THOUGH the concept and function of statehood was markedly different in medieval South India than is in modern India, there was the same concern with the productivity and welfare of the village and with the relationship of village welfare to the stability and strength of the state. In the Amuktamalyada, a Telugu epic poem of the sixteenth century which is widely attributed to the greatest of the Vijayanagar rulers, Krishnadevaraya, the king presumably Krishnadevaraya, states:

"...and prosperity ["artha"] and prosperity ["dhurma"] will increase only when tanks and irrigation canals are constructed and favour is shown to the poor cultivators in the matter of taxation and services."  

Yet, notwithstanding the recognized importance of agricultural development, neither the Chola nor Vijayanagar states had departments of irrigation or public works dealing with agricultural improvements. Such activities were left to individuals, separate villages, and extra-village institutions such as temples.

The best examples of regional development which took place in this period were those under the auspices of South Indian temples, often involving as many as 150 to 300 villages. One reason for the prominence of temple-sponsored development is that the stone and copper inscriptions, the basic historical sources for this period, give more information about temples because most of the surviving inscriptions dealt essentially with temple affairs. A more important reason is that temples mobilized resources of land and money second only to the state and were therefore capable of financing such projects.

Temple-directed regional agricultural development grew out of the nature of the endowments which temples received. Endowments were made in order to provide income for temple maintenance, for festivals honouring the deities, and for food offerings to the deities. The endowment typically involved the provision of a perpetual service for the merit of the donor or someone designated by the donor. In order to provide for these services, a permanent earning resource had to be established, the proceeds from which would pay for the specified service. Endowments were of two kinds: land and money. Village or land endowments usually gave the temple the major share of income (mellvarum) while the cultivators retained the minor share (kudivaram). The temple, thus, did not have ownership over the endowed land, but a command over a share of its income. There were important responsibilities toward the endowed land. During the Chola period, for example, a series of Srirangam temple inscriptions from the reign of Kulotunga I (1070-1118) describe a gigantic process of redevelopment of a large portion of temple lands buried under - and by Hoods of the Kaveri river. Under the auspices of the temple, these ruined lands were leased on a new basis for reclamation and ultimate recultivation. Money endowments were also made to provide perpetual services. This confronted the temples with the need to invest such funds securely in order to realize a perpetual income or interest (poliyutta). Money settled upon the temple was frequently loaned to village assemblies for developmental purposes which gave the temple an important role in mobilizing developmental funds within a region. In other places, endowments of money were frequently baned by the temple to commercial firms for a perpetual interest of around 20 per cent. In most other temples, not favourably placed for commercial investment of endowed funds, it was necessary to invest the funds in their own temple villages. The earnings on such invested funds would come in the form of a greater income from the major share of income already received by the temple.

The Tirupati Temple: An Example

The Tirupati temple in Andhra State offers an excellent example of regional agricultural development produced by the application of money endowments as capital for the improvement of villages which had been endowed to the temple dining the Vijayanagar period. This case also illustrates the importance of the state in developmental activities.
which included some 150 villages by the sixteenth century.9

From the time of its establishment in the tenth century to the middle or the fifteenth century, the Tirupati temple had become a significant centre of Vaishnavism in the northern pari of Tamilnad. Its growth in importance was due, in part, to the persecution of Vaishnavites during the Chola period, especially in the eleventh century, and the town of Tirupati was probably established as a sanctuary for Vaishnavites safe from Saivite Chola rulers. Another factor in the growing importance of the Tirupati temple prior to the fifteenth century was the occupation and plunder of many Hindu temples in the Southern part of the peninsula by Muslims during the fourteenth century sultana of Madura. In this latter period, the Tirupati temple became a refuge for many Vaishnavite priests from southern Tamilnad and even for the major deity Sri Ranganatha of Srirangam when that great temple was under Muslim control. In recognition of the increasing importance of Tirupati after the eleventh century, South Indian rulers provided endowments to support the ritual activities of the Temple. The Yadavaraya rulers of Vengi in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries became supporters of the Temple, and maintained a close supervisory control over its affairs5. In the middle of the fourteenth century, the Yadavaraya state was superseded by the young and expanding Vijayanagar state. However, the rulers of the first dynasty of Vijayanagar (1136-1486) did not succeed to the supervision or management of the Tirupati temple: the early rulers were Saivites and therefore less interested in this Vishnu Temple than their Saivite contemporaries. The village of Vikramadityamangala was the administrative and social hub of the Tirupati temple in the early years of the Vijayanagar period. The village of Vikramadityamangala was the administrative and social hub of the Tirupati temple in the early years of the Vijayanagar period. The village of Vikramadityamangala was next mentioned in an inscription of 1493 when it was recorded that Kandadai Ramanuja, the agent for the endowments of the Tirupati temple, granted the village to the temple and thus reduced the problem of managing far-flung temple villages. Moreover, the practice permitted other donors, even the most modest donors, to make money endowments with the assurance that the money would be invested in irrigation improvements and would yield a reliable income for the performance of a ritual service.

In order to support the vast increase in ritual activities at Tirupati, endowments of land and money increased. Two factors appear to be decisively important relative to the development of the temple and the provision of support through land and money. The first factor was the importance of state support through land and money endowments. The second factor was the utilization of money endowments for the creation of irrigation works in the villages which had been endowed to the temple. The crucial support of the Vijayanagar state and the utilization of money endowments for irrigation works were complementary factors contributing to the economic foundation of the Tirupati Temple. On the one hand, the irrigation programme which covered about 100 villages in the Tirupati-Chandragiri area could never have occurred without the grant of villages from state donors. About ninety per cent of all villages granted to the temple in the sixteenth century came, directly or indirectly, from state donors. About one-half of the value of all money endowments came from state donors. The economic stability of the temple was therefore critically dependent upon the grants of state donors. On the other hand, however, the scale of endowments of land and money could scarcely have been achieved had the temple not offered the assurance that money endowments would produce the secure and stable income necessary to perform specified ritual services. This assurance was provided in the temple's programme of investment in temple village irrigation. This practice provided an efficient means for absorbing the large endowments of state donors. It also permitted state officers or those whose fiefs were located at great distances from Tirupati to grant money instead of land to the temple and thus reduced the problem of managing far-flung temple villages. Moreover, the practice permitted other donors, even the most modest donors, to make money endowments with the assurance that the money would be invested in irrigation improvements and would yield a reliable income for the performance of a ritual service.

It may be useful to cite an early example of agricultural development in a temple village in order to illustrate the process which came to extend over many villages in the Tirupati area. In 1420 the Vijayanagar emperor Devaraya II granted three tax-free villages and some money to the temple for the purpose of providing specified food offerings at a particular festival. Among the villages granted to the temple was the Brahmin village Vikramadityamangala. The village of Vikramadityamangala was next mentioned in an inscription of 1493 when it was recorded that Kandadai Ramanuja Ayyangar, the agent for the endowments of the emperor Saluva Narasimha and an important teacher of the temple, granted the village to the temple and thus reduced the problem of managing far-flung temple villages. Moreover, the practice permitted other donors, even the most modest donors, to make money endowments with the assurance that the money would be invested in irrigation improvements and would yield a reliable income for the performance of a ritual service.

For a detailed discussion of the economic operations of the temple see the writer's "The Economic Function of a Medieval South Indian Temple," The Journal of Asian Studies, XIX (February, 1960) 163-76.
tion channel, all the necessary articles [for the food offerings] shall be supplied from the Shri Bhundar-ram [temple treasury],..." In the 1429 inscription, Vikramadityamangala was granted to the Temple to provide income for specific offerings to be made during a festival for the merit of the Vijayanagar emperor Devaraya I. Each year thereafter, the officers of the temple works office (tiruppari-bhandaram) would collect a share of the regular income of the village to be used for the prescribed offerings. Then, in 1495, the donor Kandadai Ramanuja Ayyan-gar stipulated that 1,300 panam of his endowment was to be used to create an irrigation channel in Vikramadityamangala village and that the additional income from this improvement would support an additional offering. Thus, the regular income from the temple village of Vikramadityamangala was enhanced by a capital improvement of 1,300 panam, and, on the basis of this improvement, the village, after 1495, supported two different food offerings.*

Though the two factors of the Tirupati investment programme and state support were interdependent factors in realizing the scale of growth achieved at Tirupati, there can be no question of the primacy of state support. From the very first record of an endowment to the deity Sri Venatesvara in the ninth century, the endowments from rulers of South Indian kingdoms and their officers had contributed the bulk of resources to the Temple. Endowments from state donors not only provided the bulk of resources necessary for the improved tempo of ritual activities at Tirupati after 1456, but, by providing an example, these state endowments also indirectly facilitated the endowments of temple functionaries and local residents and merchants. Together, the money endowments of temple functionaries and local residents and merchants amounted to fifty per cent of all money endowments by value between 1509 and 1568. In the period before 1456, these two donor groups were represented by only a few endowments according to the existing record. From 1456 to 1568, however, the temple functionaries and local residents and merchants played a major part as donors. In considering only the money endowments by these two groups, the following observation may be made: Temple functionaries contributed about one-fourth of the total money endowments to the Temple during the period of the greatest development of the Temple, 1509-1568. It has been shown elsewhere in detail by the writer how functionaries were able to convert their basic livelihood payment of consecrated food (prasadam) into money through an exchange system which had developed within the Temple precincts but which was not a part of the regular temple organisation. Briefly, consecrated food was sold to pilgrims by persons who leased the right to collect the consecrated food due to the temple functionaries and others. This exchange system depended upon a large number of pilgrim "consumers" of the consecrated food. It can be argued that the Tirupati temple became a major pilgrimage centre largely because the endowments of state donors gave the Temple the prestige of imperial support as well as the resources for impressive and frequent religious services. The temple functionaries could not have converted their food payments into money except through sales to pilgrims, and pilgrims would not have massed at Tirupati without the sustaining support in prestige and endowments which the state provided.

The same argument is true for the local residents and merchants of Tirupati, the other major donor group. Local residents and merchants contributed about one-fourth of the total of money endowments by value to the Temple in the period 1509-1568. These local donors were comprised of merchants and a variety of specialists such as teachers, scholars, and artisans, persons who congregated in important religious centres to serve the various needs of the place. All of these persons derived their livelihoods from the activities surrounding the Temple. Thus, in the same degree that temple functionaries were dependent upon the sustaining economic and prestige support of the state which attracted pilgrims to whom the functionaries sold their consecrated food payments, so the merchants and other specialists or Tirupati were dependent upon the great numbers of pilgrims who came to Tirupati to worship and who employed the services of specialists around the Temple. In both cases, the money income finally realized by the functionaries and local residents derived from the fact that the Tirupati temple had become a religious centre of the first importance. Endowments by state donors were basically responsible for raising the Temple to this kind of pilgrimage centre.

The irrigation programme carried out by the Tirupati Temple primarily with state endowed resources raises the question of the relationship of the Vijayanagar state to irrigation and the role of temples in this activity. The Vijayanagar rulers considered irrigation to be of vital importance, as indeed they might, given the character of the Vijayanagar agrarian economy. Agriculture in southern India was based upon small-scale irrigation through the use of tanks, wells, and river water sources. The irrigation programme of the Tirupati temple, based upon the investment of money endowments, is probably a good example of the small-scale irrigation of the time.*

Funds were used to create irrigation tanks and channels on a village-by-village basis. The income added to a temple village by such improvements was probably calculated with care so that part of this income, the major part, could meet the costs of the rural service for which the endowment was made. The irrigation prolamine of the Tirupati temple villages involved no observable changes in the organization of agriculture in the area beyond the probable slight reorganization of agricultural labour arising out of the introduction or extension of irrigated lands in the village. The management of village lands and the regulation of irrigation was retained in the hands of cultivators within the village organization of labour.

The kind of agrarian operation which Wittfogel calls "hydroagriculture", as distinguished from "hydraulic agriculture", in the former the degree of Social and Political control required is slight. Orientl Despotism, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1957, P 3
Sea and sky and sand...and fringing the shore the swaying palm trees. A scene of timeless beauty, and incidentally, one of nature’s most efficient distribution set-ups.

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The Vijayanagar state appeared to recognize the importance of small scale irrigation works upon which most of southern India depended. Yet, despite this recognition, there was no department of irrigation in the government. In fact, it cannot be said that the Vijayanagar state took a direct and active role in the creation of irrigation facilities in the country except around the capital city of Vijayanagar. There are only a few isolated cases of irrigation works being directly established by the imperial government. In 1339, a Mysore inscription described the construction of a huge tank by the Vijayanagar prince Bhashkara Bavadura in the present State of Andhra. Under Bukka II (1405-105-6) a river was redirected into a large channel built under the orders of the emperor and bearing the name of "Bukkarkaya channel." In 1498, a valley in the present Anantapur districts of Andhra was constructed into a large reservoir under the orders of Saluva Narasimha. In 1533, a great tank was constructed near Bangalore under orders from the emperor Achyutadvaraya and still provides water to that important city. Around the city of Vijayanagar, the state look more direct steps. Krishnaadvaraya constructed a large tank at Nagalapura. A suburb of the capital city and used the technical assistance of a Portuguese engineer della Ponte. As reported in the contemporary chronicle of Paes, the Nagalapura tank was an important irrigation work. It was one of a number of important irrigation projects of the capital which apparently had an integrated and effective irrigation and water supply system. Sir Thomas Munro spoke of the irrigational system around Vijayanagar in the following manner:

To attempt the construction of new tanks [in the capital city area] is perhaps a more hopeless experiment titan to repair those, which have been filled up, for there is scarcely any place where a tank can be made to advantage that has not been applied to this purpose by the inhabitants. 

While the Vijayanagar state did not directly undertake irrigation works in great number except around the capital, it frequently did assist individuals to do so, N Venkataramanaya, the historian of the third dynasty of Vijayanagar (1509-1576), has stated that "the excavation of tanks and canals as well as the digging of wells was left to individual enterprise." The typical procedure followed by those individuals seeking to construct a tank or irrigation channel was for the state to provide the person who undertook the project with free land watered by the tank or channel as payment. This land payment was called the name "dusavanda or kattit kodage. Vijayanagar historians have cited numerous cases in which the state made such arrangements with persons, and state grants of land for this purpose have been cited frequently in the Annual Reports of Indian Epigraphy.

Other Temple Examples

The provision of irrigation works through Hindu temples, however, remains extremely important according to the corpus of South Indian inscriptions. The Saivite temple of Kalahasti, near Tirupati, followed the practice of using money endowments for the excavation of irrigation channels and the reclamation of temple lands. A Kalahasti inscription of the year 1510 stated:

We the supervisors of the Treasury of the God at [Kalahasti!] agree to arrange for offerings of sweet rice cakes on eleven occasions. Virappannar Ayyan deposed with us for the purpose 1,306 pan which was to be invested in the new settlements of Mallayamamsamudram . . . with a view to bring the lands under cultivation [and] Lakkusettpuram . . . The lands of the latter settlement were to be irrigated and brought under the plow with the help of the waters of Virasamudram lake [which will] be repaired and maintained by investing 1,006 pon of the amount deposited.

Still other examples of temple sponsored irrigation works may be cited to indicate the scope of such undertakings. In 1581 the trustees of a Saivite shrine and a Vaishnavite shrine along with some private persons arranged to have a river channel excavated through the lands of one temple in order to supply the tank on the lands of the other temple. As compensation for permission to cross its lands, one acre (300 kuli) of land was given to the former temple. In another case, in 1552, some lands belonging to a temple which had not been cultivated for a time were granted tax-free status by an arrangement between the temple officials and the local state officer. These lands were then favourably leased to cultivators for reclamation and cultivation. An early Vijayanagar inscription from Mysore recorded that a local state officer and temple officials agreed to exempt lands from taxes which were watered by a tank constructed on temple lands with funds provided by a local merchant. The merchant was to enjoy the income from this land for two years after which the lands would revert to the temple along with the tank. It was also stipulated that the merchant waste retain a portion of the land as hire kari and a payment in land for the construction of the tank. Another Mysore inscription of the year 1110 provides an example of co-operation between a non-temple and a temple for the purpose of constructing irrigation works for the lands of the temple and the village. The villagers dammed a river and constructed a channel over their own lands to the temple at their own expense. It was stipulated that the water carried in the channel was to be used in the proportion of two-thirds for temple lands and one-third for the land of the villagers. All repairs and maintenance were to be borne in the same proportion, e.g. two-thirds by the temple. A 1424 inscription from the same place recorded that the dam constructed by the villagers in 1410 had been breached and that the temple officials and villagers asked one of the military commanders of the area for help in restoring the dam which the latter provided.

Temple-Sponsored Irrigation

A final example of temple-sponsored irrigation indicates the high degree of planned irrigational development of temple lands in some places. In 1496, a temple manager in the modern Kolar district of Mysore executed an agreement with a person who excavated a tank in a temple village. The agreement stipulated the quality of the tank construction and the payment in land for the work, i.e. the award of dasavanda land watered by the newly constructed tank. The agreement also stipulated the rights and obligations of the persons awarded the dasavanda land. The inscription read as follows:

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Be it well. [On the date specified] to. Alapa’s son Narasimhadeva, the temple priest of the Ood Narasimha, kondapa-Timmauna’s son Aveapa. granted a [land payment] agreement as follows: Whereas the Gundalahlili village... belonging to the offerings of our God... Narasimha... and provides for the offerings and ceremonies... of the God and the livelihood of the attendants [and] on your expending money and causing a viran lank to be constructed... forming an embankment with plenty of earth, building it with storm-fixing... stone sluice and making it secure with bricks and good mortar, and thoroughly completing the tank... We grant von in the rice lands that will be formed under the lams... an award of land equal to) three in ten as a (payment for the construction of a tank). If any the least failure occurs in the tank we will levy money and grain from all of the rice lands [under] the tank, including those of your [land award] and have it repaired... The same provisions are laid down for any future extension of rice lands under the tank... If the flow of water allows, you may plant area. coconut or other permanent gardens in your [awarded land] and have the full enjoyment of the same. If the tank should not fill sufficiently for your three-tenths [land award] rice fields, you will take your turn for the water. For building houses for the [cultivators] who cultivate your [land award] rice fields we will point out the sites. For such cultivators we will not exact house-tax or other taxes. These [land award] rice fields are granted to you [for] as long as the sun and moon endure, to be enjoyed by you and your posterity... with right to bequeath and self...

These examples of irrigation facilities established under the auspices of temple-, sometimes, with the support of a state officer and sometimes with the support of private persons, are a few among the many referred to in the South Indian inscriptions. South Indian temples were important laud-holders having control over lands second only to the Vijayanagar state in their extent. In addition to irrigation activities, these temples were also concerned with land reclamation. A Appadorai has stated that the medieval South Indian temples were the chief non-state agencies involved in the reclamation of land. Temple sponsored reclamation projects were accomplished under what Appadorai has called “a system of favourable leases” Cultivators were attracted to marginal or waste lands which had been endowed to temples by the lease of these lands at very small annual rents. This rent would be gradually increased by the temple until it reached a certain amount and fixed there. Under this system of reclamation, the clearing and levelling of land and the provision of irrigation were conditions of tenancy.

**Was This State Support for Development of Agriculture?**

Under the conditions which have been described above, where South Indian temples were among the most important agencies for agricultural development, the question of whether one reason for the vast state support was to achieve agricultural development may be considered. It could be inferred that the Vijayanagar state supported the Tirupati and the many other South Indian temples conducting similar programmes in recognition of the contribution which temples made to the provision of irrigation and the reclamation of land. This inferred motive for support would be consistent with, even supportive of, the other motives which moved the state to support Hindu temples such as the duty of Hindu kings to maintain the religion and its institutions and, for the Vijayanagar period, the special ideological significance of the Hindu religion in the struggle against the Muslim states of the Deccan. The inference that the state sought to promote land development through its endowments must be examined carefully. The evidence from the Tirupati temple and other temples does not, prima-facie, warrant the conclusion that the Vijayanagar state was deliberately helping to provide irrigation facilities for South Indian villages through state endowments and other forms of support to temples, it is necessary to distinguish between the manifest and latent functions of these endowments and other forms of support. The manifest function of money endowments to the Tirupati and other temples was to offer a ritual service for the merit which such an act gave to the state donor. The manifest function of grants of tax-free lands to persons who constructed tanks and irrigation channels, i.e., dasavanda or kottu-kodalgrants, was a reward by the state for an act of religious merit performed by some person. Similarly, the manifest function of the kinds of state support to temples, such as tax remissions, mediation in disputes, and periodic or regular supervision of temple administration, was to provide for the continuing operation of these important religious institutions.

To be sure, these actions by the Vijayanagar state had the latent function of supporting the land development activities of temples. However, it is necessary to distinguish the consequences of the support of the state from the motives for which the support was given. Land development was an obvious consequence or function of state endowments. Yet, land development may not have been a motive. It was perhaps enough for the Vijayanagar state to support temples simply in order to maintain Hindu institutions. State support of temples in order to promote land development is nowhere suggested in the sources, nor is this reason required to explain the support which the state provided medieval South Indian temples. Thus, without ruling out the possibility that the Vijayanagar state supported these temples in order to promote land development through these institutions, it is not possible to assert that the promotion of such development was a motive in the support of the temples by the Vijayanagar state.

**The South Indian Temple as an Economic Centre**

The development of lands was but one of the economic activities which medieval South Indian temples carried out. Within the area of their influence, which varied with the importance and wealth of the temple, each temple was an important economic institution. The variegated economic functions of medieval South Indian temples have been commented upon by most South Indian historians. Nilakanta Sastri spoke of temples as having the following economic functions: ‘landholder, employer... consumer of goods and services...’, and
bank." The landholder function has already been dealt with sufficiently. The temple as an employer of large numbers of persons may be seen in the eleventh century inscription from the Tanjore temple. Here, 609 temple servants are listed not including teachers and principal spiritual and secular officials. Mahalingam mentioned an inscription of the Vijayanagar period which referred to a smaller temple with 370 temple servants. Temples were also major consumers of local products which were regularly purchased and used for the performance of ritual. Numerous inscriptions also refer to the loans made by temples to individuals and village assemblies for economically productive and other purposes. Such loans would usually be secured by lands whose income the temple would enjoy in lieu of interest.

The variety of economic functions which South Indian Brahmanical temples came to have by the Vijayanagar period may be viewed in the following developmental framework. During the medieval period, Brahmanical centres became religious centres with respect to a group of villages and other institutions. This occurred as a result of the Hindu revival which made the Brahmanical temple the most significant institution for bhakti worship. The rise of temples was the result of religious developments of the medieval period. Necessarily, Brahmanical temples depended upon an allocation of resources in order to support ritual. Necessarily, also, the temple developed close economic ties with local institutions not only as the recipient of their endowments, but as landholder, employer, consumer, and source of loan funds. Hence, temples became economic as well as religious centres. An important aspect of the relationship between the temple and the local institution with which economic ties existed derived from the nature of religious endowments. Endowments were made for the provision of perpetual services which, in the case of money, required investment for earnings.

Study of the Tirupati and other South Indian temples has suggested another aspect of the role of temples as economic centres in medieval South India. The rulers of Vijayanagar, dedicated to the promotion of Hindu institutions, poured large sums of money into temples. This money was not buried in vaults; it was pressed into immediate service by temple officials. At the Tirupati temple, the form in which these sums of money were employed to earn an income was through irrigation investments. At Srirangam, it appears, money endowments were employed in making commercial loans to business firms in Trichinopoly. At other temples, such funds were loaned to village assemblies or individuals. It appears that every temple had one, or perhaps several, ways in which its monev trusts could be employed for productive or other purposes. The channeling of these funds with which the temples were endowed took place within what might be thought of as an economic system formed by institutions and persons which had economic ties to the temple.

Hypothesis Suggested

All of the foregoing suggests the hypothesis that medieval South Indian temples functioned as economic centres through which resources of the Vijayanagar state were redistributed in the form of endowments. Two aspects of this function of temples as redistribution centres appear significant.

(1) The nature of this redistribution was both voluntary and indirect. It was voluntary in the sense that state officers granted money and land to temples as devotees of the deities, not as state agents for the rational allocation of state resources. This redistribution was indirect in the sense that the resources which finally came to be used by local institutions were redistributed by temple officials according to the needs of each temple to establish a viable economic foundation. In this paper, three important ways of deriving earnings from monev endowments have been mentioned: (a) investment in irrigation; (b) loans to commercial firms; (c) loans to individuals and village assemblies. Presumably there were other ways in which temple officials allocated money which had been granted to them by state donors.

(2) The redistribution of state resources through temple centres represented a major allocation of state resources for economic and welfare purposes. There are two reasons for suggesting this. First, the Hindu religion and Hindu institutions were principal integrating forces within the Vijayanagar state especially in the face of the threat of political domination from Muslim states of the Deccan. Second, the Hindu temple was the principal integrating force within the Vijayanagar state especially in the face of the threat of political domination from Muslim states of the Deccan.

The hypothesis that temples served as centres for the redistribution of resources, particularly state resources, has emerged from the study of some South Indian temples during the medieval period. Research in the economic history of India is still in its infancy and hypotheses of this sort appear to be necessary. In the present state of knowledge about the economic organization of medieval India, South and North, there is a curious compartmentalization of economic life. Something is known of the peasant village as an economic unit; the general conditions and organization of trade through guilds, and the role of the state as the recipient of land revenue, characteristically, these institutions and the different levels of economic activity in which they are involved are discussed separately by

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South Indian historians without consideration of possible interrelationships. If subsequent research should prove it true that temples were important centres for the redistribution of state resources, then an important linkage between the state and the village or other institutions can be established.

**Conclusion**

Inscriptional and other evidence from the Tanjore and Srirangam temples during the Chola period (9th-13th centuries) and the Tirupati, Kalahasti, and Srirangam temples during the Vijayanagar period (14th-17th centuries) makes it possible to enumerate the ways in which the state facilitated and supported the regional developmental activities of temples. First, state endowments were important. Laud endowed to temples came primarily from the state. The ruling group was the only donor group in the country which had command over land resources of an extent which permitted alienation to temples. The state also endowed money to finance normal temple ritual and special festivals which served to attract the support of other devotees and pilgrims. The kings and their officers endowed shrines, sacred tanks, and other physical facilities which made South Indian temples more popular and comfortable places of pilgrimage and therefore promoted greater pilgrim support. Second, the state frequently remitted taxes on temple lands and properties which contributed to the financial stability of these institutions. Third, the state adjudicated conflicts within the temple organizations and between the temples and other institutions such as temple villages, non-temple villages, other temples, and local state officers. This was an extremely important function since a temple such as Srirangam had almost 300 villages in the fifteenth century which could have been administered only with state support of the Temple rights. Finally, the state frequently took an active role in supervising temple administration. In many of the larger temples there was frequently a state officer, adhikari during the Chola period and paraplavagar during the Vijayanagar period, who was attached to the temple as an inspector of administrative practices and an agent for the endowments of high state officers. In the Chola period there are references to state audits of temple accounts.

The support which the medieval South Indian state gave to temples and hence to the regional developmental activities which they carried out can be explained in a number of ways. Concern with the administrative and financial stability of Hindu temples was part of the responsibility of the Hindu state and in accord with proper (dharmic) models of state action. To some extent, state support can be understood as mere devotional acts by state officials devoid of political motives.

In this paper it has been suggested that, whatever the motive for such state support, the latent function of the support was to produce a significant degree of agricultural development through the provision of irrigation to numerous villages which had been endowed to temples. It has been suggested moreover that this latent function may be seen as a redistribution of state resources through Hindu temples which had become significant economic centres in their own right. The temple, as an economic organization, represented what may have been the best way of allocating state resources economic development and welfare on a small, regional scale. In some significant ways, the Community Development Programme, created by the modern bureaucratic and rational Indian Republic, is an extension of the small regional developmental effort, with the peasant village as its focus, which existed in medieval India three or four centuries ago. The differences between the medieval Indian programme and the contemporary one are, of course, great, perhaps the most important difference being that the motives of the modern state are much more direct and the objectives sought are much more considered.

**References**

4. For a most insightful discussion of this matter and related ones see the discussion by T K T Vira Raghavacharya, History of Tirupati, I (Tirupati : Tirumalai-Tirupati Devasthanams 1953), pp 529-30.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
14. Venkataramanayya op at p.187
15. Ibid, pp. 190-91.
17. Ibid, 1922, No 166.
24. Ibid.
27. Mahalingam. Economic Life... p 40.
28. Ibid p 38.
Not a show dog perhaps. But Moti doesn't worry about that. Nor about anything else, as long as he has enough to eat and the sun to bask in. Certainly he neither knows nor cares that he lives in Jamshedpur—a city devoted to producing one of today's most precious metals...steel.

Nor does Moti care to know that the town he lives in is the result of private enterprise...that the town produces steel for factories, houses, hospitals, railways and for the varied consumer needs of this modern age...that it is built and maintained by Tatas.

This is just one of the ways in which Tatas contribute to the growth and development of the country. In such widely differing fields as steel, textiles, electric power, chemicals, locomotives and engineering; machine tools, radios, air conditioning...private enterprise plays an important role.

It's a pity Moti knows nothing of all this. An individualist himself, he'd be the first to appreciate such private enterprise and initiative.