go and fight the battles and rewarded them with those territories.
- He was aware of the greatness of his ancestors especially Karikal Chozhan. His brother's name was Karikalan. Karikalan had the largest Chozha kingdom; handled big projects and a benevolent King. Rajarajan also knew many of his ancestors promoted Saivism and Thevaram hymns.
- Kanchipuram was won from Pallavas and Rajarajan was amazed by Kailasanathar Koil and had an ambition to build a similar temple on the site where he worshipped Siva. His quest for Thevaram and promotion of arts, literature, music and dance came from the knowledge of his ancestors. He also appreciated the value of documentation and had inscribed many things in great detail without ambiguity!
- In summary, a man of great character ruled Chozha kingdom. He was a wise man; able administrator; benevolent king; lover of art and literature.
- Rajarajan contributed a heritage site to the whole world.
- Rajarajan gave us a temple still living.

## Sembian Mahadevi

- Wife of Kandarathithan. Arulmozhi's granadmother (grandfather's elder brother's wife). She lived in Palaiyarai Palace
- She had moved with six Chozha kings (Parantaka I, Kandarathithan, Arinjayam, Parantaka II, Adhitha Karikalan, Arulmozhi/Raja Raja I)
- Rajarajan's sister Kundavai also lived in Palayarai Palace
- Raja Rajan grew up at Palayarai. His personality was molded by his grandma and sister other than his own learnings from his ancestors
- SM identified famous temples and converted all brick ones into stone temples
- She came up with the idea of donating sheep and cattle to temples. The milk can be used to make butter/ghee for the temple lamps and also useful to people
- She inscribed all her donations small or big on temple walls. She identified herself in the inscriptions ( origin of Meykeerthi )
- She renovated old inscriptions. Keen on documentation.
- She contributed to new temple architecture
- All these activities were keenly observed by Arulmozhi when he was growing up. She had tremendous influence on his personality.



Freer Gallery, DC

## Brihadisvara Temple alias Rajarajeeswaram

**” பாண்டிய குலாசனி வளநாட்டுத் தஞ்சாவூர்க்  
கூற்றத்துத் தஞ்சாவூர் நாம் எடுப்பிச்ச  
திருக்கற்றளி ஸ்ரீராஜராஜீஸ்வரம்”**  
-கோவில் கல்வெட்டு

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/vEuEgkzXgTYakpxv7>

அருள்மொழி தன்னை உலகினுக்கே - தந்து  
வான்புகழ் கொண்ட தமிழ்நாடு

- Thanks Bharati

(அருள்மொழி- திருக்குறள், ராஜ ராஜன்)

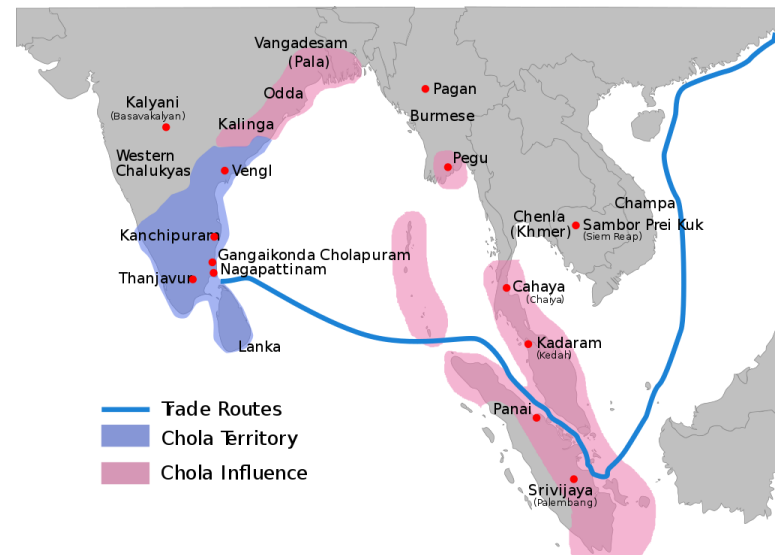


Reference Time	Name of the king	Notable activity	Reference	Other comment
<b>985-1014 AD</b>	<b>Raja Raja I</b>	Empire expanded; Brought the Karikalan era back;	Inscriptions and litearture	Ever lasting contributions to literature, music, dance and sculptiure. Gave a heritage monument to the World.
<b>1012-1044 AD</b>	<b>Rajendra I</b>	Expansion to all Sri lanka, north east India to Ganges, Java-Sumatra, Thailand	Inscriptions	Military Genius; Gave a heritage monument to the World

**Raja Raja I**



**Rajendra I**



## Gangai Konda Chozha Puram- Brihadisvara Temple

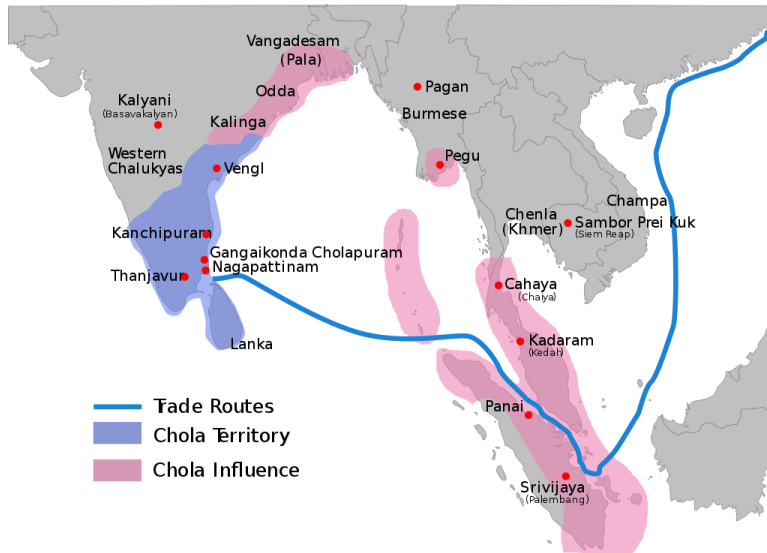


- Built around 1035 AD. Similar to his dad's temple at Tanjore. It was built to celebrate his war victory in North India. He made the defeated kings to bring Ganges water to his capital GKC Puram.
- Area is nearly 7 acre
- It is a World Heritage Monument
- There is a well that originally had water brought from Ganges.
- Rajendra added some idols captured in his war with other countries

Brihadisvara Temple alias Gangaikonda Chozhapuram

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/r1bmTexFxe2cY5Zz8>

## Rajendra I 1012-1044 AD



## Rajathiraja 1044-1054 AD



## Rajendra II 1054- 1063 AD



## Veera Rajendra 1063-1070 AD



Reference Time	Name of the king	Notable activity	Reference	Other comment
<b>1012-1044 AD</b>	<b>Rajendra I</b>	Expansion to all Sri lanka, north east India to Ganges, Java-Sumatra, Thailand	Inscriptions	Military Genius; Gave a heritage monument to the World
<b>1044-1054AD</b>	<b>Rajathiraja (son of Rajendra I)</b>	Won the war with Chalukyas; was killed in the battle of Koppam; his brother took over and won the battle	Inscriptions	Title: Rajakesari; warrior king; helped his dad in his battles; helped him to control his territories like Vengi, Kalinga; died in the battle ( யானை மேல் துஞ்சிய தேவர்)
<b>1054-1063 AD</b>	<b>Rajendra II (son of Rajendra I)</b>	He defeated the enemies at Koppam battle when his brother was killed.	Inscriptions	Title: Parakesari; Patron of arts, Gifted 120 Kalam paddy to an artist for staging <i>RajaRajeswara Natakam</i> (a musical), in the <u>Tanjore Temple</u>
<b>1063-1070 AD</b>	<b>Veera Rajendra (son of Rajendra I)</b>	Extended the territory of Vengi in India and southern Sri Lanka;	Inscriptions	Helped the king of Kadaram; Patron of temples; gave rubies to Chidambaram Temple; grants to many other Siva as well as Vishnu temples



## Medival Chozhas

- Rajarajan I was the greatest of all. He brought back the old glory of Chozhas with his ancestor Karikalan in mind
- Rajarajan was influenced by his grandmother Sembian Mahadevi in terms of administration, temple construction, donation and documentation
- Rajarajan understood the value placed by his ancestors and Sembian Mahadevi on literature, music, dance and administration
- He received help from his sister for temple administation and moral support. He valued her contributions more than his wives and children.
- Rjaendra I was a military genius. He had his dad as his role model.
- Rajendra;s three sons took care of the rest of the medieval chola period without losing their territory or expanding it little bit.
- They gave two heritage monuments to the world
- Thus medieval period was very good for Chozhas as well as Tamilnadu.