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Proceedings of the 32nd Annual Session

26th – 28th September, 2025

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Editor

Dr. M. Lakshmanan

COIMBATORE - 2025

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From the Editor's Desk

It gives me immense pleasure to present this collection of papers from the 32nd Annual Session of the Tamil Nadu History Congress, held at the historically significant Bharathiar University, Coimbatore. The institution provided an excellent platform for young scholars to share their research findings, and the warm hospitality extended by the hosts left a lasting impression on the delegates.

With a large number of young researchers participating, the Tamil Nadu History Congress has truly evolved into a dynamic platform for emerging academics. The 32nd Annual Session witnessed the participation of more than 500 scholars, both young and experienced, and the presentation of over 350 papers. Notably, the Socio-Economic and Archaeology and Art sections received the highest number of contributions, owing to the Tamil Nadu Government's encouragement of archaeological research. Encouragingly, the growing number of participants has been accompanied by a marked improvement in the quality of the papers. The younger generation, including postgraduate students, has shown an interest in presenting papers on themes that require closer investigation. I wish to place on record my appreciation of their enthusiasm, which reflects the growth of the Tamil Nadu History Congress as an academic forum.

Section-wise, the Political section received 40 papers, compared with 55 in the previous volume; the Socio-Economic section received 66 (compared with 67 previously); Archaeology received 40 (75 previously); and Historiography received 23 (29 previously). Together, these contributions highlight the Congress's growing stature as a centre of serious historical research.

Significant changes have also taken place in publication practices. The recent relaxation of UGC guidelines on publication and citation has been beneficial to scholars. In response, we aim to further improve the quality of this volume. The Tamil Nadu History Congress is among the few academic bodies that have undertaken the task of uploading previous volumes of its proceedings, an endeavour made more feasible by advancements in information technology.

This volume features articles by senior scholars, including the General President and the Inaugural Speaker, as well as papers based on the endowment lectures delivered by Dr. L. SelvamuthuKumarasami and Dr. R. Malliga. It also includes contributions from the four Section Presidents. As in previous years, the volume is divided into four sections. While efforts have been made to publish full papers based on the recommendations of the Section Presidents, some papers have been published in abstract form, following the same criteria. A few other papers, although presented at the session, are listed separately owing to formatting and readability issues.

This volume is truly the result of teamwork. As Chief Editor, I extend my sincere gratitude to the members of the Editorial Committee—Dr. N. Sethuraman, Dr. M.S. Fatima Begam, and Dr. R.K. Maya—for their cooperation in trimming lengthy articles, ensuring uniformity, and meeting deadlines. I also gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Dr. P. Gowri, Dr. Dharani, Dr. R. Gopinath, Dr. P. Tamil Selvan, and the research scholars Thenmozhi, Oviya, and Priyanga from the University of Madras, who assisted in bringing out this volume on time.

Finally, I extend my deepest thanks to the General Secretary and the office-bearers of the Tamil Nadu History Congress (TNHC) for reposing their trust in me.

M Lakshmanan

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GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Tamil Nadu History Congress, 2025

Prof. S.S. Sundaram

Honourable Guests, Distinguished Invitees, Office-Bearers, Members of the Executive Committee of the Tamil Nadu History Congress, delegates, members of the media and press, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you all to this momentous occasion, the inauguration of the 32nd Annual Session of the Tamil Nadu History Congress, being held in the historic city of Coimbatore.

Coimbatore: A Historical Introduction

Historically, Coimbatore formed part of the Kongu region and is situated at the foothills of the Nilgiri Hills. According to local tradition, the region was named after Kovan, an ancient ruler associated with the area. Geographically, the region was known by names such as Ezhukarai Nadu and Onpathu Karai Nadu. During the medieval period, it came to be known as Kongu Mandalam, while the Imperial Cholas referred to it as Vira Chola Mandalam.

Coimbatore and the adjoining Nilgiri region also played a role in India's freedom movement. On 19 August 1917, Dr. Annie Besant and her associate, Wadia, participated in the Home Rule agitation and helped establish the Home Rule Society. E. V. Ramasamy and N. S. Ramasami played significant roles in the Non-Cooperation Movement. Tiruppur Kumaran became a symbol of patriotism through his determination to protect the national flag. Jawaharlal Nehru, a prominent leader of the Indian National Congress, visited Coimbatore on 5 October 1936. S. Satyamurti and Avinashilingam Chettiar also made significant contributions to India's freedom struggle.

Coimbatore is one of India's leading industrial cities. The textile and weaving industries flourished in Bhavani, Chennimalai, Sivagiri and Tiruppur, providing substantial employment opportunities to the people. Coimbatore is also popularly known as the Detroit of South India because of its remarkable industrial development. G. D. Naidu, an eminent inventor and industrialist, made significant contributions to the development of electrical and mechanical industries in the region. He is often remembered as the Edison of India and a pioneering wealth creator of Coimbatore.

Coimbatore is also an important educational centre. Philanthropists and educational visionaries have made significant contributions to the establishment and development of educational institutions in the region. PSG College of Arts and Science was established in 1947 at Peelamedu. Several other institutions, including Maharaja College at Erode, Nirmala College for Women and the Institute of Technology at Peelamedu, have contributed to the educational advancement of the region. Rangasamy Naidu also made notable contributions to educational development.

Bharathiar University was established by the Government of Tamil Nadu in Coimbatore in 1982. The erstwhile postgraduate centre of the University of Madras formed the nucleus of the newly established university.

Report on the 31st Annual Session of the Tamil Nadu History Congress

The 31st Annual Session of the Tamil Nadu History Congress was hosted by the Department of History, Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College, Madurai, from 20 to 22 September 2024.

Mr. M. Vijayaragavan, Secretary of Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College, Madurai, presided over the conference and delivered the Presidential Address. Thiru P. Moorthy, Honourable Minister for Commercial Taxes and Registration, Government of Tamil Nadu, delivered the Inaugural Address and released the proceedings volume of the 30th Annual Session of the Tamil Nadu History Congress.

Thiru G. Thalapathi, MLA representing the Madurai North Constituency, released the souvenir of the 31st Annual Session, while the General Secretary presented the Annual Report. The General Presidential Address of the Tamil Nadu History Congress was

delivered by Dr. V. Venkataraman, former Principal of Rajapalayam Rajus' College, Rajapalayam.

The Tamil Nadu History Congress has established a commendable tradition of honouring senior and distinguished historians of Tamil Nadu for their outstanding contributions to historical scholarship. The first historian to receive this honour was Prof. N. Subramanian, a distinguished scholar of the Sangam Age. Subsequently, Padma Shri Iravatham Mahadevan, Prof. K. Rajayyan, Prof. K. V. Raman, Prof. P. Jagadeesan, Prof. Y. Subbarayalu and Dr. V. Balambal were honoured.

Continuing this tradition, the TNHC honoured Prof. A. Karunanandan, former Professor of the Department of History, Vivekananda College, Chennai, during the 31st Annual Session. He was presented with a citation recognising him as a "Distinguished and Senior Historian of Tamil Nadu."

The academic programme included several distinguished endowment lectures. In the evening, Prof. G. Venkataraman, former Professor and Head of the Department of Indian History, University of Madras, delivered the AVVM Sri Poondi Pushpam College Endowment Lecture. Prof. T. M. Kumaresan, former Principal of Sir Theagaraya College, Chennai, delivered the Dr. G. Viswanathan Endowment Lecture.

Dr. K. Mavali Rajan, Associate Professor in the Department of History, Central University of Tamil Nadu, Thiruvarur, delivered the Mannar Thirumalai Naicker Endowment Lecture. These scholarly lectures were well received by the delegates and participants and also attracted media attention.

The Sectional Presidents—Dr. R. Venkataramanujam, Dr. C. Thomas, Dr. R. Udaiachandran and Dr. S. Regi—delivered their respective Presidential Addresses in the sections on Political and Administrative History, Social and Economic History, Archaeology, Art and Cultural History, and Historiography.

On the second day, a special lecture was delivered by Thiru Amarnath Ramakrishna, Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India, Chennai. The lecture was entitled "Affinities of the Sangam Period Culture and the Indus Culture as Revealed by Keeladi Excavations."

A notable feature of the 31st Annual Session was the enthusiastic participation of 453 delegates, with more than 300 research papers presented at Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College, Madurai. This substantial participation reflected the continued interest of scholars in the academic activities of the Tamil Nadu History Congress and its proceedings since its inception.

The Executive Committee meeting of the TNHC was held on 21 September 2024, followed by the General Body meeting on the afternoon of 22 September 2024.

The General Body meeting was followed by the Valedictory Function. Er. S. Rajagopal, President of Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College, Madurai, delivered the Presidential Address, while Prof. G. Ravi, Vice-Chancellor of Alagappa University, Karaikudi, delivered the Valedictory Address.

As General Secretary of the Tamil Nadu History Congress, I wish to place on record my sincere gratitude to the Secretary, Principal, Organising Secretary and other authorities of Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College, Madurai, for their invaluable assistance, cooperation and support in organising the conference and ensuring the grand success of the 31st Annual Session.

Acknowledgements

Before I conclude, I would like to express my sincere thanks once again to the office-bearers, members of the Executive Committee and all members of the Tamil Nadu History Congress for their continued cooperation, commitment and support. Their collective efforts have been instrumental in sustaining the academic activities and institutional growth of the Congress.

I am confident that the 32nd Annual Session in Coimbatore will further strengthen our collective commitment to historical research, scholarly exchange and the promotion of historical knowledge.

Thank you.

GENERAL PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Women's Attire in Tamil Nadu: Discourse between Tradition and Modernity

Dr. K. Sankari

Women's attire in Tamil Nadu serves as a critical lens through which the intersections of tradition, modernity, individual identity, and gender may be examined. Traditional garments, particularly the sari and its regional variations, have long reflected socio-cultural hierarchies and moral expectations. With the advent of colonial encounters, nationalist struggles, and feminist waves, attire became not only a marker of tradition but also a symbol of modern identity and a reflection of women's resistance against imposed norms and a means of liberation. In contemporary times, dress choices continue to balance cultural continuity with evolving notions of modernity, individuality, and gender neutrality. However, patriarchy influences women's agency to some extent in their choices of attire. This presentation explores the historical evolution of women's attire and the recent responses and reactions to the paradigm shift in women's attitudes toward modernity. The presentation is limited to women and girls and their commonly used clothes. Women used to wear different types of dresses on various occasions. The term "attire" often implies a complete outfit or a formal style of dressing. The term "girl" refers to a female child or adolescent, typically from birth until around 18 years of age, emphasizing youth, immaturity, and dependence. In contrast, a "woman" generally refers to an adult female who has reached the legal age of majority, which is 18 years in most countries, and who has attained physical and psychological maturity. This distinction highlights the biological and social transition from childhood to adulthood and the accompanying changes in identity and social roles.

Historian's Responsibility to Address the Issues of the Women

Subaltern studies are crucial for understanding women's issues, including attire, because they focus on marginalized groups whose voices have often been silenced in mainstream history. Women, especially those in subordinate social positions, experience overlapping oppressions related to gender, caste, class, and colonial histories, making their perspectives critical for a full understanding of social realities. The subaltern lens helps reveal how women's attire is not just a reflection of culture, but also a site of resistance, identity, and contested power relations.

Addressing women's attire from a historical perspective is necessary because clothing embodies social norms, gender roles, and power structures, all of which have shifted over time due to colonialism, nationalism, and feminist movements. Historians examining women's attire can uncover hidden narratives of resistance and compliance, showing how dress is intertwined with women's agency and social change.

Furthermore, historians can evolve theoretical solutions by critically analyzing these intersections of identity, power, and culture. They can apply feminist and subaltern theories to challenge dominant androcentric historical narratives and propose frameworks that recognize women's diverse experiences and voices. Such theoretical interventions can influence policy, scholarship, and social attitudes toward gender equity and cultural representation in attire and beyond.

- Subaltern studies are necessary to recover marginalized women's voices on attire and its broader social meanings.
- Historians must address women's attire to reveal deeper social, political, and cultural dynamics.
- Theoretical frameworks from history can propose solutions by highlighting gendered power relations and advocating inclusive narratives.

Professor & Head (Retd), Department of History, Annamalai University, Chidambaram

- This subaltern approach helps create richer, more nuanced histories and supports ongoing social transformations regarding women's identity and agency.
- Factors Influencing Women's Attire - An Overall View

Culture profoundly shapes women's attire through religious beliefs, social customs, and traditional practices that establish distinct dress codes and style preferences across societies. Religious influences are particularly significant, with Christianity emphasizing modesty through biblical interpretations, Islam promoting coverage through garments like hijabs and abayas, and Hindu traditions incorporating cultural modesty concepts through regional variations in saris and salwar kameez. Social status and class distinctions are reflected through fabric choices, with wealthy classes accessing luxurious materials like silk and elaborate embellishments, while clothing also communicates marital status, age, and social roles within communities.

Geographic location and climate significantly influence clothing adaptations, as cultures develop garments suited to environmental conditions-heavy layered clothing in Arctic regions versus lightweight, breathable fabrics in tropical areas. Economic factors create correlations between financial circumstances and fashion trends, with prosperity enabling diverse wardrobe choices while constraints prioritize practical, durable garments. Traditional attire serves as cultural preservation and identity expression, maintaining ancestral heritage through garments like Indian saris, Japanese kimonos, and African beadwork that carry deep historical significance beyond mere clothing. Modern globalization creates fusion wear that combines traditional elements with contemporary styles, allowing women to honor cultural heritage while adapting to modern lifestyles.

Evolution of Women's Attire - A Global Perspective

The evolution of women's clothing began in ancient civilizations around 3000 BCE, when Greek women wore simple draped garments like the peplos, chiton, and himation made from rectangular pieces of linen and wool, secured with pins and belts rather than stitching. These unstitched garments prioritized comfort and functionality while reflecting social status through fabric quality and decoration. Hand sewing with bone needles and animal sinew emerged around 20,000 years ago, but mechanized stitching only developed during the Industrial Revolution with Thomas Saint's 1790 sewing machine design, followed by Barthélemy Thimonnier's functional machine in 1830, and Elias Howe's lockstitch patent in 1846. Materials evolved from early plant fibers like flax (36,000 years old) and cotton cultivation in India (3000 BCE) to silk production in China (2700 BCE), with synthetic fibers like nylon appearing only in 1935.

The transformation from ancient draped clothing to modern tailored garments reflected broader social changes, as women's attire became increasingly structured during medieval and Renaissance periods, then experienced liberation movements in the 20th century with shorter hemlines, professional wear, and gender-neutral options. In India, traditional unstitched garments like saris maintained cultural continuity from the Indus Valley civilization (3300 BCE) through colonial encounters that introduced Western tailoring techniques, culminating in contemporary fusion wear that balances traditional aesthetics with modern functionality. The mechanization of textile production democratized fashion access while enabling mass customization, transforming women's clothing from purely functional coverings to expressions of identity, social status, and cultural resistance across different civilizations and time periods.

History of Clothing in Tamil Nadu

Sangam Age - circa 4 BCE - 3rd century CE

Women's clothing in the Sangam Age in Tamil Nadu exhibited a diverse range based on social hierarchy, occupation, and local climate. During the Sangam period, textile materials for clothing comprised natural fibers such as cotton and silk, along with organic materials like thäzhai leaves (derived from screw pine plants), which were utilized in garment making. The Keeladi excavation has uncovered spindle whorls, bone-tipped needles, and cotton fibers, demonstrating that

Sangam society possessed an advanced cotton textile industry and extensively utilized cotton fabrics. Excavations at Keeladi have revealed evidence that Sangam society used bone-tipped and copper needles for weaving activities and ornamental pattern creation.

Sangam texts like Purananuru, Akananuru, and Patiruppattu contain numerous references to silk royal clothing. Silappadikaram, describe that women commonly wore a single piece of cloth wrapped around the lower body, identified as adai, fastened at the waist, similar to the modern sari or skirt. Upper garments were less frequently mentioned; some texts suggest simple breast bands (kanchuki) or upper cloths (uttariya), while many women, particularly in rural or tribal contexts, went without upper coverage. The differentiation between elite and common women was highlighted by the fabrics used and adornments elite women favored fine muslin and silk, often richly decorated, while ordinary women wore cotton, a fabric abundantly cultivated and woven in Tamil regions since ancient times.

The technique of stitching was evolving during the period, although much sewing was minimal, with draped clothing dominating; references in poems imply some forms of garment tailoring or fitted waist wraps like kachai existed among higher social strata. Distinct social gradations were represented in dress and accessories. Royal and wealthy women donned long flowing garments reaching the ground and used prized silks and muslins, sometimes described with specific fabricmames/like/kalingam, accompanied by elaborate jewelry and aromatic pastes. In contrast, common women opted for simpler cotton clothes, and tribalonpastoral women were often depicted with shorter garments or natural coverings, emphasizing practicality and close ties to nature, yet adorned with flowers or simple ornaments celebrated in the poetry for feminine beauty. These literary testimonies.collectively reveal how female attire in the Sangam Age was a multifaceted cultural marker, intertwining social distinctions with economic and environmental factors, set against a backdrop of evolving textile crafts and artisanal skills.

Pallava Period -6th-9th Century CE

During the Pallava period women's attire in Tamil Nadu transitioned into a sophisticated ensemble evidenced by both literary and archaeological sources, reflecting social differentiation and evolving textile craftsmanship. Classical Tamil Bhakti hymns like the Tēvāram and Divya Prabandham describe women adorned with fine silken (pattu) garments, gold and pearl ornaments, and fragrant flowers woven in their hair, highlighting the cultural significance of bodily adornment linked with devotion and status. The Literary works, including Avantisundarī Kathāsāra, mention the threefold costume comprising the antariya (lower cloth), uttarīya (upper drape), and occasionally the stanapamma or kañouki (breast-band), underscoring an established dress vocabulary among the elite.and.commoners alike. Sculptural reliefs at Mahabalipuram and temple carvings in Kāñcīpuram from the 7th to 8th centuries reveal women in ankle-length, pleated lower garments tied at the waist, resembling early sari forms, often bare-chested or with narrow breast-bands visible, corresponding with textual mentions of minimal upper garments and contrast between royal and common attire.

Archaeological representation of courtly women portrays ankle-length flowing silk draperies richly pleated and paired with uttarīya over the shoulder, lavish jewelry, and hair ornamentation, epitomizing Pallava refinement and craftsmanship in textiles and accessory design. Early bronze icons, depict goddesses in thin, clinging lower garments fastened by ornate girdles (odiyanam), typically lacking stitched blouses, which aligns with literary silence on stitched upper garments during the period and points to a system where ornamentation compensated for minimal clothing.

The distinction between social classes is marked by fabric quality royal women donned luxurious silk garments, while common women wore simpler cotton attire, and dancers or temple devadāsīs appeared in shorter, more revealing garments emphasizing agility and visual effect, reflecting functional and symbolic uses of clothing.

The Pallava period reflects an era of innovation not only in materials, favoring sumptuous silk and

cotton, but also in textile workmanship, weaving, pleating, and garment construction techniques that enhanced social expressions through dress. Both primary texts and sculptural evidence affirm that while stitched clothing was largely absent or minimal for women, draping skills and accessory artistry underscored class, function, and aesthetic preferences, revealing a layered social fabric where clothing was an essential facet of identity, cultural values, and status performance across the Pallava realm.

Pandya Period-6th-14th century CE

Women's dress during the Pandya period reflects continuity with Sangam and Pallava traditions, documented in post-Sangam literary works and archaeological findings from the Madurai region and surrounding areas. Texts such as Silappadikaram and Bhakti hymns like Tēvāram and Divya Prabandham portray women clad in fine silk and cotton garments (known as pattu and kalingam), richly decorated with gold and pearl ornaments and fragrant flowers adorning their hair.

Epigraphic evidence from the Pandya domain includes inscriptions recording gifts of luxury textiles to temples, emphasizing the social and ritual significance of these fabrics. Pranmalai inscription refers to Venpattu and Menpattu.

Excavations at Madurai and other Pandya sites reveal women wearing ankle-length lower garments draped and tied at the waist, often with a breast-band (stanapamma), while the upper body was mostly bare or adorned with necklaces, armlets, and bangles. The uttarīya (upper cloth or veil) appears in depictions of elite and divine women, completing the traditional draped attire. The Sculptural images at Thenthirubhuvanam and Vazhukoozhur let to infer the women used to draping sarees. Sculptural art from the Pandya period, including temple reliefs and bronze idols, represent women in long flowing draperies with ornate girdles and jewelry, reflecting social hierarchies and stylistic preferences.

Foreign travelers' accounts specific to the Pandya region are sparse, but literary and material culture clearly show the cultural importance placed on silk weaving, spinning, and garment ornamentation in temple and courtly contexts. Marco Polo described the Pandya Kingdom as the richest and most splendid province in the world, notable for its pearls and gems. He observed that due to the hot climate, men and women wore only a loincloth-kings wore theirs studded with jewels. Women's bodies were described as firm, with breasts that remained erect, and for a small fee, they would allow men to pinch their bodies. He also noted the cultural practice of astrology, hygiene like bathing twice daily, and the high esteem for dark skin in the society. Polo mentioned that boys and girls went naked until the age of seven, reflecting the societal norms related to dress and modesty. Wassaf, a medieval Muslim historian, mentioned the Pandya Empire in his accounts, highlighting its prosperity and well-established administrative system. His accounts emphasize the caste system present in the society, including Brahmins, Vellalas, and merchant communities. Regarding women's dress, specific descriptions are scarce, but like other contemporary foreign accounts, it implies that women wore simple garments suitable for the tropical climate, such as loincloths or sarong-like cloths, often leaving the upper body uncovered or minimally covered. The society was complex, with religious diversity including Saivism, Vaishnavism, Jainism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. Vassaf's accounts affirm the Pandya realm as a thriving trade and cultural hub with a structured social order.

Common women wore simpler cotton clothing suited for practicality and climate, while luxurious materials and intricate craftsmanship were reserved largely for the elite. The use of hand stitching remains minimally evidenced, with unstitched drapery dominating the styles, continuing the earlier South Indian sartorial traditions established during the Sangam and Pallava periods.

Chola Period -9th-13th century CE

During the Chola period, women's attire was distinguished by refined textile use, evolving drapery styles, and intricate adornments, as seen in Bhakti poetry, inscriptions, and temple art. One of the

inscriptions at the Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple refers to the existence and importance of cotton, highlighting its role in the region's textile production and economy. Textual sources such as the Divya Prabandham and Tēvāram praise women clad in fine silk (pattu), decorated with pearls, gold ornaments, and fragrant flowers woven in their hair, highlighting the symbolic and aesthetic importance of dress. Periyā; vār's Tirumo;i describes women in soft, luxurious fabrics, while Kampa RāmāyaGam portrays royal women in lengthy saris with uttarīya veils and waist-belts (odiyanam), reflecting increasingly sophisticated drapery styles. Temple inscriptions document donations of luxury textiles as kadigaipattu and kalingam silks, indicating their sacred and such material value.

Archaeological representations from the B[hadīśvara temple and other sites reveal women wearing ankle-length pleated lower garments secured with ornamental waist-belts, occasional breast-bands (stanapamma), or bare chests richly adorned with jewelry. Kōvil murals and bronze icons highlight long, clinging sari-like draperies with an absence of stitched blouses, emphasizing ornamentation over clothing construction. Social stratification is evident: royal women wore sumptuous silks with elaborate decorations, temple dancers and devadāsīs preferred functional, graceful attire such as shorter lower garments, and common women donned simpler cotton garments with minimal adornment. Textile craftsmanship flourished, with centers like Nagapattinam and Tondaimandalam producing distinctive silks woven in varied patterns and colors, supported by skilled tailors attached to royal institutions. While stitched apparel like blouses or waistcoats appeared among lower classes and attendants, draped garments dominated elite fashion. This synthesis of literary and archaeological evidence delineates a female wardrobe in the Chola era marked by luxurious materials, skilled workmanship, differentiated social symbolism, and a continuity with past sartorial traditions alongside emergent innovations.

Vijayanagara and Nayak Period - 14th-18th century CE

During the Vijayanagara period, women's dress demonstrated remarkable innovations in materials, craftsmanship, and tailoring, reflecting the empire's cosmopolitan culture and royal patronage of textiles. The specialized production of silk, cotton, and brocade fabrics flourished under skilled weavers and embroiderers, many of whom worked in imperial workshops known as kar-kanayas. The rulers actively supported weaving communities, including the Saurashtrians, whose expertise contributed to the development of luxurious blended fabrics such as himroo and mashroo. This patronage strengthened the textile economy and helped establish high standards of dress that conveyed social status and refinement.

Women's attire during this period included exquisitely embroidered fitted bodices (kanchukas), often paired with ankle-length silk saris tied with ornate girdles (odiyanam). Among royal and noble women, these garments were richly decorated with gold thread embroidery and intricate needlework, while common women wore simpler cotton attire. The introduction of stitched garments, especially tightly fitted bodices, represented a stylistic shift from the predominantly draped costumes of earlier centuries and signaled the growing sophistication of women's dress.

Foreign travelers such as the Persian ambassador Abdur Razzaq and the Portuguese chroniclers Duarte Barbosa, Domingo Paes, and Fernão Nuniz offered vivid eyewitness accounts of these clothing styles. They described brocaded silks, gold-embroidered garments, and elaborate accessories worn by women of the royal court, emphasizing the opulence and refinement fostered by imperial patronage. Sculptural and mural art from Vijayanagara further corroborates these accounts, depicting women in finely woven saris, elaborately embroidered blouses, ornate jewelry, and floral coiffures. These artistic sources highlight the fusion of indigenous and Islamic influences on dress, reflecting the empire's cultural diversity.

Sculptures from Tamil Nadu, particularly those dating to the Vijayanagara and Nayak periods, provide

additional insight into women's dress and social life. Figurative carvings in temples at Krishnapuram, Tirunelveli, Srirangam, and Hampi depict a range of attire, from ankle-length saris to shorter skirts tied high at the waist. Some figures appear bare-chested or wear minimal upper garments such as breast-bands (stanapamma), while others are shown with thin shawls or drapes across the torso. Dancers are often portrayed in tighter garments that allowed mobility, including the luxurious narsarikaiseelai sari woven with gold and silver threads, underscoring the role of textiles in performance and spectacle.

These sculptural depictions reveal distinctions among royal women, attendants, dancers, and tribal figures, with variations in costume and ornamentation reflecting social hierarchy and function. Elaborate jewelry, ornate girdles, and floral hair adornments further enhanced women's appearance, blending aesthetic ideals with symbolic meaning. The combination of literary, epigraphic, traveler, and artistic evidence reveals a period of sartorial transformation in which women's dress evolved toward greater sophistication, marked by craftsmanship, cultural exchange, and the prestige of royal influence.

Colonial Influences on Women's Attire 19th and 20th Centuries

During the 19th century, colonial rule brought significant changes to women's attire in Tamil Nadu and across India. Initially, women wore traditional unstitched saris and regional drapes, reflecting centuries-old customs. However, the introduction of the sewing machine in the mid-19th century (around 1851) and industrialization transformed the production and style of clothing. Western tailoring techniques and garments such as shirts, blouses, and skirts started to influence Indian women's dress. The Indian sari evolved with the addition of the blouse and petticoat, a change encouraged by British notions of modesty and missionary influences. Urban elite women began adopting pan-Indian sari styles like the Nivi drape from Bengal, with added elements such as corsets, frills, and collars inspired by Victorian fashion, emphasizing a formal and modest appearance in the late 19th to early 20th centuries.

During the British in south Tamil Nadu there erupted suppression of women relegating women's attire. The Upper Cloth Revolt, or Upper Cloth Movement, was a consequential socio-religious struggle during the 19th century in Travancore (covering parts of present-day southern Kerala and Tamil Nadu). It was chiefly led by Nadar women, who resisted the caste-based prohibition on covering their upper bodies, a privilege reserved for higher-caste women. Denied the right to cover their breasts, Nadar women wore scant clothing symbolizing their lower social status. This systemic oppression was enforced with harsh measures such as the Mulakkaram or "breast tax," compelling women to pay for the right to cover their bosoms. Beginning with the influence of Christian missionaries around 1813, many Nadar women, particularly converts, began wearing upper cloths, igniting severe backlash from dominant castes like the Nairs. The backlash featured public humiliation such as women being stripped, homes torched, and churches attacked. Early attempts in the 1829-1830 period to wear upper garments were violently suppressed, reinforced by proclamations from Travancore rulers denying this right. Nonetheless, the defiance continued, gaining momentum in the 1850s, culminating in widespread violence during 1858-1859. Finally, the state issued the Upper Cloth Proclamation in 1859, permitting Nadar women to wear upper cloths but restricted stylistically to jacket forms worn by Christian converts, marking a seminal step towards dignity, social justice, and gendered resistance against caste oppression.

The movement symbolized the struggle to reclaim bodily autonomy and challenge-imposed dress codes functioning as markers of caste and gender subjugation. These dress codes were legally and socially policed to enforce hierarchies and maintain privileged status quos. Nadar women's resistance challenged not only caste but gender-based repression, confronting a nexus of religious, social, and political control over female bodies. The oppressive policing of dress represented a broader strategy for controlling marginalized populations, regulating their access to public space, and

denying basic dignity. The Upper Cloth Revolt thus became a powerful symbol of caste and gender justice, inspiring subsequent reform movements in both Tamil Nadu and Kerala, and marking one of the earliest documented instances of women mobilizing through dress against systemic discrimination and patriarchy. This synthesis integrates historical facts and analysis relating the Upper Cloth Revolt to caste oppression, gendered policing of dress, and marginalized women's resistance in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

During the freedom struggle the British authorities imposed some norms for women prisoners. It may be accounted here. The government during the colonial period exerted pressure on women prisoners to conform to clothing norms that conflicted with their traditional customs, exemplified by incidents such as Congress leader Durgabai Ammal's inquiry about whether the government had allowed Brahmin married women to forgo wearing white saris in jail. This reflected broader colonial and nationalist debates on gender and attire, where authorities initially supplied white saris to high-class prisoners but later revised clothing regulations to differentiate prisoners based on marital status and criminal categorization, such as providing green-bordered cloth to married women and red-bordered cloth to habitual offenders. The contention around compelling women to wear white saris, traditionally associated with widowhood or austerity, imposed a dress code that was alien and, for some, oppressive, highlighting government attempts to regulate women's bodies against their cultural traditions as part of maintaining order and nationalistic symbolism within prison systems. These policies sparked investigations and public discourse, illustrating the tension between state directives and traditional dress practices among incarcerated women.

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The rise of feminism and nationalist movements framed women's dress as a medium for self-expression and political autonomy, challenging patriarchal norms. Indian fashion designers, emerging in the post-independence era like Ritu Kumar and others, rejuvenated traditional crafts while integrating global styles. The Swadeshi movement further encouraged

wearing indigenous khadi fabrics as a symbol of resistance against colonial imports. By the mid-20th century, the garment industry grew, supported by sewing machine use and garment manufacturing companies, empowering women economically and fostering more diverse sartorial choices including Western jeans and skirts, alongside traditional attire. Thus, women's dress transitioned from traditional drapes toward a blended style reflecting colonial impact, industrialization, professionalization, and feminist assertion between 1850 and 1950.

Feminist Advocacy on Modernity in Women's Attire

Muthulakshmi Reddy (1886-1968) advocated women's emancipation and dignity, opposing caste and societal restrictions on attire. She supported reforms allowing women greater freedom in personal choices, including dress, as part of broader social upliftment efforts in the early 1900s.

Sivakami (1957) a Dalit feminist addressing caste and gender oppression, highlighted how dominant castes policed Dalit women's clothing (e.g., denial of upper cloth). Advocated clothing choice as integral to dignity and liberation for Dalit women, emphasizing caste and gender equality.

Salma (b. 1968) critiqued patriarchal and moral policing of women's dress from the late 20th century onward. Emphasized women's autonomy over their bodies and clothing, including support for face covering as a personal and political choice.

Kutty Revathi (b. 1970) a poet and activist who challenges patriarchal restrictions on dress through literature. She advocates attire guided by comfort and self-expression, rejecting "male gaze" and cultural policing.

Akila Ramachandran focuses on social equality and dignity, viewing clothing as a class and respectability marker. She advocates freedom from societal-imposed inequalities, especially for marginalized groups.

Leelavathi Manoharan criticized double standards of modesty where women's dress is policed more than men's. Argued for recognizing dress as self-expression, not morality.

Sangati Collective, an association working for promotion of women from the 1990s onward, assert dress autonomy as resistance against caste oppression, linking it to broader caste and gender equality.

University Feminist Groups (Post-1990s) has been criticizing college and hostel dress codes as patriarchal controls, advocating for women's dress freedom.

Pinjra Tod Tamil Nadu a feminist association campaigns against restrictive dress and mobility rules in hostels, linking dress choice to women's safety and autonomy.

Digital Feminists (2010s onwards) highlight "choice of dress is not consent," confronting victim-blaming and promoting autonomous dress choices through social media activism.

Together, these voices trace an evolving, consistent Tamil feminist theme from early calls for social freedom in the 1900s to today's complex assertions of dress as bodily autonomy, dignity, and political resistance spanning over a century.

Cultural Continuity and Change: Tradition Meets Modernity

Culture in Tamil Nadu profoundly shapes women's attire, balancing deep-rooted tradition with adaptive modernity. Historical evidence and leading historians like Arnold Toynbee and A. L.

Basham support these six cultural observations, showing how attire reflects the interconnectedness of heritage, cognition, practice, and evolving values.

Culture's Root in Primordial Sentiment -A. L. Basham observes, "India and China have, in fact, the oldest continuous cultural traditions in the world... legends known to the humblest Indian recall the names of shadowy chieftains who lived nearly a thousand years before Christ..." This historic continuity is echoed in Tamil clothing, where even contemporary women's saree draping can trace its roots to ancient cultural practices.

Culture, Cognition, and Practice - Traditions around attire were shaped by both practicality and perception. Ancient Tamil society wore simple, often unstitched clothing, as described in Puranannooru and Silappatikaram, reflecting an adaptation to climate and social needs. Dr. Paramasivan notes that "there is no evidence of tailoring in Tamil literature until the late 18th century," and that early attire emphasized minimalism and utility, showing how ideas (cognition) became embodied in collective customs (practice).

The Historical Value of Culture - Basham writes, "The ancient civilisation of India differs... in that its traditions have been preserved without a break down to the present day." Tamil attire's evolution-from two-piece drapes to sarees and blouses-demonstrates history's role in testing and validating cultural norms. The value of these dress customs stems from their resilience and ability to survive societal I pressures and outside influences, such as Mughal and British colonial rule.

Culture and Modernity: Parallel Tracks - Arnold Toynbee stated, "Civilization is a movement and not a condition, a voyage and not a harbor." This reflects how Tamil dress traditions readily interfaced with imported western ideas-from Vijayanagara draping methods to colonial influences introducing the blouse creating a culture where "tradition" and "modernity" run alongside each other.

Coexistence Enables Societal "Movement" - The evolution of Tamil attire from minimalistic drapes to contemporary sarees-epitomizes Toynbee's notion that "civilizations grow by successfully responding to successive challenges." Tamil Nadu's society, like a well-guided train, progresses because it honors ancestral roots while welcoming change, blending primordial and new threads into daily life.

Safe Progress - Blending Old and New-Basham and contemporary Tamil historians demonstrate that societies adapt most safely and richly when they balance the preservation of foundational customs with flexible adaptation. The survival of ancient draping customs alongside the adoption of stitched blouses and global fashion reflects this safe, simultaneous movement whether in food, social roles, or dress.

State Identity and Development - Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, former President of India and renowned philosopher, regarded culture as the spiritual foundation of a nation rather than mere external customs. He believed Indian culture rested on values such as spirituality, tolerance, harmony, and ethical living. For him, culture conveyed the unity of existence, respect for all religions, and the principle of universal brotherhood, expressed in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam ("the whole world is one family"). True culture, he stressed, lay in the balanced pursuit of material and spiritual knowledge, along with moral discipline and social responsibility. These values shaped Indian society by nurturing inclusivity, pluralism, and respect for diversity, while also offering a philosophical basis for India's democratic and secular ideals. Taking a cue from his ideas, it can be inferred that dress too reflects state and cultural identity, and the practices and use of clothing in every society should align with values of sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Reformist Opinions on Women's Dress in Tamil Society

Rettamalai Srinivasan (1860-1945) as a pioneering Dalit leader, journalist, and activist, Srinivasan was primarily concerned with caste-based discrimination and social equality. While not as explicitly focused on women's dress as Periyar or Bharathiyar, he argued for dignity and respectability in everyday life for Dalits, including women's attire. He criticized caste Hindus' enforcement of humiliating dress codes on Dalit women (such as prohibiting upper cloths in certain regions of Tamil Nadu), advocating their right to wear respectable clothing without restriction.

St. Ramalinga (1823-1874) emphasized simplicity, humility, and compassion in all aspects of life, including clothing. He advocated plain, white attire as a sign of purity and spiritual equality, rejecting ornamentation and luxury. While his discourse was not directly centered on women's emancipation, his insistence on simple dress applied equally to men and

women, symbolizing a rejection of caste and material vanity.

Subramania Bharati (1882-1921) was a pioneering advocate of women's emancipation. He directly questioned the sari as a limiting garment and encouraged women to wear comfortable, practical clothing, including stitched garments such as jackets and skirts. His famous poems celebrated the "new woman" who would walk freely in public, educated, adorned in functional attire, symbolizing liberty rather than chastity.

Thiru. V. Kalyanasundaranar (1883-1953) a journalist, nationalist, and social reformer, critiqued oppressive customs tied to caste and gender. He advocated education and social reforms that implicitly extended to dress, supporting women's right to reject restrictive traditions. His writings in Deshabhakthan encouraged women to embrace modernity and functionality over ritual dress codes.

Swamy Sahajanada (1886-1963) regarding women's dress, while specific detailed writings or speeches by Sahajananda on this topic are not widely documented, his overall philosophy, inspired by rationalism and social reform, would align with encouraging practical, non-oppressive, and dignified clothing for women, opposed to caste-based restrictions and elaborate ornamentation that symbolized social hierarchy. He aimed to promote self-respect, dignity, and emancipation for women in marginalized groups, reflected through access to education and modern progressive ideals.

Bharathidasan (1891-1964) influenced by both and the Self-Respect Movement, emphasized women's autonomy in every sphere, including dress. He encouraged women to discard symbols of oppression like heavy jewels, veils, or ritualized clothing, and instead embrace simple, dignified, and functional attire. His poems often depicted women as equals in society, free from ornamental bondage.

E.V. Ramaswamy Periyar (1879-1973) explicitly addressed women's dress as a site of oppression and liberation. He critiqued the sari and caste-based prescriptions, instead advocating practical, gender-neutral attire such as the lungi or stitched garments. For him, dress reform was inseparable from self-respect, equality, and women's empowerment. He further added that dress should not be decorative.

C. N. Annadurai (1909-1969) as the leader of the Dravidian movement, continued the discourse on rationalism and equality. Though not as radical as Periyar in promoting women wearing male attire, he supported breaking caste- and ritual-based dress norms. His speeches encouraged modern, modest, and practical clothing, linking dress reform with social mobility and self-respect.

Across these reformers, a clear progression emerges: Vallalar emphasized simplicity and equality through plain clothing, Bharathiyar and Bharathidasan directly encouraged practical alternatives to restrictive attire, while Periyar radicalized the discourse by promoting gender-meutral dress as a revolutionary tool. Kalyanasundaranar and Annadurai tied dress reform to broader social and rationalist agendas. Together, their views reveal how clothing became a medium of contesting patriarchy, caste hierarchy, and colonial modernity in Tamil society.

Dress Codes as Sites of Conflict: Gender and Social Control in Tamil Nadu

Moral Policing by Misogynists

In rural Tamil Nadu, patriarchal influence often underpins the policing of women's dress, reflecting entrenched social norms that seek to regulate female bodies under the guise of tradition. A notable recent incident in Thanjavur district involved a village administrative officer who was suspended for imposing an unofficial dress code banning visitors wearing short pants, lungis, or nighties from entering his office. This directive barred a farmer seeking a caste certificate from entry due to his attire, prompting administrative intervention and suspension of the officer. This case exemplifies how male authority figures exercise moral control by imposing arbitrary dress restrictions, reinforcing hierarchical power dynamics within public service settings in Tamil Nadu.

Similarly, other reported incidents reveal continuing patterns of gendered moral policing. At Vellore Fort, a group of men targeted hijab-wearing

women accompanied by male friends, pressuring them to remove their hijabs under social surveillance. In Chennai, allegations of moral policing by transport officers sparked public outrage, despite no official dress codes existing in the Motor Vehicles Act, highlighting how patriarchal assumptions translate into informal enforcement of gendered norms. Such episodes, though sporadic, demonstrate how claims to tradition are often weaponized by male-dominated society to constrain women's sartorial choices and bodily autonomy. The invocation of "tradition" to justify these impositions ignores evolving notions of rights and freedom, undermining the agency of women to dress as they desire. Ultimately, these patterns expose a persistent patriarchal attempt to control women's bodies through dress codes, reflecting broader struggles over gender, power, and autonomy in Tamil society.

In Tamil Nadu's rural villages, patriarchal directives strictly govern women's attire, mandating traditional garments such as sarees, half-saris, or churidhar suits with dupattas for temple visits and public functions while discouraging or banning Western clothing like jeans and leggings. These dress codes are often enforced informally by community elders and local bodies under the guise of preserving cultural values and modesty. A striking example is the Thottiyanur hamlet in Salem district, where women are prohibited from wearing blouses due to religious and social taboos, with violators facing social ostracism and ex-communication from communities like the Thottinayakar. Such regulations reveal the deep entanglement of dress with patriarchal control, communal authority, and the policing of women's freedoms in these rural contexts.

Policing Femininity: Tamil Cinema and Print

Media and cinema often participate in this policing by reinforcing stereotypes that associate traditional clothing with virtue and Western or revealing attire with moral laxity, thereby perpetuating misogyny and restricting women's autonomy. One of Tamil Magazine published in 2015 criticized women wearing leggings. This incident created controversies. Such judgments about what constitutes "decent" or "indecent" dress are socially constructed and predominantly enforced by societal norms, rather than determined by the women themselves. Consequently, these practices serve to control women's bodies and limit freedom of expression, revealing deeper gendered power imbalances embedded within culture and tradition, rather than addressing issues of respect and individual agency. This reflects a patriarchal imposition rather than an objective standard of decency.

Clothing and the Deconstruction of Social Prejudices

In Tamil Nadu, government and institutional policies regulate women's clothing in professional and public spaces, favoring traditional attire while restricting Western-style garments. Women staff in offices like Fort St. George must wear sarees, salwar kameez, or churidars with dupattas, excluding jeans and t-shirts. Similarly, the Tamil Nadu Bar Council prohibits leggings for women lawyers, reflecting gender bias in professional dress codes.

The Tamil Nadu Entry into Public Place (Removal of Restrictions on Dress) Act, 2014, and temple dress codes at sites such as Meenakshi and Brihadeeswarar Temples enforce modest, ethnic attire, often upheld by judicial directives. School dress codes and high court interventions against sexist remarks further illustrate ongoing contests over gendered clothing norms. These regulations highlight broader societal struggles over women's autonomy, professional dignity, and cultural expectations.

For instance, the Kerala High Court ruled that assessing a woman's virtue based on her clothing is unacceptable in any civilized society. Karnataka High court while referring a case in 2022 argued that the right to freedom of expression included the freedom to dress though they had to be reasonable restrictions on the right. And that the right to freedom of expression Under Article 19 of the constitution included dress.

Conclusion

The clothing is considered as a second Skin. It has a historical origin and influencing the women society in Tamil Nadu over the years. And it is adopting different attires determined by economy, influence of the community and convenience to profession. How ever on the other side the women who deviate from traditional dress norms often face criticism from patriarchal and misogynistic segments promoting cultural nationalism to control women's appearance. The feminists argue that attire is a critical mode of self-expression and bodily

autonomy, reflecting individuality and personal freedom. The misogynist's criticism on women who deviate from traditional dress norms reflects deep-rooted patriarchal control over women's bodies and appearance. Challenging these patriarchal norms is essential for advancing women's rights, dignity, and freedom to choose their attire without fear of judgment, however the women may oblige to cultural directions. In between the tradition and modernity can be considered as feasible. Women should also take care of environmental sustainability through the use of natural, biodegradable fibers. Historian Pollard asserted that simply arranging historical facts does not constitute true history; it requires imaginative interpretation to give it meaning. Similarly, since dress acts as a "second skin" for human beings, it should be thoughtfully and purposefully embraced to express identity and self

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AVVM SRI POONDI PUSHPAM COLLEGE ENDWOMENT LECTURE

First War of Independence – The Rebellious Role of Palayakkars in Tamil Country

Dr. L. Selvamuthu Kumarasami

Respected General President Professor K.Sankari, General Secretary Professor S.S.Sundaram, Advisory Committee Members, Professor P. Jagadeesan, Professor A.Chandrasekaran and Professor A.Karunanandan, Editor Dr. M.Lakshmanan, Vice-Presidents, Joint-Secretaries, Treasurer, office Bearers, and members of the General and Executive Bodies of the Tamil Nadu History Congress, Local Secretary Dr. R. Udaichandran, Delegates, staff and students of Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Ladies and Gentleman.

I deem it a great honour to be invited to deliver AWM Sri PoondiPushpam Endowment Lecture at Thirty-Second Session. Again I would like to express my heartiest thanks to Office Bearers and General Body of the Tamil Nadu History Congress to this rare honour conferred upon me.

In Tamil Country, as in other parts of India, the earliest expression to British rule took the form of localize rebellions and uprisings. Chief among these was the revolt of the Palayakkars (Poligars) against the British hegemony in since the second half of the Eighteenth Century. The British records often branded theseindependent Palayakkars as 'Rebels' and their uprisings as 'Rebellions'. They were considered as feudatories and auxiliary powers.1

Historians have held three different versions on India's War of Independence. One version is that it began with PuliThevar and ended with Marudhu Brothers. In this context, there Palayakkar Rebellions, which took place on different occasions in Tamil Country, ultimately paved the way for South Indian Rebellion, which started at Coimbatore.2 This South Indian Rebellion of 1799 to 1801 ultimately ended with the Vellore Mutiny of 1806. According to this version, the period from the First Palayakkar Rebellion to the Vellore Mutiny was called the 'First and Early War of Independence'. According to the second version, the First War of Independence began in 1857 when the Sepoys of North India rose in rebellion against the alien rulers. This uprising began as mutiny at Meerut, spread its tentacles in North India with the common people rallying into its fold. A third version is the First War of Independence began in 1885 when the nationalists gave shape to the Indian National Congress which in subsequent years led the war of liberation which culminated in 1947. It is apt to regard the first version because in the Palayakkar Rebellion, MarudhuPandyan was the first to call the people of India to fight jointly against the British authority. Further the Palayakkar Rebellion was entirely different from the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 and the war initiated by Indian National Congress through different phases. The Palayakkar Rebellions took place before the establishment of the British power in India.

The Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 and the struggle launched by the Congress were taken place after the British established their power firmly in India. In the great battle that was fought at Tiruchirappalli from 1749-1750, the British laid the foundation of their imperialism in India. For, they defeated the combined forces of the Carnatic, Tanjore ant the French and also Mysore. They won the Battle of Plassey and extended their imperialism to Bengal in the east. Subversion of the established order, oppressive taxation, humiliation, military depredations and violent proceedings not only caused widespread discontent but also offended the sentiments of the people of the Tamil Country.3

Native resistance to the authority of British East India Company came from the Tamils begun first in the Tirunelveli region, then Ramanathapuram and thereafter it engulfed the entire Tamil Country. On the whole, the Southern Palayakkar Region was the first to blow the trumpet of war against British imperialism.

The rule of the Nayaks of Vijayanagara Empire had its strong base only in Tamil Country. Madurai was its capital. The Pandya Country was divided into Palayams. Each Palayam had forts and as well as armed soldiers. There were seventy- two Palayams which were created by ViswanthaNayak of Madurai with the assistance of his able General Ariyanatha Mudali.4 Among the Palayams there were thirty four Palayams in the Southern Palayakkar Region especially in the Tirunelveli and RamanthapuramSeemais. The number of Palayams fluctuated to the need of the situation.5 The Ramanathapuram and Sivagangai were the biggest Palayams and Ramanathapuram served as the headquarters of the Southern Palayakkars.6 The chiefs of the Palayams had the status of the princes of states and Nicholas B.Dirks, the author of 'Hollow Crown' called them 'Little Kings'.7 Consequently, there arose many new royal dynasties in the Pandya region. The Palayakkars of the Eastern Part of Tirunelveli belonged to the Naick community, called 'Kambalattars' .Their mother tongue was Telugu. They were settled the in the wake of the expansion of the Vijayanagar rule in Tamil Country.TheMaravaPalayakkars were settled in the western part of the Tirunelveli. Among the Palayakkars, the Palayakkars of the Nercattumseval, Panjalamkurichi, EttayapuramRamanthapurm, Sivagangai were the most influential and powerful.8 According to S. Kadhirvel, the author of the 'History of the Maravas' the NerkattumsevalPalayakkar was most influential among the Marava Palayakkars.9 During the Nawab regime, the struggle of the Palayakkars was started because the Nawab sought the help of the British to suppress those rebellious Palayakkars who refused to pay the tax which was collected by the amuldars (native revenue collectors) of Tirunelveli.

The Palayakkars of Panjalamkurichi were given the supervising power over a few other Palayakkars. The Palayakkars were functioning as the intermediaries for collecting the taxes for the Nawabs.After the eclipse of the Nayak's regime, the Palayams of this southern region came under the rule of the Nawabs of the Carnatic.ThePalayakkars were not submissive to the ArcotNawab but earlier they were subservient to the Nayaka Kings of Madurai. The fact that the Nawab regime was not as strong as the Nayakas could be one of the reasons.That the Nawabs were also indifferent towards the Palayakkars was another reason.

On the appeal of the Nawab, the British conducted a series of military expeditions in the Southern Palayakkar Region to suppress the rebellious Palayakkars. As the Nawab Muhammad AH of the Wallajah Dynasty ascended the throne with the success in the Carnatic Wars and with the military aid of the Company, he was indebted to latter. The Nawab's debt was immense and it was called, 'Carnatic Debts'.10 To mitigate the debts, the Nawab even authorized the Company with the right to collect tax in the Southern Palayakkar Region. When the British tried to collect taxes from the Palayakkars, the latter began to fight relentlessly against the former.

Puli Thevar and First Palayakkar War

Many of the Palayakkars on certain pretexts did not pay the last (tribute) and peshcush (tax) to the aliens. The first British military expedition in the Palayakkar region was undertaken by Captain Cope in 1751.11 His force was defeated and driven away by the Kallars of Natham. Mahfuz Khan, the elder brother of Muhammad Ali and the Governor of Tirunelveli Province with the assistance of the British army under Col. Heron undertook an military expedition in March 1755.12 When PuliThevar and other MaravaPoligars strongly opposed the British Col. Heron who failed in his attempts.13 In the meantime, PuliThevar consolidated the MaravaPalayakkars and formed a confederacy. He even tried to forge an alliance with the Haidar Ali of Mysore and French against the British.14 The British insisted the native princes not to support PuliThevar. Yusuf Khan, otherwise called 'Khan Sahib' was entrusted the task of quelling the rebellion of PuliThevar. The rebellion of PuliThevar broke out in 1755.15 Madurai was captured by Puli Thevar.16 With the assistance of the King of Travancore , the Eastern Palayakkars and British army , Yusuf Khan was able to recapture Madurai and won battles against PuliThevar. At last Nercattumseval was attacked in 1761 and it fell.1? PuliThevar escaped and died while in exile.18 Major Donald Campbelllevelled the strong stone and mud built forts of the Palayakkars at Kollankondan, Seithur, Sivagiri, Vasudevanallur and Nercattumsevalin

1767.19 Even though PuliThevar was failed in his attempt, he organized a Western Palayakkar League which successfully and valiantly fought against the British power .As it was the First Palayakkar War, N.Rajaiah called PuliThevar as the 'First Freedom Fighter' and his struggle as the 'First War of Independence'.20

Kattabomman and Second Palayakkar War

Jagavira Pandya Kattabomman became the Palayakkar of Panjalamkurichi in 1760 He was succeeded by his eldest son, Vira Pandya Kattabomman who was born on 3rd January 1760.21 In 1783, Col. Fullarton launched a military expedition towards Panjalamkurichi for collecting tax. On that occasion, JagaVira Pandya Kattabomman had run away from the fort and escaped. When Fullarton dictated final terms with military threat, the PanjalmkurichiPalayakkar agreed to pay 30,000 chakarams and 15,000 pagodas.12 Fullarton also seized a copy of the treaty which the Palayakkars had made with the Dutch who were ruling in Ceylon, against the British.23 These things happened in the period of the ancestors of celebrated hero, Veera Pandya Kattabomman.,

When the Carnatic Treaty of 1792 was signed between the East India Company and the Nawab of Arcot in 1792, Vira Pandya Kattabomman was the Palayakkar of Panjalamkurichi. I Kattabomman was the family name. He ascended the throne on 2nd February 1790 at the age of thirty.24 He later became a formidable foe of the British East India Company. He had a brother by name, Kumarasami and was also called Duraisingam. As Duraisingam was dumb, he was called Oomaithurai.25 He was always along with his brother Kattabomman and assisted him in the latter's valiant struggle against the British power.

As per the Carnatic Treaty of 1792, the Nawab of Arcot surrendered his right over the Southern Palayakkar Region to the British.26 The East India Company on acquisition of superintending power tried to collect tax from the Southern Palayakkars by sending the Captain Maxwell in 1792. Most of the Palayakkars received Maxwell respectfully and paid him tributes. All the Palayakkars also consented to pay tax regularly every year. The Palayakkar of Ettayapuram became a trustworthy Palayakkar of the British. He also effectively played the role of being a spy conveying information against the Southern Palayakkars. Vira Pandya Kattabomman also received Col. Maxwell with due respect.

When Maxwell demanded payment of the tax to the Company Kattabomman became furious. He soon roared thus: The sky is pouring: the soil yields: Can a visitor of yesterday demand tax for the land soil of the king?'. He further thundered thus: 'If you ask for alms, yes. But if you demand tax, No'. This is my final reply. You may go and say this to the Governor of the Madras. Maxwell who came with a hope of collecting tax had to go empty-handed P

After Maxwell, many British officials appointed for collecting tax invited Kattabomman to come and meet them. Mostly they were all military officials. When one or two officials came to collect tax they arrived with an army of more than five hundred soldiers. The conflict on payment of tax that erupted in i 1792 prolonged endlessly till 1798. By 31st of May 1798, the 1 total arrears of tribute from Panjalamkurichi stood at 3310 pagodas? As the Palayam experienced a severe drought, the Palayakkar found it difficult to collect taxes from the inhabitants. Hence, Kattabomman did not pay tax and the British did not leave him. Consequently, there were exchange of letters and messengers. Fair minded British officials tried to settle the dispute peacefully but it was of no avail. This conflict acquired such a wide publicity that the whole country was aware of it. Even the shivering cowardly Palayakkars who were paying taxes to the British earlier, plucked courage on seeing Kattabomman's heroic ' posture. They followed him in refusing to pay tax.

Kattabomman had one Sivasubramania Pillai as his manager. He was a great scholar and was called Thanapathi Pillai. He had two trustworthy and valiant generals, namely, VellayaThevar, and Sundaralingam. His younger brother Oomaithurai was also a counsellor to his heroic brother. Kattabomman j prepared his army to face the British with his people as the backing force.

At this stage Jackson took charge as the collector of Southern Palayakkar Region. The British appointed him only for the purpose of waging a war with the Kattabomman. As an I arrogant Collector, he wrote letters to Kattabomman in threatening language. When Kattabomman was not responded, on 18th August 1798, Jackson sent an order to Kattabomman to come and meet him at Ramanathapuram within two weeks.29 Kattabomman realized the mind of Jackson who was a Company official came to trade in sheepskins and hides of bulls. The wise Thanapathi Pillai also pointed out to Kattabomman that Jackson called him for an interview only to incite a war. Therefore Kattabomman also staged a drama by which he gave his consent for seeking an interview on a date and then changing it a number of times. Jackson who was infuriated by this constant change of dates, fixed a date himself and insisted that Kattabomman should come and meet him on that day failing which his Palayam would be forfeited and sent a letter to that effect.

After receiving this letter, Kattabomman went to Tirunelveli to meet Jackson with his manager Thanapathi Pillai. He also took with him four thousand armed soldiers. When he reached Tirunelveli he was told that Jackson had gone to Courtallam, and Kattabomman, then, went there to meet Jackson. But Jackson went to Srivilliputtur. When Kattabomman reached Srivilliputtur, he was at last told that he could meet the Collector at Ramanathapuram only where the Collectorate of the Southern Poligras, the first of its kind in India, was functioning.

Despite this humiliation, Kattabomman followed Jackson for twenty - three days in journey of 400 miles through the latter's route and reached Ramanathapuram on 19th September 1798.30 At Ramalinga Vilas, the Collectorate office in Ramanathapuram , the meeting was organized Kattabomman was asked to come alone. He took his manager Thanapathy Pillai and met Jackson. They had to stand before the arrogant Collector for three hours continuously. They were not permitted to sit and leave the place and also directed to remain standing there. Hence Kattabomman suspected the intention of Jackson. He tried to escape with his manger. Lt. Clerk, on the order from Jackson tried to arrest Kattabomman.31 The latter be headed the officer, and with his brother Oomaithurai and his soldiers escaped and marched to Panjalamkurichi. Sivasubramania Pillai, however, was arrested by Jackson's men.32 He was tried by the company officials at Tiruchirappalli,Pillai convinced the company officials that Jackson was at fault. So Pillai was released from confinement.33

After his return to Panjalamkurichi, Kattabomman appealed to the Madras Government by submitting the facts of the incidents. The Government directed Kattabomman to appear before a committee. Jackson prepared false evidence against Kattabomman by getting statements from the palayakkars of Sivagiri and Uthumalai accusing Kattabomman of having looted their property and killed their men. Presenting these statements of the Palayakkars to the company, Jackson sought punishment to Kattabomman. But the Committee refused toaccept those fabricated documents and Jackson was dismissed from service.34

The author of 'History ofTinnevelly', Bishop Caldwell's portrayal of Kattabomman as a 'dacoit' is based on these documents prepared by Jackson and rejected by the Company. Kattabomman appeared before the Committee which included William Brown, WillaimOram and John Casmayor.The committee enquired the Ramanathapuram incident on 15th December 1798and found Kattabomman no guilty.35

Yet in the background of humiliation that he suffered, Kattabomman was also influenced by the confederacy otMarudhu brothers and the Fourth Mysore War led by Tipu Sultan, , the son of Haidar Ali. The rebel missions that visited Panjalamkurichiinfluenced Kattabomman to their side and Kattabomman gradually turned as a deadly enemy to the British. Kattabomman had frequent consultations with Marudhu brothers of Sivagangai Palayam.36

It was in this situation that an incident occurred at Srivaikuntam where one of the godowns of the British fully stocked with grains compulsorily procured at abominably low prices from the peasants, was looted by the men of Subramania Pillai.37 This infuriated the British and it demanded that Subramani Pillai, guilty of

looting and murder, be handed over to the British forces. Though Kattabomman did not approve of Subramania Pillai's action but he was not ready to hand over his trustworthy manager to the British. However he was willing to compensate the British for their loss. The British did not accept this. Thus the feud between Kattabomman and the British was renewed. Further in August 1798, the son of SivagiriPalayakkar and his adviser visited Panjalmkurichi and held discussions. Kattabomman decided to establish his influence in Sivagiri with the assistance of the son of Palayakkar. As the Palayakkar was a tributary to the British, the Madras Government considered the move of Kattabomman as a challenge to its authority and this event moved into a crisis.

In May 1799, Lord Wellesley, the Governor - General of India directed the British forces of Tiruchirappalli, Tanjore and Madurai to Tirunelveli, the hotbed of rebellious centre. On lsl September 1799, Major Bannerman served an ultimatum instructing Kattabomman to surrender and attend him on 4th September at Palayamkotti, amilitary station of the British. Kattabomman replied that he would come on an auspicious day. Bannerman considered this reply as evasive and decided to attack Panjalamkurichi. On 4 September 1799, the British forces led by Bannerman attacked the fort of Panjalamkurichi , It was the day of the festival of Jakkamma, the family deity of Kattabomman. Hence Oomaithurai and his men had gone to Tiruchendur. Subramania Pillai was also away in his native village. Their absence in the Panjalamkurichi was intimated to the Company by its loyal EttayapuramPalayakkar, EttappaNaick a kinsman of Kattabomman. Maj. Bannerman surrounded the Panjalamkurichi fort assisted by his able infantry, cavalry and cannon forces.

Before attacking, Bannerman sent a word to Kattabomman that the war could be averted if he would hand over Subramania Pillai. Kattabomman refused for the second time. 'Success or heroic death is my choice', he replied. Oomaithurai rushed back to Panjalamkurichi. Subramania Pillai also joined Kattabomman at the fort. On 5th September 1799, Kattabomman's fort was attacked. 39A fierce fight was ensued. The British had all modernized weapons and a force numbering 500, besides they were helped by EttappaNaick and his 4000 strong army. Kattabomman's army had only conventional weapons but they offered stiff resistance. Bannerman had thought of capturing Panjalamkurichi in a day but he had to struggle for five days and hence, reinforcements were arrived from Palayamkottai reached Panjalamkurichi on 16th September 1799. But even then he could not succeed in capturing Kattabomman, Oomaithurai and Subramani Pillai and other ring leaders.

Kattabomman with his men sought refuge at Nagalapuram but the Company scented it through informers and attacked Nagalapuram. There was a minor battle and Subramania Pillai was taken captive. Kattabomman and his younger brother managed to escape. Along with Subramania Pillai, Soundarapandiyan, the younger brother of NagalapuramPalayakkar was also taken captive. Both of them were executed at Nagalapuram on 13lh September 1799.40 Their dead bodies were denied decent burial.

Kattabomman and Oomaithurai were condemned to be a wandering career. No Palayakkar was ready to entertain them because they were afraid of disobeying the fiat of the British. Any hospitality shown to Kattabomman, they had been told, would be taken as an inimical act to the British.If any attempt was made to trace them, all such act would be considered friendship with the British. Tondaiman of Pudukkottai and EttappaNaick of Ettayapuram were the two palayakkarswho aspired for this friendship. The Tondaiman of Pudukkottai was a longtime friend of Kattabomman. Thinking that loyalties would not change, Kattabomman sought refuge with VijayaragunathaTondaman of Pudukkotai. He was entertained at the palace for two days. On the third day when Kattabomman woke up from a siesta he found himself surrounded by soldiers. Being unarmed, he could not offer any resistance.41 The two brothers were taken to Kayattar where Bannerman was camping with his forces.42

There the brothers were separated. Oomaithurai was taken to the prison at Palayamkottai. Kattabomman

was held captive at Kayattaritself.On 16th October 1799 Kattabomman was tried before an assembly of Palayakkars, summoned at Kayattar.43 He was accused of inciting opposition to the British, organising the Palayakkar rebellion against the authority of the British, insulting Collector Jackson and murdering a British soldier, Clarke at Ramanathapuram. Kattabomman did not plead innocence but questioned the very validity of the charges. He boldly said that he did not look upon his actions as crimes. In an assertive tone and with contempt for death, Kattabomman did not accept the charges levelled against him. Thereupon, Bannerman announced death penalty. On 16th October 1799, Kattabomman was sentenced to death in a summary On 17th Octoberl799, Kattabomman washanged to death on a tamarind tree, near the old fort of Kayattar.44

Kattabomman faced the last moments of his life with a successful hero who fought for inalienable rights. All the Palayakkars, including the loyal ones were invited to witness the execution of Kattabomman. In his letter to the Governor of Madras, Maj. Bannerman wrote that this arrangement was intended to warn prospective rebels. The British General himself highlighted Kattabomman's heroic acceptance of death. As he walked up to the tamarind tree to embrace his sentence he looked calm and peaceful. The Palayakkars, lined up on both sides, received his contemptuous looks. He did not also allow the hangman to put the noose around his neck. He did it himself as his last contribution to the cause of freedom.45 Kattabomman was the Palayakkar at Panchalamkurichi only for nine years. All through the period he did not submit to the British yoke. In this, he was unique, a match only to himself. Indeed, Katabomman and some NaickPoligarsorganised the Eastern Palayakar League which culminated in the Second Palaykkar Rebellion. India's early struggle for independence reached the next phase in Tamil Country along with the rebellion of Kattabomman.

After Kattabomman's execution the fort at Panjalamkurichi was levelled to the ground. The loyal Palayakkars were asked to demolish their forts voluntarily. Forty two forts were thus destroyed. Bannerman through a declaration proscribed the manufacture and use of rifles and ammunition by the Palayakkars.The ordinary people were prevented from keeping any weapons at all. The loyal Palayakkarswere made responsible for the good behaviour of their tenants. By this declaration the, Palayakkars were degraded from their kingly status to revenue renters. They could not also have their annual durbars.

While Oomaithurai was in Palayamkottai prison, theKambalaNaicks were burning in their hearts with a vengeful fury against the British. A few rebels assembled in Ottanatham, a \illage near Maniyachi Junction They planned to revive their supremacy in the region by installing Oomaithurai again as the Palayakkar of Panjalamkurichi. MarudhuPandyan of Sivagangai and GopalaNaick of Virupakshi helped the rebels in Palayamkottai by sending forces of rescue operation. In January 1801, the insurgents numbered 200, under the guise of jugglers and pilgrims proceeding to Tiruchendur, moved to Palayamkottai. They carried on bundles of grass and firewood in which they concealed their weapons. Reaching Palayamkottai on 2nd February 1801, the conspirators attacked the prison and liberated Oomaithurai.46 The rebels under Oomaithurai fled away to Vallanadu Hills and from there they moved to Panjalmkurichi.47 The rebels attacked the military outposts of the British. Alwarthirunagari, Srivaikuntam, Kadalkudi, Nagalapuram, Kolarpatti and Tuticorin fell into the hands of the insurgents.48 Oomaithurai was able to gather the support of the subaltern people like the Pallars of Paramankurichi, the Maravas of Marugalkunchi and Manad, andthe Nadars ofKurumburwho hadbitter experiences with Kattabomman. Forgetting all their sufferings in the days of Kattabomman, they gave their full hearted support to the rebellion led by Oomaithurai.49With their support, Oomaithurai erected the razed fort again at Panjalamkurichi. The fort was parallelogram in shape, 500 feet long and 300 feet wide with walls of twelve feet height.50 Oomaithurai anticipated an attack by the British forces. This time, he armed himself with modern weapons including rifles and bombs. Even the British commanders admitted that the newly built fort was far stronger and impregnable than the earlier one destroyed

by Major Bannerman. This fort was reconstructed within six days.

To capture Oomaithurai, Major Macaulay, the station military general mobilized the company forces from all sides. Capt Martin, Maj.Sheppard and Lt.Versy arrived to assist Maj. Macaulay. When the British forces reached near the newly erected fort ofPanjalamkurichi on 9th February 1801, they wereastonished and returned to Palayamkottai on 10th February 1801. On 31st March 1801, Macaulay assembled the British forces and attacked the fort. When the fort was not breached, new advanced reinforcements arrived under Lt. Col.Agnew. On 23rd and 24thMay 1801, the fort was besieged and captured and destroyed by the British and they planted castor seeds in its place to prevent future habitation since these seeds would try out the soil.51 The rebels, numbered 300, under Oomaithurai escaped and in an encounter, the rebels lost 1050 while the British lost 600. With some desperate wounds Oomaithurai moved to Kamudhi.52 He along with the Palayakkar of Kulathur committed depredations in and around Kamudhi.53 Oomaithurai was warmly welcomed at Kamudhi by MarudhuPandyan 54 and Oomaithurai and then they moved to Siruvayal, the headquarters of MarudhuPandyan.

James Welsh who had an intimate knowledge of Oomaithurai , had declared thus; " Oomaithurai was one of the most extraordinary mortals I knew .The Oomme was adored , his slight sign was an oracle, and every man flew to execute whatever he commanded. No council assembled at which he did not preside; no daring adventure was undertaken when he did not lead. Whatever in disciplined valour could effect, was sure to be achieved wherever he appeared". His method of representing the British was extremely simple, for he collected a few little pieces of straw, arranged them on the palm of the left hand to represent the British force; then with other signs of characteristic of a dumb man and a whizzing sound drew the other hand across and swept them off. This was the signal for attack".55

MarudhuPandyan and Third Palayakkar Rebellion

The relationship between the Marudhu brothers who were the Palayakkars of Sivaganga and the British was not at all cordial. Knowing this, Oomaithurai sought asylum there. Marudhu, theelder and Marudhu, the younger in the beginning served as the army chiefs of MuthuvaduganathaThevar. In a war with the British, Muthuvaduganathan met a heroic death. Even though his heroic wife Velunachiyar and his military generals, MarudhuPandyas were there in the battlefield they could not save him. Historians give conflicting versions on this.

After the death of MuthuvaduganathaThevar his wife Velunachiyar took up the reins of administration at SivagangaiPalayam. In her shadow, grew the influence of the MarudhuPandyas. The administration of the SivagangaiPalayam was under their control. After the sudden demise of Velunachiyar, Marudhu the elder who was till then the general, became the Palayakar. Eventhough the easygoing Marudhu, the Elder was the nominalruler power only the able Marudhu, the Younger was the de facto ruler. There prevailed no political conflict between MarudhuPandyas and the Britishy until they took over the administration of the SivagangaiPalayam. They were seemed even friendly.

There arose a deep division among the people of Sivagangai consequent on the MarudhuPandyas coming to power. A section of the people argued that the MarudhuPandyas could not be the successors to MuthuvaduganathaThevar as they did not come from a royal family. As usual, the British took upon itself the responsibility of arbitration in this dispute, unasked for. It sent a notice asking Marudhu, the Elder to prove his legitimacy as heir to the Palayam. Of course, the elder Marudhu's coming to power in Sivagangai could not be held indisputable. In those days might was right and in the history of Sivagangai the Generals coming to power on the death of the King was not altogether new. But this argument of the MarudhuPandyas was rejected by the British and they ordered them to hand over the administration to the legitimate heir. This incensed the MarudhuPandyas. They thought that the succession issue was a domestic problem to be settled by the people of Sivagangai. The alien intervention had nothing to do with it. So they were discontented. And when joined by Oomaithurai at this critical juncture they got ready to fight against the British. But the British forestalled them.

Before commencing military operations against Sivagangai, the British issued a diplomatic proclamation, aiming at reducing the popularity of the MarudhuPandyan amongst the people. It stated that MarudhuPandyan was selfish and was ruling the region ruthlessly.Therefore the people should relinquish him and should surrender their arms. This proclamation showed the British diplomacy of divide and rule.56 As a retaliatory measure , MarudhuPandyan declared twin proclamations .One of them was pasted on the fort of Tiruchirappalli addressing to the people of the Peninsula of 'JambuDweepa or South India". Another one was found on the wall of the Great Vaishnava Temple of Srirangam addressing the inhabitants of the Island of 'Jambu or India'. These twin proclamations appealed the people of South India and India to join together and participate in the liberation struggle of India from the yoke of the British rule. Indeed, MarudhuPandyan was the first Indian freedom Fighter in calling the people of India for a war against the British. The proclamations called on all the people of India irrespective of caste, class and religion for a fight to finish the British power.57

The proclamations and counter proclamations brought the British and the MarudhuPandyan to the brink of a bloody conflict. In May 1801, the fighters under the command of MarudhuPandyan encountered the British. In July 1801, Oomaithurai, an ally of MarudhuPandyan commanded his followers in Madurai and capturedit. SevattaTambi, the son of MarudhuPandyan advanced to Tanjore region. Thus the entire Kallar Nadu comprising Madurai, Ramanathapuram and Tanjore brought under the control of MaudhuPandyan.

The end of Tipu Sultan at Srirangapatnam on 4th May 179958 and the execution of Kattabomman of Panjalamkurichi helped the British troops to divert their concerted attention towards Sivagangai. On the other hand, Lt. Col. Agnew was in charge of over all military operations against MarudhuPandyan. The British forces from all the four directions moved. On P'October 1801, the whole Cranatic British detachments moved to Kalayarkoil.59 After a sharp fire, the Kalayarkoil fell. On 1 October 1801, MarudhuPandyan along with his elder brother PeriyaMarudhu or VellaiMarudhu engaged in an encounter against Cholapuram.60 Both of them wounded and captured. James Welsh, an Officer in the British Army, had given a brief account on the last days of this rebel leader. He had observed that after ChinnaMarudhu was defeated in the battle of Kalayarkoil, he was chased like a wild beast, he was badly wounded and captures. He was seen in lingering with a fractured thigh in prison and was lastly beheld with his gallant brother PeriyaMarudhu and no less gallant son, ShevattaThambi, surrounded by other insurgents , in chains upon a common gibbet.61 On 24th October 1801, MarudhuPandyan, together with his brother VellaiMarudhu and a horde of other patriots were executed on the ruined fort of Tirupattur in Ramanthapuram region.62 The followers of MarudhuPandyan carried his body to Kalayarkoil, buried it near the Tank of the Great temple and erected a small tomb in his memory.63 On 16th November 1801, Oomaithurai and his brother Sevatiah were executed on a tower erected at Panjalamkurichi.64 While highlighting Oomaithurai, General Welsh portrayed that he was at last doomed to grace a gallows in reward for the most disinterested and purest patriotism.65 Another historian remarked him that one of the most extraordinary mortals heknew.66 In the Third Palayakkar War, Marudhu brothers and Oomaithurai sacrificed their lives as price for freedom. Seventy three other leaders of the Third Palayakkar Rebellion were order for perpetual banishment. They were boarded on the Admiral Nelson on 11th February 1802 for Prince of Wales Island, Penang. While on voyage, one fell into sea and another died of sickness and drowned. Twenty four of them died in Penang within five months of exile. Among the banished one was Duraiswamy, a nineteen year old son of Marudhu Pandyan.67

The suppression of the three Palayakkar rebellions resulted in the liquidation of the influence of the native chieftains of the Tamil Country. Under the terms of the Carnatic Treaty of 1801 which was signed between the British and Azim - ud - Doula, the Nawab of Arcot, there was an end of the rule of the Nawab and the beginning of the British rule in the Camatic.Enable by these developments in its favour, the British carried into effect the much contemplated political settlement with the loyal Palaykkars.68The British established their

direct rule over Tamil Country which became a part of Madras Presidency which was formed in 1801.69 This Presidency was comprised most of the Peninsular India by 1801.70 Thus the Madras Presidency, the southernmost region in India came under the British rule.71 The Palayakkar system came to a violent end and in its place the zamindari System was introduced.72 However the discontent with the British rule did not end with the suppression of the Palayakkar uprisings. On lO^July 1806, the Indian sepoys in the British stationed at Vellore showed their loyalty to their old masters especially the Palayakkars in the form of a mutiny73 which was considered the precursor of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. This Vellore Mutiny was suppressed by Col. Gillespie.74 Though the Vellore Mutiny was suppressed, it spread to Pallikonda, Wallajabad, Arcot, Palayamkottai, Chicacole and Hyderabad.75 Even the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, had its impact in the Tamil Country. Some places in Tamil Country were disturbed by the Sepoy Mutiny. The Madras had revolutionary links with other centers in the South like Belgaum, Kolhapur etc. There were signs of protests at Madras, Chengalput, Tanjore, North Arcot, Vellore, and Salem and into the interior areas of the Coimbatore in the Tamil Country.76

The Imperialist Scholars like Bishop Robert Caldwell and J.F. Reams spread canards about the Marudhu Brothers as they as they did about Kattabomman. Some Indian historians too have followed suit. But Col. Welsh who warred with them had a different story to tell, especially about the heroic qualities of Marudhu the Younger and Oomaithurai .MarudhuPandyan and Oomaithurai were spoken of as heroic persons in James Welsh's book, 'Military Reminiscences' which was published in 1830. He even recorded that he learnt the art of using 'Valari' from the MarudhuPandyan. Even the skill and leadership of Khan Sahib was aptly portrayed by S.C .Hill in his renowned book, 'Yusuf Khan, The Rebel Commandant'. Further the works of the historians and scholars like M.S. Subramania Iyer, K.Rajayyan, S.Kadhirvel, Jegaveera Pandyanar, N.Vanamamalai, V.Manickam, N.Rajendran, Kanakalatha Mukund, R.Kumaran, and G.Rengaraju recorded and proved that the heroic struggle of the early freedom fighters like Puli Thevar, Khan Sahib, Kattabomman, Oomaithurai, Velunachiarinscribed as the 'First War of Independence' in the immortal historical writings of K..Rajayyan.78 The publications and utilization of the Tamil ballads and folklores brought on the silenced and suppressed subaltern heroes to limelight. Had the MarudhuPandyas succeeded in defeating the British, the freedom of South India would definitely have been preserved. It is in this sense that they became the torch bearers of the First War of Independence.

Between 1750 and 1857, British India experienced a period without significant civil or military unrest. It was believed that the Mutiny of 1857 was the sole occasion when British authority in India faced a serious threat. Previous uprisings and disturbances laid the groundwork for the more significant events of 1857. Notably, the Palayakkar Rebellions in Tamil Nadu culminated into the South Indian Rebellion of 1800-1801, which impacted all of Peninsular India due to the rallying efforts of the Marudhu Brothers, marking the initial struggle for freedom that served as a model for the Revolt of 1857 in India.

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DR.M. THILAKAVATHY ENDOWMENT LECTURE

The Empowerment Chronicle: Women of Coimbatore

Dr. R Malliga

"History is nothing but Biography of Great People"- Thomas Carlyle

History records the achievements of humanity making progress and sets a passion for the future shaped by meaningful compassions and determination. Throughout history, significant men and women have advocated for the development of various sectors in particular vicinity. Napoleon observed each generation's understanding of the past shapes how its people contribute to the Society. Similarly, the ultimate reward for an individual's hard work lies not in the outcomes they pursue, but in the transformation, they undergone. Their steadfast dedication, leadership, pursuit of knowledge and visionary outlook propelled them through various life challenges. In addition, their remarkable eloquence left a lasting impression on their contemporaries, showcased the brilliance of their leadership and the stability of their knowledge. The history of Coimbatore District in the State of Tamil Nadu stands testament to such individual contributions, particularly women whose efforts have propelled the region's entire development.

A Concise Historical Overview of Coimbatore

Coimbatore, one of the major cities in the state of Tamil Nadu, India is known for its Industrial Hub, Educational Institutions, Economy, Connectivity, Cultural Heritage, Cuisine and its respectful Tamil Language.

Coimbatore is distinguished by its extensive textile industry, earning it the title 'Manchester of the South'. Besides textiles, the city is home to a diverse array of engineering sectors, special economic zones, automobile production facilities, electronics, and numerous other prosperous manufacturing operations.

In addition to its dynamic present and hopeful future, Coimbatore possesses a profound historical background. It was formerly known as Kongu Nadu and later came to be called Kovai, a name that continues to be prevalent even today. The region was once under the leadership of tribal chieftains referred to as of Koyan or Kovan. Their governance was followed by a powerful dynasty, KarikalaCholan and a succession of dynasties, including the Rashtrakudas, Chalukyas, Pandyas, Hoyasalas, and the VijayanagarEmpire.

During the eighteenth century, Coimbatore region came under the Mysore kingdom, ruled by HyderAli and later Tipu Sultan. After Tipu Sultan's defeat in the Anglo-Mysore Wars, the British East India Company annexed Coimbatore to the Madras Presidency in 1799. Coimbatore played an important role in the Second Poligar War against the British in 1801 because it was Dheeran's area of operations. In 1865, Coimbatore was established as the capital of the newly created Coimbatore district and in 1866 it attained its municipal status. Sir Robert Stanes became its first City Council Chairman.

Industrialization of this region began in 1888 and continued through the twentieth century. The city experienced a textile boom in the 1920s and 1930s due to the decline of Mumbai's cotton industry, Coimbatore became the leading industrial hub in South India. The region played an important role in India's National Movement. After independence in 1940's, Coimbatore grew rapidly due to industrialization. Later years, Coimbatore was established as a corporation in the year 1981.

During the recent decade, Coimbatore had a drastic growth and development in various sectors. To add on, Coimbatore Corporation runs a total of 82 educational institutions, comprising 16 Higher Secondary Schools, 10 High Schools, 15 Middle Schools, 40 Elementary Schools and 1 Special School for individuals with disabilities. Further, 43 Pre-

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Schools, 174 High and Higher Secondary Schools, 29 CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) Schools, 6 IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) and IB (International Baccalaureate) Schools and also this district accommodates 7 universities, 67 engineering college, 21 management schools, 8 architectural institutions, 3 medical colleges, 2 dental colleges, 27 polytechnic institutes and 62 arts and science colleges. The Coimbatore city is a home to three government-operated universities: Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Bharathiar University, and Anna University Coimbatore, along with four private universities.

The economy of Coimbatore is significantly shaped by the sectors of information technology, engineering, and textiles. Often referred to as the 'Manchester of South India', Coimbatore boasts a robust textile industry alongside a growing IT sector and numerous small to medium-sized enterprises. As of 2021, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Coimbatore is approximately $45 billion. This makes it the second-largest city in Tamil Nadu in terms of GDP. Coimbatore is a home to more than 25,000 industries of various sizes, including small, medium, and large-scale enterprises, with a pronounced emphasis on engineering and textiles, alongside a burgeoning IT/BPO sector.

Additionally, notable industries encompass the production of automotive parts, pumps, wet grinders, foundry products, textile machinery, and a substantial involvement in software development and research. Further, the city developed and equipped with more than 750 hospitals in order to serve the people including 5 Government owned hospitals, more than 5 Multi-speciality, 5 Super Speciality and 6 NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals) accredited hospitals.

Coimbatore District of Tamil Nadu is one of the developed Districts of India. All developments phase of Coimbatore District did not begin in the recent past but had its genesis from the stages of growth reached during earlier periods.

The Contributions of Individuals

Legendary personalities like Robert Stanes, P.S. Govindaswamy Naidu, T.A.Ramalingam Chettiar, Swamikannu Vincent, G. Kuppuswamy Naidu, C.S. Rathnasabapathy Mudaliar, KovaiKizhar, V.S. Sencottaiah, R.K.Shanmugam Chettiar, G.D. Naidu, P.A. Raju Chettiar, T.Avinashilingam Chettiar, G.K.Devarajalu, N.G.Ramasamy, G.R.Damodaran, Chinnappa Devar, Boo.Boo. Ramasamy, N. Mahalingam, K. Damodara Samy Naidu, J.G.Shanmuganathan, N.R.Karuppanna Nadar, Arunachalam Muruganantham, M.Badrappan, G.Bakthavachalam, Chinnammal Rangaswamy, R. Pappammal, Janaki Ammal, Kamalam Venkataswamy Naidu, Rajammal P Devadass, Prema Rangachari, Velumani Venkatesalu, Rukmini Govindarajulu, Kulandai Ammal, G.V. Rajammal, Savithri Shanmugham, Parvathi Krishnan, T.V.M. Thillai Ammal, Lakshmi Ammal, Yogacharya Nanammal.etc., contributed for the remarkable growth of Coimbatore.

Many legendary luminaries have contributed for this enormous development in Coimbatore. The main objective of this lecture "The Empowerment Chronicle: Women of Coimbatore" is to understand and recall the efforts and contributions of women personalities towards the development of Coimbatore.

Skilled Agriculturist: ChinnammalRangaswamy

ChinnammalRangasamy is regarded as a senior committed lady who inspired people of Coimbatore, particularly in the agricultural field. She was born in the last quarter of the twentieth century and lived long. Her hard work and efforts had helped her family come up. She had been a committed farmer and was considered to be extremely lucky. Her sons R.Venkataswamy Naidu and P.R.Ramakrishnan were extremely successful industrialist behind the huge ventures like Madras Aluminium Company and South India Viscose.

ChinnammalRangasamy of Coimbatore was known as a diligent and innovative farmer who made significant contributions to agriculture. She was recognized for employing innovative farming techniques that increased yields for her family and the society. Her practical involvement extended to running the family farm and influencing agricultural practices around her. Her focus on farming and agricultural innovation was pioneering in Coimbatore region, including early use of modern farming techniques such as using sewage water for irrigation and rainwater harvesting.

Eco Conscious Organic Agriculturist: R. Pappammal

R. Pappammal is an organic farmer hailing from Thekkampatti Village, located near Coimbatore. In 2021, she received the prestigious Padma Shri award for her contributions to organic farming. Recognized as a trailblazer in the agricultural sector, she is associated with the education department of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

Born in 1914, Pappammal faced the loss of her parents at a young age and was raised by her paternal grandmother in Thekkampatti and pursued her education. She was the mother of three daughters, grandmother to three, and great-grandmother of two.

From a young age, Pappammal exhibited a keen interest in agricultural practices. She managed to save money by selling snacks and beverages from a small shop she inherited from her grandmother. With her savings, she purchased 10 acres of land to cultivate pulses and corn.

As she aged, Pappammal sold a significant portion of her land, retaining 2.5 acres where she cultivated lentils, including horse gram and green gram. Throughout the years, she was closely collaborated with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and travelled alone to attend various farmers' meetings and applied the knowledge she gained in her life.

During one of those meetings, Pappammal encountered the concept of 'organic farming' for the first time. On returning home, she began to educate herself on the subject. Her innovative methods quickly gained recognition, by leading the University to send students to her village for field visits to learn from her expertise by the University. In 2021, at the remarkable age of 105, she was honored with the Padma Shri award for her achievements in organic farming. Pappammal passed away on September 27, 2024, at the age of 109.

Innovative Geneticist and Researcher: JanakiAmmal

JanakiAmmal, a pioneering Indian Botanist and cytogeneticist. was an expert in plant breeding, Cytogenetics, and phytogeography. She worked at the Sugarcane Breeding Institute in Coimbatore as a geneticist, where she advanced sugarcane biology research. She developed high-yielding sugarcane strains suited for Indian weather by manipulating polyploid cells and cross-breeding hybrids. JanakiAmmal was the first Indian woman to receive a Ph.D. in botany in the United States in 1931and was the first female scientist invited by the Royal Horticulture Society at Wisley Garden, England.

JanakiAmmal taught at various institutions including Maharaja's College of Science, Trivandrum, and held significant roles such as Officer-on-Special-Duty and Director of the Central Botanical Laboratory of the Botanical Survey of India. Her research spanned many plant species and contributed broadly to cytogenetics, polyploidy, and chromosome studies. She was called as "the woman who sweetened India's sugarcane" for her groundbreaking contributions to improving Indian sugarcane varieties. JanakiAmmal continued her research until late in life and dedicated her career to botany and genetics advancement.

PerumalAmmal was JanakiAmmal's sister and was known for efficiently managing their lands. She is also noted in the family context of the PSG family from Coimbatore. Together, the sisters represent a blend of dedication to family, land stewardship and pioneering scientific achievement, particularly JanakiAmmal's transformative contributions to genetics and agriculture in India. Their influence reached into the community and scientific history of Coimbatore and far beyond this region.

Passionate Educationist: KamalamVenkataswamy Naidu

KamalamVenkataswamy Naidu is a prominent industrialist and social leader of Coimbatore. Her involvement in educational initiatives also linked her family in its upliftment and progression.

KamalamVenkataswamy Naidu, wife of industrialist R. Venkataswamy Naidu, managed the R.V.G. Higher Secondary School and supported various family enterprises and educational initiatives. She helped her husband's contributions to Coimbatore's industrial and social landscape. R.Venkataswamy Naidu was a key figure in Coimbatore's industrial and social development. He was deeply engaged in the textile industry and other enterprises in Coimbatore, including founding and expanding various mills and industrial companies with the support of his wife Kamalam.

Together with his brother, he established the Coimbatore Institute of Technology in 1955, which has grown into a renowned technical institution now.

Thus, KamalamVenkataswamy Naidu played an important role as a manager and caretaker of the educational institutions associated with the family.

Inspiring Educationist and Determined Women Activist: Rajammal P Devadass

Dr.RajammalPackianathanDevadass, affectionately known as "Amma," was a prominent scholar and social activist dedicated to women's education and child welfare. Born on April 7, 1919, in Chengam, North Arcot, she hailed from a modest background, with her father serving as a forest Range Officer in Tamil Nadu. Her early marriage at sixteen did not hinder her academic pursuits; instead, it facilitated her educational journey, leading to significant achievements, including and a B.Sc. in Home Science from Queen Mary's College and the Elizabeth Miller Gold Medal.

Dr.RajammalDevadass's academic excellence earned her a scholarship for advanced studies in the USA, where she obtained her M.S. and Ph.D. in Nutrition and Bio-Chemistry. Her career took a pivotal turn when she joined Dr. T. S. Avinashilingam in establishing an educational institution for women in Coimbatore, which later became Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women. Under her leadership, the university flourished, gaining autonomy and deemed university status, while she served as its first Principal and later as the Chancellor.

Dr.Rajammal's contributions to education included the establishment of various schools within the university, focusing on Home Science, Arts, Social Sciences, and Engineering. She was instrumental in integrating the National Service Scheme into the curriculum and promoting community awareness about nutrition through educational resources and outreach initiatives. Dr.RajammalDevadass authored 57 books and over 530 research papers, significantly influencing Home Science education in India.

Recognized nationally and internationally, she received numerous accolades, including the Padma Shri Award in 1992 and the G.D. Birla Award in 1999. Her initiatives, such as the model school lunch program in 1963, have had a lasting impact on child nutrition in Tamil Nadu, benefiting millions. Dr.RajammalDevadass was also a strong advocate for integrated education for individuals with disabilities and established programs to support their rehabilitation and development.

Her legacy includes fostering partnerships with international universities, promoting gender awareness, and empowering women through various training programs. Dr.Rajammal P. Devadass passed away on March 17, 2002, leaving behind a profound impact on education, nutrition, and women's empowerment in India. Her life serves as an inspiring testament to resilience, vision, and commitment to social progress.

Dedicated Rural Educationist and Committed Children Activist: PremaRangachari

PremaRangachari dedicated her efforts to rural education in Coimbatore city and the welfare of children, engaging in volunteer work at Balwadis for children hailing from tribal and disadvantaged communities in Anaikatti. She was instrumental in the advancement of early childhood education and mentoring initiatives, championing the importance of vocational and technological skills for every child. Her watchword and focus was always,

"Everybody should be sent to school." - PremaRangachari

This statement, while broad, highlights PremaRangachari's belief in universal education, which is a fundamental aspect of empowering individuals, especially women, by providing them with opportunities for growth and prosperity. Her work specifically focused on children from the underprivileged and tribal backgrounds, aiming to show them a different reality through education. It was achieved through 'VidyaVanam', a School beyond text books at Anaikatti.

Holistic Health Care and Accessible Educational Service: Velumani Venkatesalu

VelumaniVenkatesalu of the Ramakrishna family was an excellent hostess and facilitated a lot for the society. She was a daughter of P.S.G.Ganga Naidu. VelumaniVenkatesalu was noted for her role within the

family and community, contributing to social and cultural activities around her. The Ramakrishna family itself is well-known for their significant contributions towards the society, notably in healthcare and education through the establishment and running of the Sri Ramakrishna Hospital and the SNR Sons Trust. The family, including notable members like SevaratnaDr. R. Venkatesalu (RV), who was involved in founding the hospital, has been influential in the Coimbatore region. VelumaniVenkatesalu, being a part of this family, played an important role in fostering community welfare and uplifting the family's social initiatives.

Pioneer in Medical Education Abroad: Rukmini Govindarajulu

Rukmini Govindarajulu, the daughter of Diwan Bahadur P.S.G.Rangaswamy Naidu and P.S.G.R.Krishnammal was connected with the P.S.G.R.Children's School and the A.L.G Matriculation Higher Secondary School. RukminiGovindarajulu was a pioneering woman from Coimbatore, notable for being one of the women from the city to pursue higher medical education abroad. She was recognized for running a hospital that was well known for its hygiene standards. Though detailed personal life history information is sparse, she is remembered as a significant figure in Coimbatore's history, especially among the notable women who have inspired the local community.

Passionate Tamil Educationist and Outstanding Politician: KulandaiAmmal

KulandaiAmmal, an Indian educator, writer, broadcaster, and politician affiliated with the Indian National Congress in Tamil Nadu was born on June 10, 1924. Later, she studied in Sarvajana High School and graduated from AnnamalaiUniversity.She worked as a Tamil language lecturer at NirmalaCollege for Women and SanthalingaSwamigal Tamil College in Coimbatore.She authored a book titled "Aram ValarthaMangaiar" and was a regular broadcaster for the All-India Radio.She served for two terms in the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1957 and 1967 representing Sulur constituency by defeating Communist candidates. KulandaiAmmal advocated for population control, welfare of scheduled castes, farmers and empowerment of women during her political career.

Influential Medical and Notable Politician: G.V. Rajammal

Dr. G.V. Rajammal, the daughter of G. Venkatasamy Naidu and Lakshmi Ammal, was born on July 17, 1916, in Uppilipalayam, Coimbatore, who was the second of four children. She received her education at the Raja Street, Government Girls School and had a strong desire to pursue a career in medicine.

During that era, it was uncommon for girls from Coimbatore to leave their hometown for studies. However, a conversation with Dr. N. Velappan, who was a doctor by profession and family friend of G.V.Rajammal, motivated her parents to allow her to attend medical college in Madras. G.V. Rajammal enrolled in Stanley Medical College in 1937 and graduated in 1942. After completing her degree, she was appointed as a paid House Surgeon at the Victoria Hospital and Gosha Hospital (now known as Kasturibai Hospital) in Madras.

Dr. G.V. Rajammal had her medical practice in Coimbatore and actively engaged in public service. She represented the residents of Ram Nagar as a Municipal Councillor on three occasions. She made significant contributions towards the benefits of water, road and drainage facilities to her constituency and was also involved with the Congress party activities also.

A versatile individual, Dr.Rajammal was also an accomplished farmer. She cultivated sugarcane on her farm in Upilipalayam and produced jaggery. Notably, the seeds she brought back from her trip from the USA were shared to her friends and they also began cultivating them, and continue to benefit from the produce of those plantations.

Distinguished Politician: SavithriShanmugham

SavithriShanmugham, the daughter of India's first Finance Minister, Dr R.K.ShanmukhamChettiar was a member of the legislature and a social worker. SavithriShanmugam was born on 18 November 1913 in Coimbatore Shantiniketan House was educated at St. Francis Convent, in Coimbatore.She later became a well-known public figure and served in several important roles in the society. She was an Indian National Congress politician from Tamil Nadu. She

represented the Coimbatore constituency in the Madras Legislative Assembly from 1957 to 1962.

Notable highlights of her life and career includes as a person who,

- Served as Vice-chairperson of the Coimbatore Municipality.
- Worked as an honorary Secretary of the Indian Red Cross society.
- Acted as Vice-President of the Guild of Service and 'SevaNilayam'.
- Served as a member of the Senate at Annamalai University.

During the 1957 Madras Legislative Assembly election, she went as the official Indian National Congress candidate from Coimbatore who secured 20,511 votes, defeating her nearest Communist Party rival by a margin of 10,573 votes.

In her legislative role, SavithiriShanmugam advocated for women's education, farmers' issues, and was instrumental in increasing government funding for the People of Coimbatore. Her role in introducing Tamil as the medium of instruction in colleges is notable.

As the Vice-chairperson of the Coimbatore Municipality, her leadership was instrumental in Municipal Governance and City administration.

During her tenure from 1957 to 1962 as the representative of Coimbatore in the Madras Legislative Assembly, SavithiriShanmugam had a meaningful impact on the development of Coimbatore as,

- She played a pivotal role in getting government funding for the Coimbatore Municipality, to improve the local infrastructure and civic amenities.
- Through her advocacy in the Assembly, she raised issues that concerned not just women and education, but also local farmers, highlighting her broader focus on community welfare and regional development.
- SavithiriShanmugam's efforts helped to channel more resources into Coimbatore, supporting both civic development and the socio-economic upliftment of the region during her political career. A road near Race Course is named after her as 'SavithiriShanmugamSalai' to recognize her service rendered towards this region.

Charismatic Politician: Parvathi Krishnan

Parvathi Krishnan, an Indian politician of Communist Party of India served as a Member of Parliament for the Coimbatore LokSabha constituency for three times and was also a member of the RajyaSabha. Born on March 15, 1919 to P. Subbarayan, a former Premier of the Madras Presidency and RadhabaiSubbarayan. She completed her education at C.S.I. Ewart Matriculation Higher Secondary School and later earned B.A. (Hons.) from St.Hugh's College, University of Oxford. Parvathi emerged as a significant trade unionist and leader in Coimbatore, advocating for workers' rights, particularly among textile mill and tea plantation workers in Valparai and she also held the position of Vice-President of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC).

Active in parliamentary politics, Parvathi Krishnan was elected to the LokSabha in 1957, 1974 (by-election) and 1977 and also, she served as a RajyaSabha member from 1954 to 1957. Parvathi was instrumental in Labour Movements and policies, notably the 1956 Wage Agreement for mill workers and the promotion of equal pay for women. She participated in the inaugural tripartite committee on plantations and addressed issues concerning mine disasters and the nationalization of workers. Her family included notable individuals such as General P.P. Kumaramangalam and Union ministers Mohan Kumaramangalam and RangarajanKumaramangalam. Parvathi Krishnan passed away on February 20, 2014 in Coimbatore.

Compassionate Social Service and Influential Women Educationalist: T.V.M.ThillaiAmmal.

"I used to visit her everyday for more than 12 years. She made me unlearn a number of things before inculcating the concept of service in me. She was frank, simple, committed, calm, patient and understood the language of the downtrodden, handled difficult situations with aplomb and was fearless at all times. It is thanks to her hard work and her life long mission that SevaNilayam has withstood the test of time . The sacrifice of ThillaiAmmal is our foundation for she gave away all her wealth for this cause and she just had three

khadisarees in her cupboard along with one shawl presented by Indira Gandhi . Her ornament was benevolence"

Jayshree Ravi (The Grand Niece and the Secretary of SevaNilayam)

T.V.M.ThillaiAmmalofSevaNilayam was a noble soul who had led a simple life. Born in 1914,asthe second daughter of T.A.RamalingamChettiar, the father of the Cooperative Movement and the first Member of Parliament from Coimbatore. She devoted her life towards the upliftment of the destitute girls and also instill education to them.

Thillai Ammal was married to Dr.T.V.Muthuswamy at a tender age of 14. Muthuswamy passed away due to Tuberculosis (TB) just three years after their marriage. She went to Chennai, joined a tutorial college and did a two-year programme. Despite personal loss, she pursued her education in Chennai and participated in Mahatma Gandhi's prayer meetings, drawn deep inspiration from his ideals. ThillaiAmmal also spent significant time at Sabarmati Ashram and decided to devote her life to serve the downtrodden, socially and economically backward. She was generous to even donated her gold bangles for the Freedom Movement.

The KasturiBai Trust was the first social organization that gave ThillaiAmmal the required inputs for her work. She returned to Coimbatore and worked in Periya Naickenpalayam where her cousin T.S.Avinashilingam Chettiar had established the 'Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya'. It was here that her service to the society of this region began. She visited nearby villages and taught them the value of education and hygiene. Later, she adopted villages and conducted street plays and villupaatus as part of a continuous awareness initiative. The prayer meetings mobilized women folk and they were taught crafts and awareness on health. A number of women were offered assistance and therefore were able to establish themselves by purchasing cattle or setting up petty shops. She helped them acquire land for housing by acting as their representative.

Later, ThillaiAmmal started 'SevaNilayam' with few children in 1949 and subsequently her father T.A.RamalingamChettiar and the Coimbatore public helped her to establish a permanent premises for 'Seva Nilayam' at Syrian Church Road. Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy inaugurated it in 1950. ThillaiAmmal started an Umber Charkha training course and a type- writing course for widows in order to empower them. 'SevaNilayam' became the home for a number of abandoned kids and these kids grew up under her watchful and compassionate eyes. She was known as the 'Amma' for these kids. The Saradhamani Primary School and the SevaNilayam High School were started by her with the purpose of empowering the girls under her care. The kids who grew up at the 'SevaNilayam' were enriched with education, social and moral values along with a sound traditional foundation that made them stand well all their life.

ThillaiAmmal visited prisoners in the jail and she tried to make a difference in the lives of the inmates and their families. A Junior approved school was started for the kids in need of rehabilitation in the year 1951 and a working women's hostel came into being in 1982.Thillai Ammal, educated thousands of girls and conducted hundreds of marriages. Several citizens were made part of this initiative. Sir.R.K.Shanmukham Chetty, Dr.C.Subramaniam, R.Venkataswamy Naidu, M.S.PalaniappaMudaliar were part of the committee. Social worker and legislator SavithriShanmugam accompanied ThillaiAmmal in her social work. She met eminent leaders such as Indira Gandhi, K.Kamaraj and they appreciated her work and visited 'SevaNilayam'.

ThillaiAmmal's contributions to society was recognized with an honorary doctorate from Avinashilingam University in 2004. She kept only three khadisarees and a shawl presented by Indira Gandhi, this reflects her simple life and selfless service. Her legacy endures through the ongoing activities of 'SevaNilayam'. She was revered as 'Amma' to many destitute children and inspired countless volunteers with her commitment and humility. She took her last breath in the year 2009.

Prominent Social Activist: Lakshmi Ammal

Lakshmi Venugopal hailed from Udumalpet and was the daughter of Bhasyakarulu and Kaveriammal. However, she grew up under the guidance of her aunt and people's representative Alamelu Manga Thayar in

Chennai. She studied at Queen Mary's College and was exceptionally good in Botany and Mathematics.

Lakshmi Ammal was married to advocate C.V.Venugopal, a civil and criminal lawyer who had been associated with Bapuraju of Big Bazzar street, the founder of the 'NanneriKazhagam'. NanneriKazhagam, an organization established in 1956 with the aim of promoting Tamil literature. The organization had a wonderful reputation and therefore one of the streets was named after it in those days. Unfortunately, C.V.Venugopal passed away at a young age and Lakshmi Venugopal took charge of the family early in life. She took care of her work, financial matters and also the upbringing of her three daughters.

The kind hearted Lakshmi Ammal understood the plight of the poor and downtrodden. She thought that one had to invest money, time in the company of a team in order to alleviate the misery of the downtrodden. Lakshmi Venugopal was a part of the Prisoners Aid Society, SPCA (Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), Guild of Service and Red Cross. She was also an active member of the Ladies Recreation Club for many years. The weekly meetings were attended by her regularly.

Lakshmi Ammal's association with various social welfare organizations created long lasting rapport with Neelaveni Ramaswamy wife of G.Ramaswamy of the PSG family, Savithri Shanmugham daughter of Dr.R.K.Shanmugham Chetty, T.V.M.Thillai Ammal daughter of T.A.Ramalingam Chettiar, Chandrakanthi Govindarajulu PSGR Krishnammal College, Manoranjitham Jayaraman and Lakshmi Bai the daughters of jeweller S.P.Ramaswamy Chettiar.

Lakshmi Venugopal was one of the board member of Gnanambigai Mills and also in the managing committee of Mani High School for a few years. She used to manage her accounts on her own and seldom took help in this regard. As a social worker she did not ignore her family rather she was a dedicated mother to her daughter. She developed her skills in stitching and fulfilled her family requirements.

Reading was a good past time for the educated women of those days and Lakshmi Venugopal was not an exception. She used to read The Week, The Indian Express, Nava India, Thuqluq and Ramakrishna Vijayam quite regularly. Her knowledge in music made her to participate a number of programmes in All India Radio and on Television.

Inspirational Yoga Instructor: Yogacharya Nanammal

"I have never visited a hospital. I wake up at 5 am every day and brush my teeth using a neem stick and practiced yoga." - YogacharyaNanammal

This statement provides insight into Nanammal's disciplined life and commitment to traditional health practices, which she propagated through her yoga teaching for over 70 years, inspiring thousands of people of all age groups. While not directly about "women's empowerment," her long and influential career as a yoga instructor showcases personal resilience and impact, which can be seen as a form of self-empowerment.

Nanammal was born on February 24, 1920, in an agricultural family in ZameenKaliayapuram, Coimbatore. At the age of eight, she began her yoga journey under the guidance of her father, ultimately mastered over 50 asanas. As per Nanammal, her father, who was skilled in martial arts, imparted yoga knowledge to her, to be practiced throughout her life.

In 1972, she founded the "Ozone Yoga Centre" in Coimbatore. Nanammal and her family adhere to the traditions that have been passed down through generations. The centre specializes in their traditional yoga style, which places a significant emphasis on Pranayama. The 'Ozone Yoga School' established by her, instructed yoga to over 100,000 individuals. Throughout, the last five decades, Nanammal has trained more than one million students and continued to teach 100 students daily at the 'Ozone Yoga Centre' for the rest of her life. Approximately 600 of her students, including 36 family members, have become 'Yoga instructors' who are all teaching yoga globally. Her son Balakrishnan noted that she had trained over 60 family members as Yoga teachers during her lifetime.

Nanammal entered the Guinness Book of World Records by teaching yoga to students and enthusiasts in Coimbatore. Her aim was to raise awareness among women, particularly young female students, about yoga techniques by visiting various educational institutions to address numerous health-related issues, especially post-marriage. She also planned to participate in the Indian

reality show 'India's Got Talent' as a contestant. She gained popularity on YouTube, featuring videos of her executing challenging yoga poses while dressed in her customary pink sari.

In 2018, she was honoured with India's fourth highest civilian award, the Padma Shri, becoming the oldest recipient of this accolade. Nanammal passed away on October 26, 2019, in Coimbatore.

Conclusion

The development of any district requires a multi-dimensional approach in sectors such as agriculture, industry, information technology, transport and services. Growth and support in all these sectors of development are clearly visible in Coimbatore District. The growth of educational institutions and health care programs have created more awareness and attracted more interest in the economic activities.

The history of Coimbatore is inextricably linked with the profound and multifaceted contributions of its women. From Agriculturists like Chinnammal Rangaswamy, R. Pappammal, dedicated social workers like T.V.M. ThillaiAmmal, Lakshmi Ammal who built institutions for the vulnerable, initiative health care services like VelumaniVenkatesalu, RukminiGovindarajulu, Empowerment with educationists like KamalamVenkataswamy, Rajammal P Devadass, PremaRangachari, Self empowerment through yoga instructor R. Pappammal to pioneering scientists like JanakiAmmal, who revolutionized agriculture, and political leaders like Parvathi Krishnan, SavithriShanmugham, KulandaiAmmal, G.V. Rajammal and who shaped civic governance, these women consistently demonstrated courage, innovation and an unwavering commitment to societal well-being and empowerment of all individual. Through entrepreneurship, education, healthcare, cultural enrichment, their efforts, often against significant odds, have been crucial in catalyzing Coimbatore's progress.

The contributors to the development of Coimbatore District in the present day, form a diverse group whose efforts have improved the district in many different ways. These efforts have produced a large measure of success in various spheres of development.

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POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY
THE SECTIONAL PRESIDENT ADDRESS

INA and Its Impact on Indian Military Administration

Dr. J. Stella

Respected President, General Secretary and office bearers of the Tamilnadu History Congress, Honourable Sectional Presidents, Local Secretary of this session, Dignitaries, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the office bearers and executive committee members of the Tamilnadu History Congress for having given me this opportunity to be the Sectional President of Political and Adiministrative History Section of the 32nd Annual Conference, being held at Bharathiar University, Coimbatore.

In this august gathering of historians and lovers of history, I would like to share some of my views on the theme INA AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIAN MILITARY ADMINISTRATION.

The Indian National Army (INA), also known as Azad Hind Fauj, represents one of the most significant military movements in India's struggle for independence, profoundly influencing the organizational structure and administrative philosophy of the post-independence Indian Army. Under the dynamic leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the INA not only challenged British colonial authority but also fundamentally transformed the conceptual framework of military administration in the Indian subcontinent. This transformation particularly impacted the three principal wings of Indian Army administration: Fighting Arms, Supporting Arms, and Services, each representing distinct functional domains that collectively constitute the backbone of military operations. The INA's revolutionary approach to military organization, its emphasis on nationalist ideology over colonial hierarchies, and its demonstration of unified command across diverse ethnic and religious groups created lasting institutional changes that resonated throughout the post-independence military structure.

Formation and Revolutionary Structure of the Indian National Army

The genesis of the Indian National Army traces back to the fall of Singapore in February 1942, when Captain Mohan Singh of the Punjab Regiment organized the first iteration of this revolutionary force from Indian prisoners of war captured by Japanese forces. However, the true transformation occurred in July 1943 when Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in Singapore and assumed command, restructuring the organization into what became known as the Azad Hind Fauj. Bose's visionary leadership transformed a disparate collection of former prisoners into a cohesive military force that peaked at approximately 60,000 troops, organized into three primary brigades named after prominent Indian leaders: the Gandhi Brigade, the Azad Brigade, and the Nehru Brigade. This nomenclature itself represented a radical departure from British military tradition, reflecting the INA's commitment to Indian nationalism over imperial loyalty.1

The organizational structure implemented by Bose demonstrated remarkable innovation in military administration, particularly in its approach to diversity and inclusion. Unlike the British Indian Army, which maintained strict communal and regional segregation, the INA promoted mixed regiments that transcended ethnic, religious, and linguistic boundaries. The establishment of the Rani Jhansi Regiment, comprising exclusively of women soldiers under Captain Lakshmi Swaminathan (later Lakshmi Sehgal), represented an unprecedented advancement in military gender integration that would not be matched in conventional

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armies for decades. The INA's administrative apparatus included its own currency, postage stamps, and symbols, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to state-building that extended beyond mere military operations. This holistic administrative vision profoundly influenced post-independence thinking about military organization, particularly regarding the integration of diverse populations under a unified national command structure.2

The INA's command philosophy emphasized political consciousness alongside military effectiveness, requiring soldiers to take an oath of loyalty to both Netaji and the national cause rather than to a colonial sovereign. This fundamental shift from imperial to nationalist allegiance created a new paradigm for military service that prioritized ideological commitment over traditional martial hierarchies. The organization maintained strict discipline while fostering democratic participation through elected strike committees and collaborative decision-making processes, prefiguring the democratic military ethos that would characterize independent India's armed forces. The INA's administrative innovations, including the adoption of 'Jai Hind' as the national greeting and the elevation of Tagore's 'Jan Gan Man Adhinayak' as the national anthem, established precedents for symbolic and cultural integration that would profoundly influence post-independence military culture.3

Three Wings of Indian Army Administration: Structure and Function

The contemporary Indian Army's organizational framework reflects a tripartite administrative structure inherited from the British colonial system but significantly modified by post-independence reforms influenced by INA principles. This structure comprises three distinct wings: Fighting Arms (Combat Arms), Supporting Arms (Combat Support Arms), and Services, each serving specific functional roles within the broader military ecosystem. The Fighting Arms constitute the primary combat elements, including Infantry, Armoured Corps, and Mechanised Infantry, responsible for direct engagement with enemy forces and territorial operations. These formations represent the army's core operational capability, designed for offensive operations, ground holding, and direct tactical engagement in various combat scenarios.4

The Supporting Arms provide specialized combat support through Artillery, Engineers, Army Air Defence, Army Aviation, Signals, and Intelligence Corps. These formations enhance the operational effectiveness of Fighting Arms through long-range fire support, combat engineering, air defense capabilities, communication systems, and intelligence gathering. The Artillery provides crucial fire support using guns, mortars, rockets, and missiles, while Engineers handle

combat support tasks including fortifications, demolitions, bridge construction, and water supply management. Army Air Defence protects against aerial threats, Army Aviation provides air observation and utility support through helicopters, and Signals ensures communication connectivity across all operational levels.5

The Services wing encompasses the logistical and administrative backbone of the army, including Army Service Corps (ASC), Army Ordnance Corps (AOC), Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME), Army Medical Corps (AMC), and numerous specialized services. The ASC handles provisioning, procurement and distribution of supplies including food rations, fuel, oils, lubricants, and mechanical transport operations. The AOC manages ordnance stores, weapons, and ammunition supply, while EME provides repair and maintenance support for all equipment. Additional services include Army Medical Corps for healthcare, Army Dental Corps, Remount and Veterinary Corps, Army Education Corps, Corps of Military Police, and Defense Security Corps. This comprehensive service structure ensures that combat operations receive sustained logistical, medical, educational, and administrative support throughout all phases of military operations.6

INA Impact on Fighting Arms: Nationalism and Organizational Revolution

The Indian National Army's most profound impact on the Fighting Arms of the Indian Army manifested through its revolutionary approach to

nationalism, recruitment, and command philosophy. The INA demonstrated that Indian soldiers could operate effectively under Indian leadership, directly challenging the colonial assumption that British officers were indispensable for military effectiveness. This demonstration of indigenous military capability fundamentally altered recruitment patterns and leadership development in the post-independence Indian Army, establishing the precedent for complete Indianization of the officer corps. The INA's success in organizing mixed regiments across communal and regional lines provided a compelling model for the Indian Army's subsequent integration policies, particularly relevant during the traumatic partition period when communal tensions threatened military cohesion.7

The nationalist ideology promoted by the INA created a paradigm shift in military service motivation, transforming the conception of military duty from colonial obligation to national service. This ideological transformation profoundly influenced the Indian Army's recruitment and training philosophy, emphasizing patriotic commitment over martial tradition as the primary qualification for military service. The INA's inclusive recruitment practices, which drew from diverse social backgrounds rather than limiting selection to traditional "martial races," established precedents for the Indian Army's democratic recruitment policies. The organization's emphasis on political education alongside military training influenced the Indian Army's approach to soldier development, incorporating civic awareness and national consciousness into military education curricula.8

The INA trials of 1945-1946 created a crisis of loyalty within the British Indian Army that fundamentally altered the relationship between Indian soldiers and their British commanders. The widespread sympathy for INA officers among serving Indian military personnel demonstrated the extent to which nationalist sentiment had penetrated the colonial military structure. This crisis of confidence accelerated the Indianization process and contributed to the British decision to expedite independence rather than risk widespread military revolt. The trials unified diverse political factions in support of the INA, creating unprecedented political consensus that influenced the Indian Army's subsequent role as a unifying national institution. The legacy of this period established the Indian Army's commitment to secular nationalism and professional apoliticism, characteristics that distinguished it from many post-colonial military organizations.9

INA Impact on Supporting Arms: Technical Innovation and Indigenous Development

The Indian National Army's influence on Supporting Arms manifested primarily through its emphasis on technical innovation, indigenous development, and operational flexibility. The INA's limited resources necessitated creative solutions to engineering challenges, communication requirements, and logistical constraints, demonstrating that effective military operations could be conducted with indigenous resources and innovative adaptation. This experience profoundly influenced post-independence approaches to military technology development, particularly in the areas of communications, engineering, and indigenous weapons production. The INA's success in establishing communication networks across Southeast Asia, despite limited equipment, provided valuable lessons for the Indian Army's subsequent development of self-reliant communication capabilities.10

The organization's engineering accomplishments, including the construction and maintenance of military infrastructure in challenging terrain, demonstrated the potential for indigenous engineering solutions to complex military requirements. This experience influenced the post-independence Indian Army's approach to military engineering, emphasizing adaptability, local resource utilization, and innovative problem-solving over dependence on foreign technical expertise. The INA's artillery operations, though limited in scope, provided crucial insights into the effective deployment of indigenous and captured weaponry, contributing to the Indian Army's subsequent emphasis on developing domestic artillery capabilities.11

The INA's communication strategies, which successfully maintained coordination across vast

distances using limited equipment, influenced the Indian Army's approach to signal operations and communication security.12 The organization's ability to maintain operational security while conducting psychological warfare operations provided valuable lessons for the Indian Army's development of information warfare capabilities. The INA's experience with air defense operations, though constrained by limited resources, contributed to understanding of integrated air defense systems that influenced the Indian Army's subsequent development of air defense capabilities. These technical innovations and adaptations established precedents for indigenous military development that became central to India's post-independence defense strategy.13

INA Impact on Services: Logistics Revolution and Supply Chain Nationalism

The Indian National Army's revolutionary approach to military logistics fundamentally transformed thinking about supply chain management and administrative efficiency in the Indian military context. Operating under severe resource constraints in Southeast Asia, the INA developed innovative logistics solutions that maximized efficiency while minimizing dependence on external supply chains. This experience profoundly influenced the post-independence Indian Army's approach to logistics management, particularly through the Army Service Corps (ASC), Army Ordnance Corps (AOC), and Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME). The INA's success in maintaining operations despite limited British or Japanese logistical support demonstrated the viability of indigenous supply chain management, contributing to the Indian Army's subsequent emphasis on self-reliance in logistics operations.14

The organizational innovations implemented by the INA in medical services, particularly in forward area medical support and casualty evacuation, provided valuable insights for the Indian Army Medical Corps' post-independence development. The INA's emphasis on preventing disease and maintaining soldier health under challenging conditions influenced the Indian Army's approach to preventive medicine and field medical operations. The organization's experience with veterinary services, managing animals in tropical conditions while maintaining operational effectiveness, contributed to the development of the Remount and Veterinary Corps' capabilities in diverse environmental conditions.15

The INA's approach to military education, which combined tactical training with political education and national consciousness development, profoundly influenced the Indian Army Education Corps' curriculum development. The organization's emphasis on developing literate, politically aware soldiers who understood their role in national liberation provided a model for the Indian Army's approach to soldier education and development. The INA's innovative approach to military policing, which emphasized discipline through ideological commitment rather than purely punitive measures, influenced the Corps of Military Police's development of disciplinary procedures that emphasized rehabilitation and education. These comprehensive innovations in military services established precedents for holistic soldier development that became characteristic of the post-independence Indian Army's approach to personnel management.16

INA Trials and Political Impact: Crisis of Military Loyalty

The Indian National Army trials, conducted at the Red Fort between November 1945 and May 1946, represented a watershed moment in Indian military history that fundamentally altered the relationship between the military and political authority. Initially, over 7,600 INA members faced potential trial, though logistical difficulties reduced the actual number of proceedings significantly. The first major trial involved Colonel Prem Sahgal, Colonel Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon, and Major-General Shah Nawaz Khan, deliberately selected to represent Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh communities respectively, symbolizing the secular nationalism that the INA embodied. These trials, intended by the British to discredit the INA and restore military discipline, instead generated unprecedented

public support and political unity across religious and ideological divides.17

The trials created a profound crisis of loyalty within the British Indian Army, as serving Indian officers and soldiers increasingly identified with the INA defendants rather than their British commanders. This crisis manifested most dramatically in the Royal Indian Navy mutiny of February 1946, when over 20,000 sailors across 78 ships and shore establishments revolted in solidarity with INA prisoners. The mutiny, spreading from Bombay to Calcutta, Karachi, and other naval bases, demonstrated that the loyalty of Indian military personnel could no longer be taken for granted by British authorities. The participation of elements from the Royal Indian Air Force and local police forces in these demonstrations illustrated the breadth of military disaffection.18

The political response to the INA trials unified diverse political factions in unprecedented ways, with the Indian National Congress forming a Defense Committee led by prominent leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru, Bhulabhai Desai, and Tej Bahadur Sapru. Even the Muslim League, despite political differences with the Congress, supported the INA defendants, recognizing their role as symbols of national resistance. The Communist Party of India emerged as the only major political organization to fully support the naval mutiny, while Congress and Muslim League leaders, concerned about the implications of military indiscipline on the eve of independence, persuaded the mutineers to surrender. This complex political response established important precedents for civil-military relations in independent India, emphasizing civilian control while recognizing the military's role as a national institution.19

Post-Independence Military Reforms: Institutional Transformation

The partition of India in 1947 necessitated a fundamental reorganization of military administration that incorporated many lessons learned from the INA experience. The division of the British Indian Army between India and Pakistan required careful attention to maintaining unit cohesion while managing communal tensions, a challenge for which the INA's experience with mixed regiments provided valuable guidance. The post-independence Indian Army's commitment to secular nationalism and professional apoliticism reflected the INA's demonstration that military effectiveness could be maintained while promoting national rather than imperial loyalty.20

However, the integration of INA personnel into the post-independence Indian Army faced significant resistance from King's Commissioned Indian Officers (KCIOs) who had risen to

senior positions following the departure of British officers. These officers, concerned about career prospects and institutional stability, largely succeeded in preventing INA veterans from rejoining the armed forces, despite Nehru's initial intentions to rehabilitate them. This exclusion represented a missed opportunity to integrate the INA's innovative approaches to military administration into the post-independence military structure. Nevertheless, the INA's ideological legacy profoundly influenced the Indian Army's institutional culture, emphasizing national service over colonial tradition.21

The post-independence period saw significant efforts to modernize military administration while maintaining the tripartite structure of Fighting Arms, Supporting Arms, and Services. The establishment of the National Defence Academy in 1954 reflected the INA's emphasis on comprehensive military education that combined professional training with national consciousness. The gradual Indianization of military technology and equipment production, accelerated by the lessons of 1962 and subsequent conflicts, embodied the INA's vision of military self-reliance. The development of indigenous defense industries, including the expansion of ordnance factories and the establishment of Defense Public Sector Undertakings, reflected the INA's demonstration that effective military operations could be sustained through indigenous resources.22

Long-term Legacy and Contemporary Military Transformation

The Indian National Army's influence on contemporary Indian military administration continues to manifest through ongoing efforts to enhance jointness, indigenous production, and strategic autonomy. The establishment of the Chief of Defence Staff position in 2019, though delayed by decades, reflects the INA's demonstration of unified command effectiveness across diverse military elements. The creation of the Department of Military Affairs and the push toward joint theater commands represent the institutional realization of principles that the INA pioneered in its integrated approach to military operations.23

The contemporary emphasis on military indigenization through the "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" initiative directly echoes the INA's commitment to self-reliance and indigenous capability development. The ongoing transformation of ordnance factories into corporate entities and the expansion of private sector participation in defense production represent the evolution of concepts that the INA demonstrated through its innovative resource utilization. The Indian Army's current focus on reducing dependence on foreign military equipment and developing indigenous alternatives reflects the strategic autonomy that the INA pursued through its emphasis on indigenous resources and innovation.24

The integration of women into combat roles, including the recent opening of permanent commissions for women officers, represents the continuation of revolutionary inclusion policies pioneered by the INA's Rani Jhansi Regiment. The Indian military's commitment to professional excellence while maintaining democratic values reflects the INA's demonstration that military effectiveness and political consciousness could be successfully combined. The ongoing efforts to enhance civil-military coordination while preserving military professionalism reflect lessons learned from the INA experience and its aftermath.25

Conclusion

The Indian National Army's impact on the three wings of Indian Army administration represents one of the most significant yet under examined transformations in modern military history. Through its revolutionary approach to military organization, the INA fundamentally altered concepts of military service, command structure, and administrative efficiency that continue to influence contemporary Indian military doctrine. The organization's demonstration of effective indigenous military leadership, integrated logistics operations, and unified command across diverse populations provided crucial precedents for the post-independence Indian Army's development.

The INA's legacy extends beyond immediate organizational changes to encompass fundamental shifts in military philosophy, from imperial service to national dedication, from communal segregation to secular integration, and from foreign dependence to indigenous capability development. While the direct integration of INA personnel into post-independence military structures remained limited, the ideological and organizational innovations pioneered by the movement profoundly shaped institutional culture and strategic thinking of Mount Pattern and implemented through Nehru. The post- independence military reforms, including initiatives, indigenization efforts, and technological advancement programs, represent the continued evolution of principles of INA first demonstrated under extraordinary circumstances in Southeast Asia.

The transformation of Indian military administration from colonial subordination to strategic autonomy, achieved through decades of institutional development and modernization, reflects the enduring influence of the INA's vision of indigenous military capability and national service. As India continues to enhance its defense capabilities and regional influence, the foundational contributions of the Indian National Army to military administrative philosophy and organizational innovation remain relevant for understanding both historical transformation and contemporary strategic evolution.

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From Barter to Bullion:
Transition in Exchange Practices under the Early Pandyas

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Introduction

The history of money in ancient India reflects the intersection of economy, polity, and culture. While coinage in northern India, especially punch-marked coins, circulated from the 6th century BCE, Tamilakam retained barter as the primary mode of exchange into the early centuries CE.[1] Sangam literature, including the *Purananuru* and *Akananuru*, frequently refers to trade in pearls, salt, and agricultural produce but rarely to metallic coinage, raising debates on whether Tamil polities were monetized or relied mainly on barter .[2]

The Early Pandyas provide a significant case study of this transition. Emerging from the Sangam Age, they experienced a decline during the Kalabhra interregnum (3rd–6th century CE). With Kadungon's revival in 570 CE, political restoration was accompanied by economic changes. Records such as the Dalavaypuram copper plates mention royal gifts, while archaeology reveals coinage marked by the Pandya fish emblem.[3] These point to gradual monetization, linked especially to urban growth and maritime trade with Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia.[4]

Pandya coins also carried political and cultural significance. By adopting the fish emblem, rulers asserted dynastic legitimacy after Kalabhra rule. [5] Thus, Early Pandya coinage embodied economic transformation, state power, and cultural memory, bridging barter and bullion systems.

Emergence of Pandya Coinage

The shift from a predominantly barter-based economy to one where metallic coinage gained importance was not sudden in Tamilakam. It represented a gradual evolution, tied to political stability, growing trade networks, and the assertion of dynastic authority. In this context, the Early Pandyas (6th–9th century CE) occupy a distinctive place in South Indian numismatic history. Their coins, though modest compared to later medieval issues, serve as critical markers of both economic change and political legitimacy.

Kadungon's Restoration and the Need for Coinage

Kadungon's accession in 570 CE, recorded in the Dalavaypuram copper-plate inscriptions, marked a turning point in Pandya history. Having defeated the Kalabhras, he reasserted Pandya sovereignty and sought to consolidate his authority through both religious patronage and economic reforms.[6] Inscriptions describe his gifts of villages to Brahmins, which while largely land-based, also hint at a gradual incorporation of monetary exchange. The issuing of coins by Kadungon and his successors may therefore be seen as part of a broader strategy of re-legitimization. After centuries of political eclipse, coinage served as a visible and portable symbol of revived kingship.

Typology of Early Pandya Coins

The numismatic corpus of the Early Pandyas consists mainly of copper and silver coins. Most are small in size and weight, indicating their use in everyday transactions rather than large-scale wealth storage. A majority feature the fish emblem, the dynastic symbol of the Pandyas, often depicted singly or as a pair. The fish motif is sometimes accompanied by supplementary symbols such as an elephant, lamp, or stylized ship.[7]

Copper Coins: Predominant in circulation, these coins were simple, struck with minimal inscriptions, and intended for local trade. They are found in significant numbers in Madurai and its hinterland.

Silver Coins: Fewer in number but more prestigious, silver issues were likely used in high-value exchanges and possibly in overseas trade. Some hoards

discovered in Sri Lanka include Pandya silver coins, underscoring their external circulation.[8]

Absence of Gold: Unlike Cholas in later centuries, the Early Pandyas do not seem to have minted gold coins. Gold was imported and used as a prestige commodity rather than standardized currency.

Symbolism of the Fish Emblem: The fish had long been associated with the Pandya dynasty, as Sangam poetry frequently refers to the "twin-fish banner" of the kings of Madurai. Its appearance on coins is therefore not accidental; it represented dynastic continuity and sovereignty. In a period when the dynasty was reasserting itself after Kalabhra disruption, the emblem reinforced the legitimacy of rulers by visually linking them with their Sangam ancestors.[9] The persistence of the fish emblem across centuries highlights how symbols can serve as anchors of political memory in material culture.

Minting Techniques and Circulation

The Pandya coins were typically struck rather than cast, though the techniques appear less sophisticated compared to northern Indian punch-marked coins. They are usually uninscribed, relying solely on symbols for identification. This suggests that their circulation was regionally bounded, where the fish emblem was widely recognized. Archaeological distributions show concentrations in Madurai, Tirunelveli, and Alagankulam, with outliers in Sri Lanka, indicating both internal and overseas usage.[10]

Pandya Coins and Inscriptions

Inscriptions reinforce the picture derived from coins. The Dalavaypuram copper plates describe grants where terms such as "panam" (coins) are occasionally mentioned, suggesting that monetized exchange was beginning to supplement barter. Later charters of Varaguna I record gifts that included both land and monetary equivalents, highlighting the hybrid nature of the economy.[11]

Foreign Coins in the Pandya Realm

Another significant feature of the Pandya economy was the circulation of foreign coinage. Roman gold and silver coins discovered in large numbers in Tamilakam, particularly in the Pandya region, reveal the asymmetry of early trade: while Tamils exported pearls, pepper, and textiles, they received bullion in return.[12] Even in the Early Pandya period, Byzantine and Arab coins entered South Indian markets, further familiarizing local populations with monetized exchange. It is likely that the presence of foreign coins encouraged the Pandyas to issue their own currency, thereby asserting sovereignty in economic terms.

Religious and Cultural Associations

The coinage of the Early Pandyas also carried religious undertones. The fish, besides being a dynastic emblem, was associated with fertility and abundance in Tamil culture. Some coins feature symbols resembling temple lamps, which may indicate a connection between kingship, religious patronage, and economic life.[13] In this way, coins functioned as sacred as well as secular tokens, circulating in temples and markets alike.

Assessment of Early Pandya Coinage

Though modest in scale and design, Early Pandya coins represent a decisive stage in the evolution of Tamilakam's monetary system. They bridged the gap between barter-based exchange and monetized economies, legitimized dynastic authority, and facilitated both internal and maritime trade. Their widespread discovery in both Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka demonstrates their acceptance as a medium of value, even beyond the political boundaries of the dynasty.

Thus, the emergence of Pandya coinage must be seen not in isolation but as part of a broader regional and global shift. The 6th to 9th centuries CE witnessed increasing commercial interaction across the Indian Ocean, and the Pandyas, strategically located with access to pearl fisheries and maritime routes, could not afford to remain outside this monetized network. By issuing coins, they positioned themselves both as heirs to an ancient Sangam legacy and as active participants in a new economic order.

Barter as the Primary Mode of Exchange

In the centuries following the decline of the Sangam Age, barter remained the predominant system of exchange across much of Tamilakam. Agrarian

surpluses, forest produce, and artisanal goods were traded directly for essential commodities. Literary sources and inscriptions consistently highlight such practices. For instance, donations recorded in Pandya copper plates often describe land, cattle, and paddy being transferred to Brahmins or temples.[14] Paddy in particular functioned as a unit of value, with quantities used to measure payments for services and offerings. Pearls, salt, textiles, and honey also circulated in barter-based exchanges, reflecting both ecological diversity and specialized production across the region.

The persistence of barter was rooted in structural conditions. Localized agrarian economies, absence of standardized coinage, and reliance on subsistence production limited the spread of monetization. Exchange was often organized within kinship and caste-based networks, where reciprocity, tribute, and ritual obligations substituted for cash transactions. In this context, coins were supplementary, not primary.

Stimuli for Monetization

Political Stability: With Kadungon and his successors restoring Pandya power after centuries of Kalabhra rule, conditions emerged for more organized statecraft. A revived dynasty needed visible instruments of authority, and coinage offered one such mechanism.

Urban Revival: Archaeological excavations at sites like Alagankulam and Madurai show signs of urban regeneration from the 6th century CE onwards. As towns functioned as nodes of craft production and trade, the need for a portable, divisible medium of exchange became more urgent.[15]

Maritime Trade: The Pandyas' location made them key intermediaries in Indian Ocean trade. Roman coins had already familiarized Tamil merchants with bullion exchange. By the 7th–8th centuries, contacts with the Arabs, Persians, and Southeast Asia created fresh demand for standardized coinage.

Religious Endowments: Temples increasingly became centers of economic life, receiving not only land but also cash donations. Inscriptions of later Pandya rulers refer to "panam" as part of ritual endowments, reflecting how religious institutions helped normalize monetary transactions.[16]

Role of Foreign Coinage

Roman aurei and denarii had circulated widely in Tamilakam from the early centuries CE, reaching Pandya ports through Indo-Roman trade. Hoards of such coins found in Madurai and Tirunelveli suggest that they were used as bullion, valued for their metal content rather than face value.[17] Even after Rome's decline, Byzantine and Arab gold and silver coins continued to arrive via Indian Ocean routes. These foreign coins performed dual roles: they facilitated high-value overseas trade and influenced local rulers to issue their own coins, both to assert sovereignty and to integrate into wider monetary systems.

Pandya Response: Indigenous Coinage

Against this backdrop, the Pandyas introduced their own series of copper and silver coins. Unlike the complex punch-marked coins of northern India, Pandya coins were relatively simple, bearing only the fish emblem or associated motifs. Yet their significance lay in the symbolic transition they embodied. By minting coins, the Pandyas provided a standardized reference for value, gradually supplementing barter.

While barter continued for everyday rural exchanges, coins became increasingly important for: Urban trade: transactions between merchants, artisans, and guilds; Maritime exchange: facilitating foreign trade, especially pearls, horses, and textiles; State revenue: payments in cash alongside agrarian produce;Temple economy: endowments in coin form, easier to store and redistribute.

Hybrid Nature of the Economy

It is crucial to stress that the Pandya economy was not fully monetized. Barter and bullion coexisted, complementing one another. For instance, a farmer might pay rent in paddy but purchase imported goods in coin. Similarly, temples received both land and coin donations. This dual system reflected pragmatic adaptation rather than uniform transformation.[18]

Ideological Dimensions

Coinage was not merely economic but also ideological. The repeated use of the fish emblem signified continuity with the glorious Sangam Pandyas,

while also distinguishing their coins from Chalukyan, Pallava, or Chola issues. In this way, the circulation of Pandya coinage was as much a statement of political identity as an instrument of commerce.

Broader Implications

The Pandya transition from barter to bullion highlights larger patterns in South Indian history. Unlike northern India, where punch-marked and inscribed coins proliferated from the Mauryan period onwards, South India adopted monetization more selectively. The Pandyas, through their strategic location in maritime networks, were among the first southern dynasties to issue coins systematically. Their efforts created the foundation upon which later Chola and Medieval Pandya coinage developed.

Thus, while barter persisted as a dominant mode of exchange well into the medieval period, the introduction of Pandya coinage between the 6th and 9th centuries CE represented a significant transformation. It enabled smoother integration into Indian Ocean commerce, provided tangible markers of dynastic sovereignty, and foreshadowed the fuller monetization of South Indian economies in subsequent centuries.

Conclusion

The study of Early Pandya coinage demonstrates how monetary practices were closely tied to political power, economic change, and cultural identity in South India. Following the Kalabhra interregnum, the Early Pandyas re-established state authority and projected sovereignty through coinage. The fish emblem, a dynastic symbol with deep cultural roots, functioned not only as a marker of economic value but also as a political statement that linked the rulers to their Sangam-era predecessors .

The gradual transition from barter to bullion highlights the adaptive strategies of the Early Pandyas. Agrarian surplus and reciprocal exchange continued to dominate rural life, but coinage facilitated urban commerce, temple donations, and long-distance maritime trade with Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia . The circulation of foreign coins Roman, Byzantine, and Arab further stimulated local minting, integrating the Pandyas into broader Indian Ocean trade networks .

This process produced a hybrid economy. Coins were not universally used; rather, they circulated in specific contexts such as high-value transactions, institutional payments, and overseas trade, while day-to-day exchanges in villages remained dependent on agricultural products . Such selective monetization reflects the transitional character of South Indian economies between the 6th and 9th centuries CE .

Ultimately, Early Pandya coinage must be seen as both an economic instrument and an ideological medium. It reinforced dynastic legitimacy, expressed political sovereignty, and provided the foundation for later numismatic traditions under the Cholas and Later Pandyas. By situating Pandya coins within literary, epigraphic, and archaeological frameworks, historians can better understand the intertwined dynamics of power, economy, and culture in early medieval Tamilakam

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The Chola Imperium: An Integrated Analysis of Political, Maritime, and Cultural Hegemony in Medieval Asia

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Introduction

The ninth century CE witnessed the dramatic resurgence of a dynasty that would come to define the historical trajectory of South India and reshape the dynamics of the medieval Asian world: the Cholas. From their core in the fertile Kaveri delta, the Cholas constructed an imperium whose influence extended from the banks of the Ganges in the north to the Malayan archipelago in the southeast. While historical scholarship has often partitioned the Chola achievement into distinct categories of political history, maritime activity, and cultural production, such an approach risks overlooking the fundamental genius of the Chola state.

This paper posits that the unparalleled longevity and influence of the Chola Dynasty (c. 850–1279 CE) was not a product of these elements operating in parallel, but rather of their deeply interconnected and synergistic relationship.The central thesis of this work is that the Chola Imperium functioned as a sophisticated, self-reinforcing system: its political and administrative innovations generated the stability and revenue necessary to fund a powerful navy; this naval force projected power to dominate Indian Ocean trade routes, thereby securing immense wealth; and this economic surplus was then strategically deployed in a vast cultural project of temple construction and artistic patronage that served to legitimize the state's authority, integrate its society, and project its soft power internationally.This study will therefore move beyond a fragmented analysis to provide a holistic examination of this integrated system. It will first deconstruct the political engine of the Chola state, focusing on its balance of central authority and local self-government. It will then analyze the navy as an instrument of economic policy, culminating in the celebrated expeditions to Southeast Asia. Third, it will interpret the magnificent cultural output—the monumental temples and exquisite bronzes—as a deliberate arsenal of legitimation. Finally, the paper will synthesize these threads to illustrate the feedback loop that sustained Chola hegemony for over four centuries, offering a framework for understanding pre-modern statecraft that emphasizes the interdependence of governance, economic force, and ideological expression.

Administrative Brilliance and the Mechanics of Power

The foundation upon which the Chola edifice was built was a remarkably sophisticated and efficient administrative system. This system masterfully

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negotiated the classic tension of empire: the need for strong, centralized control alongside the practical necessity of effective local governance. The success of the Cholas lay in their ability to institutionalize this balance.

Centralized Authority and Imperial Hierarchy At the apex of the political structure stood the emperor (Chakravartin), whose authority was absolute and often expressed in increasingly imperial and divine terms under rulers like Rajaraja I and Rajendra I. The empire was divided into a hierarchy of administrative units that ensured effective control from the center. The largest unit was the *Mandalam* (province), often under the viceregal authority of a royal prince. Below this was the *Valanadu* (division), and the foundational unit was the *Nadu*, the district representing a collection of villages. This hierarchical structure facilitated efficient revenue collection, resource mobilization, and the dissemination of imperial orders, forming the backbone of centralized control.

The Innovation of Local Self-Government, the *Sabhas.* The most striking and often-cited innovation of Chola polity was the extent of local autonomy. The famous Uttaramerur inscriptions from the reign of Parantaka I (10th century CE) provide a detailed constitution for the election and functioning of the village assembly, the sabha. These assemblies were composed of elected members who met in committees (*variyams)* to oversee specific functions such as irrigation management, land distribution, tax collection, temple maintenance, and justice for minor disputes. The electoral rules were remarkably detailed, specifying property qualifications, age limits, and procedures designed to ensure rotation and prevent corruption. This system of local self-government was not an exercise in democracy for its own sake but a brilliant administrative tool. It devolved the burdensome tasks of day-to-day governance and revenue collection to the local level, ensuring efficiency and reducing the need for a vast, top-heavy imperial bureaucracy. It fostered a sense of participation and investment in the stability of the empire, thereby strengthening the central state from the ground up.

Revenue and Resource Management

The lifeblood of the state was land revenue(*irai*), assessed through extensive and periodic land surveys. The accuracy of this system, managed effectively by the local assemblies, provided the predictable and substantial income needed to fund the imperial court, the standing army, the navy, and grand public works. The administration also collected tolls and customs duties from trade, a revenue stream that would grow exponentially as maritime power expanded.

The Chola political engine was a masterpiece of design. It combined the unifying force and ambition of a powerful central monarchy with the hyper-efficient, ground-level management of local assemblies. This structure generated immense internal stability and a reliable revenue stream, creating the capital—both financial and administrative—required to pursue ambitions beyond the Indian mainland. It was this powerful and well-oiled political machine that made the projection of maritime power not just a possibility, but a reality.

The Chola Navy and Maritime Hegemony

The wealth generated by the political and agricultural economy provided the means for the Cholas to build and project power beyond their shores. They recognized that ultimate supremacy lay in controlling the lucrative trade routes of the Indian Ocean, and to this end, they developed a formidable navy that served as the central instrument of their economic and imperial policy.

The Navy as an Instrument of State Policy: The Chola navy was not merely an auxiliary force;it was a professional, standing military armada comprising numerous specialized vessels, including large combat ships (thirisadai) and troop transports. Its primary purpose was threefold: to protect the vast coastline of the Chola state, to safeguard the merchant fleets of Indian traders (a key constituency), and to execute offensive campaigns against maritime rivals. This represented a strategic understanding of geopolitics where control of the sea (thalassocracy) was directly linked to prosperity and power on land.

Economic Motives and the Srivijayan Rivalry: By the 11th century, the trade route between China, Southeast Asia, India, and the Arab world was the most

lucrative on the planet. The key chokepoint controlling this route was the Strait of Malacca, dominated by the Srivijaya Empire based in Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. Srivijaya acted as an intermediary, taxing goods flowing through the strait. The Cholas, seeking to maximize their own profits and protect their merchants from exorbitant tariffs, increasingly saw Srivijaya not as a partner but as a barrier to their economic ambitions.

The Expeditions of Rajendra Chola I: The culmination of this policy was the audacious naval campaign launched by Emperor Rajendra Chola I around 1025 CE.Inscriptions, including the famous Tiruvalangadu plates, detail this expedition, which targeted a string of Srivijayan port cities across the Strait of Malacca.[^8] The Chola fleet reportedly sacked Kadaram (modern Kedah), Pannai, and other centers, crippling Srivijayan power in the region.

It is crucial to note that this was not a classic territorial conquest aimed at annexing Southeast Asian land. Instead, it was a strategic, punitive raid designed to achieve clear economic objectives: to dismantle the Srivijayan monopoly, chastise a rival power, and establish direct and favorable trading terms for Chola and Tamil merchants. It was the projection of hard power in the service of economic interest. The success of this campaign reshaped the geopolitical map of the Indian Ocean, establishing Chola hegemony over the trade routes and ushering in a period of unprecedented commercial wealth flowing into the Chola heartland. This wealth would become the fuel for the empire's most enduring legacy: its cultural transformation.

Legitimation Through Art, Architecture, and Ideology

The immense wealth flowing into the Chola treasury from land revenue and, crucially, from maritime trade, was not merely hoarded. It was strategically invested in a vast program of cultural production that served as the final, crucial pillar of Chola hegemony. This output was not incidental; it was a deliberate arsenal of tools designed to legitimize, integrate, and glorify the imperial project. Architecture of Power: The Royal Temple The most visible and powerful symbol of this cultural project was the construction of monumental stone temples. The Brihadeeswara Temple in Thanjavur, commissioned by Rajaraja I in 1010 CE, is the paradigmatic example.It was far more than a place of worship; it was a multi-functional institution central to Chola power.

Economic Function: The temple was a major landowner, employer, and economic hub. It managed vast resources, acted as a bank, and stimulated local economies. Administrative Function: Its walls served as the public record office, with inscriptions detailing imperial orders, land grants, and endowments, anchoring the state's bureaucratic functions in a sacred space. Ideological Function: Most importantly, it was a statement of divine kingship. The colossal scale of its vimana (tower), designed to mimic Mount Meru, the axis of the universe, and the strategic placement of the emperor’s portrait in a sacred position, explicitly linked the king’s rule to the cosmic order of the gods. It was physical propaganda, demonstrating the king’s power, piety, and divine mandate to both his subjects and rival kings.

Metaphysics in Bronze:The Nataraja as Cultural Icon The Chola period represents the zenith of bronze casting in India. The iconic form of Shiva as Nataraja, the Lord of Dance, was perfected during this era. The Nataraja bronze is a masterpiece of theology and art, encapsulating within a single form the Hindu concepts of creation, preservation, destruction, illusion, and liberation. The patronage of these exquisite idols by the royal family and elite was not merely an act of devotion. It was a way of associating themselves with the highest philosophical ideals, displaying their taste and wealth, and reinforcing the religious and cultural values that underpinned the social order. The widespread distribution of these bronzes, both within India and through trade networks, also acted as a vehicle for disseminating Chola cultural influence. Inscriptions: The Written Word of Authority The thousands of stone inscriptions adorning temple walls are invaluable historical sources. They go beyond mere records of donations; they are the detailed ledgers of the empire, providing data on taxes, land disputes, administrative organization, and social structure. They were the permanent, public testament to the king’s generosity, the stability of his rule, and the reach of his administration, ensuring his legacy would be literally set in stone. In essence, the cultural project was the necessary superstructure to the economic base. The wealth from trade and taxes was recycled into cultural forms that justified the very system that produced that

wealth, creating a powerful cycle of legitimation that cemented Chola authority for generations.

The Integrated System of Hegemony The true genius of the Chola Imperium is revealed not when examining its political, maritime, or cultural achievements in isolation, but when understanding how they functioned as interdependent components of a single, integrated system. This synergy created a resilient feedback loop that propelled and sustained the empire for centuries.

The process can be visualized as a virtuous cycle:

The Political Foundation: The efficient administrative system, combining central authority and local sabhas, created internal stability, integrated the agrarian economy, and generated a reliable stream of land revenue. Funding Projection: This capital, supplemented by initial trade, funded the building and maintenance of a formidable standing navy, an instrument of state power. Securing Wealth: The navy projected power to protect Chola merchants, crush

rivals like Srivijaya, and secure dominance over the Indian Ocean trade routes. This generated a massive influx of wealth from tariffs and increased trade profits. Investment in Legitimation: This new commercial wealth was strategically invested in a vast cultural project: the construction of monumental temples and the patronage of exquisite art. Reinforcing Power: These cultural projects served to: Legitimize the state and the emperor through divine association; Integrate society by providing a shared religious and cultural focus; Stimulate the economy by functioning as central economic hubs; Project soft power, broadcasting Chola glory across Asia.Completing the Loop: This enhanced legitimacy and economic stimulation further strengthened the internal political stability and revenue-generating capacity of the state, allowing the cycle to begin anew with even greater intensity.

This model explains why the Chola Empire was more resilient and influential than its contemporaries. A challenge to one pillar of its power was mitigated by the strength of the others. An agricultural drought could be offset by trade wealth. A military setback could be overcome by the deep internal stability provided by the sabhas and the legitimizing power of its cultural institutions. The Cholas did not just conquer; they engineered a sophisticated and self-sustaining ecosystem of power.

Conclusion

The Chola Imperium stands as a testament to one of the most sophisticated political and cultural enterprises of the medieval world. This analysis has argued that its enduring legacy was not the product of isolated excellence in governance, naval warfare, or art, but rather the result of a deliberate and masterful integration of these elements into a coherent and self-reinforcing system. The Chola state demonstrated a profound understanding of the mechanics of power: that effective governance generates capital, that capital can fund the projection of hard power, that hard power can secure wealth, and that wealth must be invested in the soft power of cultural legitimation to ensure long-term stability. The feedback loop between the hyper-local administration of the sabhas, the global reach of the navy, and the symbolic power of the Brihadeeswara Temple and Nataraja bronzes created a resilient hegemony that dominated South India and the Indian Ocean for over four centuries. The Cholas offer a compelling case study in pre-modern statecraft, one that highlights the importance of synergies between different spheres of power.

Future research could fruitfully compare this integrated model with other contemporary empires, such as the Khmer in Angkor or the Song in China, to develop a broader comparative understanding of medieval state formation. Furthermore, a deeper archaeological investigation of Chola-era port sites could provide even richer data on the scale and nature of their maritime economy. Ultimately, the Chola legacy endures not only in the stone of their temples and the beauty of their bronzes but also in the powerful example they set of how to build a lasting and influential civilization.

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The Kudavolai System: A Proto-Democratic Model of Village Governance under the Cholas

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Origin Of Kudavolai System under the Cholas

The system of *Kudavolai* was acquired its formal form in the period of one of the first and most influential rulers of Imperial *Cholas Parantaka I* (c. 907-955 CE)[2]. This administration is commonly remembered as one of the golden eras in the growth of systematic city government in Tamil Nadu. Through *Parantaka I*, the *Chola* government also started writing on elaborate rules to guide the maintenance of village affairs especially *Brahmadeya* villages (land given to the Brahmins) to run with reasonable administrative freedom.[3]

Despite the centralized ruling authority of the *Cholas*, the rulers held the idea of decentralized administration considering the necessity for such a direction in the ruling of the state. They understood that grassroot governance would be more effective in case it was under the control of local people as long as it was controlled by the well-defined systems. It was against this background that *Kudavolai* electoral process developed not in isolation but as one of the attempts to bring the village self-rule under the general imperial practice.[4]

Evidence from the Uttaramerur Inscription

The most important source of the information on the *Kudavolai* system is in the *Uttaramerur* inscriptions of the contemporary state of Tamil Nadu-*Kanchipuram*.[5] Structured in the walls of temples, these inscriptions date to the late 10th century and form a detailed account of how elections were held and who could take part, what the qualification was and how accountability was tripped.

An inscription, granted by *Parantaka I*, gives very elaborate provisions as to how village committees, or *variyams* (taking care of various matters of rural management, such as irrigation, justice, and temple duties) were constituted. This process was carried out by dividing the village into wards and by selecting the eligible candidates whose names were then written over palm leaf slips (*olai*), which were placed in a pot (*kudam*) and lottery was used to make the final selection. It is an annual, systematic and fair electoral process.[6]

These inscriptions are also not just administrative documents; in a sense they give priceless glimpses on how a medieval South Indian society started setting up democratic ways of representation, decades before such a spread to the rest of the world became systemized.[7]

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Earlier Influences and Temple-Based Governance

In comparison to Roman and later rule, the temple governance of Canaan is studied as an influence. Temple-Based Governance The temple-based form of governance of Canaan can also be examined as an influence in comparison to the rule of Rome and latter rule. Although the *Kudavolai* system is seen to be most well-documented during the *Chola* period, its antecedents can be traced to previous models of local management which had been established during the *Sangam* age (c. 3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE) and the reign of *Pallavas*.[8] The Tamil kinship societies were settled in consensus-supported decisions made by the elders or assemblies of the early society. As temple economies expanded, especially in the 7th century onwards a new form of local government focussed on temples appeared.

It was not only a religious institution but it was a social, economic, and political centre. Administration of temple lands, taking of donations, allotting of grain and wages and drawing up of festivals also needed proper planning. They were organized into committees to carry out these activities and in several instances, involvements of local elites and Priests collectively made major decisions.[9]

The precedent of temple-centred committee rule perhaps provided the basis of the more officialised *Kudavolai* structure which were set up during the *Cholas* rule.[10] The existence of administrative maturity in the temple towns and the necessity of the village administration by the *Cholas* supplied the necessary conditions to the emergence of this orderly election system.

The *Sabha*: - Centre of Village Government

Sabha (and in *Brahmadeya* villages *Mahasabha*) was the most important institution in the government of villages of the *Chola* period.[11] It consisted of wise and honourable men of the cultivated society and usually a council of Brahmin people to whom the king offered tax free land. The *Sabha* participated independently and made joint decisions on questions regarding irrigation and taxation, management of temples and the resolution of disputes.[12]

Compared to an informal village meeting, however, the *Sabha* was very formal and organized. Meetings normally took place in a public place like in a temple or *mandapam* and the records of such meetings were documented and inscribed on a stone.[13] This degree of documentation shows the complexity of the administrative system.

Ur in its turn was an overall village assembly in non-*Brahmadeya* villages. Although similar in functionality it would tend to be more comprehensive with the *Ur* being more representative of a wider cross-section of the population, consisting of more occupational groups.[14]

Commissions (*Variyams*) and their Duties

With the view to effectively manage multiple elements of local governance, the *Sabha* was subdivided into smaller permanent committees, called *variyams*.[15] These *variyams* were permanent institutions which performed executive and oversight tasks. Every *variyam* was assigned a certain portfolio to perform and a clear set of tasks.

Among the notable committees there were:

- **Annual Committee (*Samvatsara Variyam*):** Responsible of the overall village governance of the year.
- **Garden Committee (*Tottam Variyam*):** Responsible of maintaining the orchards and agricultural fields.
- **Tank Committee (*Eri Variyam*):** controlled water reservoirs, bunds and irrigation channels which were important in agrarian communities.
- **Gold Committee (*Pon Variyam*):** Dealt with temple accounts including the accountancy of the donation of gold and jewels to the god.
- ***Panchavara* Committee:** Lodging the day to day administration the *Panchavara* was accountable to the greater *Sabha*.

A *variyam* had a particular term, often of 1 year, after which members either were replaced or rotated. This regime provided responsibility and did not allow power concentration.[16]

Membership Qualification and Eligibility

Although the *Kudavolai* system provided a means of fair selection it was not impartial to everyone. The strict eligibility standards were used to see that only capable, truthful and social responsible people entered the service. The standards listed in these qualifications were engraved regarding *Uttaramerur* and showed a form of mixture of moral, educational as well as economic levels.[17]

The fundamental eligibility criteria were:

- **Age Limit:** It was normally mandatory that candidates should be aged between 35 and 70 years.
- **Learning:** The individual cannot only have learned Vedas but he/she should be well trained in administration or religious books.
- **Land Tenure:** Only the landowners whose land was worth a particular value e.g. half a *veli* (traditional measure of land) were allowed. This made sure that members felt part of the community.
- **Tax Compliance:** The candidate should have been able to pay taxes in time.
- **Ethical Purity:** those accused of crimes, gambling, alcohol, or other vices were not allowed.
- **Family restrictions:** There were restrictions that could not allow selection of more than one candidate in a family to ensure nepotism was avoided.

The standards were not only aimed at maintaining integrity of governance but also they were aimed at achieving ethical service of the people in villages. Any violator to the code in office or after would attract penalties and disqualification to hold future office.[18]

Procedure of *Kudavolai* Election

Kudavolai system used a distinctive procedure of elections that was a mixture of a clearance of the candidates and randomness to promote fairness. It was organized, ritualized procedure with administrative rationale and traditions of the community. Derived so-called after the implements used, which are a *kudam* (pot) and *olai* (palm-leaf slips), the system was an annual election to fill the office in a host of village committees (*variyams*).[19]

The important stages of the process were:

- **Nomination and Screening:** A list of candidates, who were eligible by either age or time, was made by a panel of current elders or even records in the village. This was purely pegged on the pre-determined requirements like age, education, tax and land ownership.
- **Inscription on palm leaves:** On a single palm-leaf slip (*olai*) the name of a qualifying person would be written. A lot of care was taken to entail that the slips were equal in size, also folded such a way that no biasness was introduced when picking.
- **The drawing of the Slips**: The slips were kept in a closed pot (*kudam*) which was thoroughly shaken. This was done to ensure that the slips were mixed up and they were not arranged in some order.
- **Pick by someone unconnected with the contest**: The slips were drawn out of the pot by some youth too young (before the age of five years), to have been corrupted by politics or even bribery. His choice was regarded as holy and unbiased.
- **Results Publicity:** The selected names were published and recorded in books. These people were then recruited into their respective *variyams* on a one year term.[20]

This procedure did not just render elections transparent, but also created the ritual solemnity, where the entire village took part in the collective and public process of decision-making.

Lot-Drawing to be used to be on the Safe Side

The most notable aspect of the *Kudavolai* system was its employment of lot-drawing (*tirattu*)[23] as a mechanism of final selection process. This approach fulfilled a number of very important functions: The decision on who to select was left to luck as only those who qualified, thereby eliminating the aspect of human

intervention and politics. A candidate that was judged to be equally qualified had the chance of serving decided by chance only and there could be no competition or rivalry. This was done in a transparent way whether in the temples or locations where people could meet, which ensured people trusted their system. Lot-drawing was a compromise between principled eligibility and the accidental appointment in the name of democracy which tends to shun favouritism by all means, even by those who deserve.[24]

The Need of Neutrality Avoidance of Partiality

The *Kudavolai* system was also credited as being so innovative in its mechanics to avoid bias, favouritism and corruption, which is even a challenge in current-day democracies. Many precautions were taken so that there was neutrality: The decision to make a very young boy draw the lots was a calculated one of creating neutrality in both emotions and politics. Close family members of the occupant office holders were un-allowed to participate thus ending the possibility of dynastic and family dominance. No one was allowed to take the same position two years in a row and there were certain periods of time that they were forced to wait before they would be elected again. Announcement of winners were engraved on the inscriptions along with the temple records so that the whole process could be, in a way, publicly verifiable.

These checks in combination formed a transparent, self-regulating electoral system that brings together eligibility, scrutiny, and opportunity to provide a level of local governance at the time that was far ahead of its day.[25]

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Dynastic Marriages and Political Strategy of the Cholas in the Kaveri Delta Region

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The Chola dynasty, which rose to prominence in the Kaveri delta region from the 9th century CE onwards, is renowned for its expansive political power, military conquests, and remarkable contributions to art, architecture, and administration. Beyond warfare and territorial expansion, one of the subtle yet crucial instruments of Chola statecraft was matrimonial alliances. Dynastic marriages served as familial unions and deliberate political strategies, forging links with neighbouring powers, consolidating authority within the delta, and legitimizing the Chola rule. By allying with influential lineages of the Cheras, Pandyas, Rashtrakutas, and other regional powers, the Cholas enhanced their prestige, secured military support, and facilitated cultural and economic integration. In the complex socio-political landscape of the Kaveri delta, where temple-centered agrarian networks and local chieftains played significant roles, marriage diplomacy offered a pragmatic means of ensuring stability and projecting royal dominance. Thus, studying dynastic marriages provides a nuanced perspective on how the Cholas balanced kinship, politics, and regional identity in sustaining their empire.

The Cholas expanded their empire through military campaigns and matrimonial alliances with the ruling dynasties and local chieftains. The TACTAILS powerful states in medieval South India. They established their political power around the delta region of the holy stream of the River Kaveri by VijayalayaChola around 850 CE) He captured Tanjavur from the local power, the Muttaraiyar, a feudatory of the Pallavas. During the establishment of Chola power at Tanjavur, the contemporary dynasty of the Cholas to the west was initially the Rashtrakutas and later their successor, the Chalukyas of Kalyani. Between 850 and 1200 CE, they expanded eastward amidst the hostilities in the west of their kingdom. They received support from the Ganges of Kalinga and the eastern Chalukyas of Vengi, which drew closer and closer to the Cholas by matrimonial alliances up until 1070 CE.) The Cholas advanced in the eastern world up to the Ganges, led an expedition to the Srivijayaempire, and sent repeated embassies to China. The Cholas used warfare and matrimonial alliances to expand their empire and establish stability They maintained their strong hold on the Kaveri basin for about 350 years, from 850 to 1200 CE The Tiruvalankadu copper plate of RajendraChola I mentioned that VijayalayaChola captured the Tanchapuri (i.e., Tanjavur) and established a temple of Nisumbhasüdinī. The accession date of Vijayalaya is

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not clearly known to us. UttamaChola, son of Gandaraditya, refers to a grant made in the 22 regnal year of VijayalayaChola, based on which it can be assumed that Vijayalaya came to the throne in 850 CE or sometime after 850 CE. We do not have much information about the marriage alliances of Vijayalaya with other ruling powers of that time. He established the Chola power when the Pallavas and Pandyas were busy with their own affairs.

After Vijayalaya, his son Aditya I stepped into the Chola throne around c.871-907 CE. It can be assumed from the inscription of his twenty-third year that he married a Pallava princess." The Tirumalavadai record speaks about the marriage relationship between Ilangõnpichchiar, daughter of Vallavarayar, the senior queen of Aditya I. The consequence of this marriage later turned into a hostile situation between the Cholas and the Rashtrakutas)ation. It is said tha

It is necessary to mention that from the inscription of Aditya-l, that he was married to a Pallava prince named VayiriAkkaṇ, alias Tribhuvanamadeviyar, donor of a 20 kalanju of gold for a perpetual lamp in the temple of Tiruchurruttarai, is said to have been the daughter of KadupattigalTamaramettiyar, who also made a similar gift to the temple at Tiruppaḷanam. The donor's name indicates that she has a connection with the Pallava family. Besides this, Aditya I also had a mistress (bhögiyan) named NangaiSattaperumanar, who endowed 30 kälanju of each to the temples at Tiruppundurutti and Tillaisthanam for burning a perpetual lamp. It indicates that the mistress of Aditya I acquired some honorable place in the Chola period 1. Tiruvalangadu copper plates refer that Aditya I overthrew the strong Pallava ruler Aparajita in the battle of Takkõlam." Another contemporary dynasty of that time, the Ganges, accepted the suzerainty of Aditya I and entered into a friendly relationship for a long time in history. Aditya I also conquered the Kangu country, possibly from the Pandya king, ParantakaViranarayana (860-905 CE). It is important to note that this battle led to a friendly relationship between the Chola and Chera dynasties, leading to a marriage alliance." Aditya I gave his son Parantaka in marriage to the daughter of Sthanuravi, the Chera king."

After Aditya I, his son Parantaka I ascended to the Chola throne. He ruled for forty-eight years." During the early days of his reign, he successfully resisted the attempts of Rashtrakuta ruler Krisna II, who wanted to make his grandson Kannaradēva king on the Chola throne. He was the offspring of Aditya I and Ilangopicci, the daughter of Rashtrakuta king Krishna II. Thus, it can be said that Krisna II might have intervened by using his grandson's claim on the Chola throne, along with other reasons, which led to a battle with an unfavorable result for Krishna II." It can be said that the marriage alliance that strengthened the empire to establish its power created an unfavorable political situation between the Cholas and Rashtrakutas. Parantaka I defeated the Pandyas during his reign and extended his empire up to Kanyakumari He also led an expedition to Ceylon, but the campaign was unsuccessful. He also defeated the Banas. Hastimalla acknowledged his suzerainty. However, the Rashtrakutas have always caused trouble for the Cholas.

Towards the end of Parantaka's reign, the political situation between the Cholas and Rashtrakutas had worsened. Parantaka has faced trouble in defending his empire. During this time, his great ally Prithvipati II was no more, and the next Ganga ruler Bhütunga II entered into a marriage alliance with a Rashtrakuta prince Rëveeka (the sister of Krishna III). This marriage alliance brought the dynasties closer together." The Ganga-Chola friendship had gone down, and the Rashtrakuta and Ganga dynasties were on friendly terms. This created trouble in the polity of the Kaveri delta region. As the Cholas constantly suffered from the Rashtrakuta attack, Parantaka sent his elder son Rajaditya and another son Arinjeya to support him in resisting them from the North-Western frontier of Chola territory. A Kerala general, Vellanakumaran, also assisted them. In the decisive battle at Takkõlam with the Rashtrakutas, the Chola prince Rajaditya was killed by the Rashtrakuta ally Bhütunga II. One of the reasons behind this enmity between the Rashtrakuta and Cholas was probably the marriage relationship between Rashtrakuta prince Govinda IV and Vīramadēvi, a daughter of Chola king Parantaka. Govinda IV played Amoghvarsha II to fulfill his ambition, but the

feudatories of the Rashtrakuta Empire later banished him. BadeggaAmoghavarsha II took refuge in the Chola Empire.")

From 907 to 948 CE, the matrimonial alliance between the Cholas and Rashtrakutas created problems in the political scenario of the Kaveri delta region; however, during this time period, the marriage alliance between the Chera and Chola established friendly relations, and that worked behind the Chola power to establish a strong hold in the Kaveri delta region. According to K.A. NilakantaSastri, Parantaka had many wives, eleven of whom can betraced in his inscriptions. It is evident from the inscription that he entered into a marriage alliance with the Chèra country. One of the queens of Parantaka from Chera origin was Kökkila, who appeared in the inscription from Lalgudi, which refers to a gift to the temple of lavara-Bhatara by SankaranKunṭaappajan of Püttur in Mala-Nadu on behalf of Kökkilandigal, the daughter of Cheramanar. She has been identified as the mother of Rajaditya (the eldest son of Parantaka I)." The Anabil plates of SundaraChola mentioned that Parantaka I married the daughter of the Chëra king Paluvēṭṭaraiyar. With this union, the offspring was Arinjaya." Parantaka I has five children, the eldest one was Rajaditya, Gandaraditya, Arińjyya, and two daughters, Viramadevi and Anupama,

Relation with the Chera

The Cholas maintained a friendly relationship with the Chera country. The friendly terms between the two royal families were probably established during the time of Aditya I. The background behind this was the policy of becoming a superpower, thus, the Chola ruler took the policy of matrimonial alliance to strengthen their power. However, the friendly political relations obtained between the two kingdoms apparently furnished the chances to influx a large number of people from Kerala country to seek service under the king and his sons."

The earliest record refers to the Chēra, Chola cordiality, which we find in an undated inscription of the Tillaisthanam temple. It records a gift by KadambaMadevi, whose husband is Vikki Annan. K.A. NilakantaSastri identified the Chola counterpart of the Chëra king Sthanuravi of that period as Aditya Chola 1. Another inscription that speaks about CaturananaPandita, who has been identified as VellanKumaran. According to K.A. NilakantaSastri, VellanKumaran, who has been identified as the Kerala general of Rajaditya, was only the leading immigrant, figuring as a donor of small charitable gifts in the inscriptions of that period. Several of their names suggest that, like VellanKumaran, they Shailed from families who held various estates under the Cheras of Makotai." However, this Malayaḷi, donors in Chola temples offer more than a large influx of Malayalis into the Chola country in search of service under the kings and their sons. They show that the Chëra king had not given his daughter in marriage to the Chola king, but also sent a selected band of princelings from the families of his feudatories, who were Naduval in different districts of Kerala, to serve as companions for his grandson Rajaditya, who became the Chola crown prince. The reason behind this was not only the search for employment under the Chola king and his son, but also that they were not adventurers who sought a place in the Chola military organization. However, as members of the aristocratic ruling families of Kerala, they were probably fulfilling their hereditary feudatories' responsibilities towards their own sovereign. This Chëra king nominated them as the companions of his own grandson. So that they may serve him in war and peace. Therefore, it is clear that the matrimonial alliances between the Chola and Chera played a significant role in their diplomatic policy. It allowed the Cholas of Tanjavur to establish a friendly relationship with the Cheras and supported them on the battlefield. This marriage alliance was very important for increasing and strengthening the political power of the Cholas in the Kaveri delta region.

The Cholas' Relation with the Kodumbalur Chiefs

The kings of the Chola dynasty entered into matrimonial alliances not only with their contemporary dynasties but also with their feudatories, who helped the

Cholas during emergencies. The Müvarköyil inscription shows that Samarabhima of Kodumbalur married a Chola prince named Anupama. They had a son known as BhütiVikramakësari. Many scholars described him as the husband of Anupama, the daughter of Parantaka I. Two important events are associated with this chief. One is a gory battle against the Pallavas on the bank of the river Kaveri, and another one is the victory over Vira Pandya. Nevertheless,the two events took place seventy years apart. Here comes the identification problem of the Kodumbalur chief, BhütiVikramakësari. We find a solution to this in an article of Mythic Society by K.V. SubramanyaAiyar and K.S. Vaidyanathan." The article refers to another Vira Pandya, who was much Anterior to his namesake, the enemy of Aditya II." This information, combined with the identification of BhūtiVikramakësari's wives. Karrali and Varaguna, in an inscription attributed to Aditya 1. BhūtiMadevadigal, identified as the sister of BhūtiVikramakësari, mentioned as queen of Kannaradeva, son of Aditya I." Daughter of BhütiVikramakesar, NangaiBhūti Aditya Pidari (Pidari) was the queen of Chola prince ArikulaKesari (Arinjaya), son of Parantaka 1. VaragunaPerumainar, the sister of the Chola king SundaraChola, is also known as the wife of Kodumbalur chief ParantakanIlangovellor.

So, it is evident from the sources that the matrimonial alliance between the Cholas and their feudatory, Kodumbalur family, undoubtedly gave the Cholas an important position in the political scenario of the Kaveri delta region. It has been presumed that the Samarabhirama should have actively helped his kinsman Vijayalaya in his conquests. Vijayalaya probably enlisted the help of Kodumbalur chieftains in capturing Tanjavur from the Muttariyar. Interestingly, they ruled in parts of Tiruchirappalli and Pudukkottai districts, which are situated within the CholaMandalam proper, perhaps Parantaka I could bank upon their support in times of crisis." ButiVikramakësari aided Aditya 1 and Parantaka I in their battle against the Pallavas and Pandyas, as they were engaged through the matrimonial alliances and shared friendly relations with the Cholas

After the death of ParantakaChola, no significant events took place in the history of the Chola Empire. The Cholas were beset with various internal problems and confusion during this period. The immediate successor of Parantaka I was his son Gandaraditya. He ruled for a very short time. Gandaraditya died around 957 CE." He left behind his wife, SembianMadevi, and his only son, UttamaChola. After GandaradityaArinjeya ruled for a very short time (956-957 CE), he was married to VimanaKundavaiyar and KothaiPirattiyar. It has been assumed that VimanaKundavaiyar was a daughter of ChalukyaVima II, of Vengi. Another queen of Arinjaya was Kalyani. She is the only queen of Arinjaya mentioned in the Anbil plates; she is a Vaidumbha princess. The Vaidumbha prince who gave his daughter in marriage to Arinjaya must be identified with Sandaiyan, defeated by Parantaka I." Therefore, this marriage is an alliance influenced by contemporary politics in the Kaveri delta region.

After Arinjaya, his son SundaraCholaParantaka II succeeded him to the throne (957-973 CE).

Sundarachola, with the help of his son Aditya II, tried to restore the Chola supremacy over the Pandyas." He also led an expedition to Ceylon." Vanavanmadevi was the queen of Sundarachola from the line of Malaiyalamas. She performed sati on the death of his husband, SundaraChola." They both had two sons, Aditya II and Arunmolivarman, later known as Rājarāja I, and one daughter, Kundavaiyar. She perhaps installed the Sundarachola and VanavanMadeviyar image in the Rajarajeswara temple, Tanjavur. Following SundaraChola's death, UttamaChola, the son of Gandaraditya and SembianMahadevi, ascended the Chola throne in 973 CE. It is perhaps because UttamaChola conspired to murder the already-nominated Yuvaraja Aditya

Inscriptional evidence reveals that UttamaChola had many wives. Among them, five are mentioned together in one inscription. The highest position among them was held by Orattanam (Urattayan) Sorabbaiyar, a

Kannada name (?), who is called Agramahadeviyar and Muttanambirattiyar. She also bears the title TribhuvanaMahadeviyar." One of his queens, SiddhavadavanSuttiyar, was a prince of the Miladu family who made a gift of land to the temple at Tiruvaisalur (Tanjavur district), in a record of Rajaraja's III, She has been surmised to be a daughter or sister of Raman Siddhavadavan alias Vikramasola-Miladudaiyar,who had married a Pandya princess. The Miladu or Maladu was an ancient dynasty of minor rulers exercising authority over year portions of the present South Arcot district. It is evident from the information that they were related to the Cholas' family both by ties of allegiance and marriage. Almost all the queen of the UttamaChola made endowments in a village which bore the name of their mother-in-law, SembianMadevi."

(The The dynastic marriages of the Cholas in the Kaveri delta region were not merely social arrangements. However, they carefully devised political strategies that strengthened their authority, legitimized their rule, and expanded their sphere of influence. By forging matrimonial alliances with powerful regional and neighbouring dynasties, the Cholas secured diplomatic ties, ensured loyalty among feudatories, and integrated diverse communities into their polity. These alliances also facilitated stability within the delta, which served as the core of Chola power, and enabled them to project their influence beyond the region. Thus, dynastic marriages functioned as vital instruments of statecraft, reinforcing the Cholas' political supremacy while reflecting the interplay of kinship and power in early medieval South India.

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Banas in Dharmapuri District

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The Banas were feudatories to Pallavas in Tamil Nadu. They were said descendants of Mahapali. They were also known as Vanas. The origin of Banas was as controversial as that of Gangas, Kattai and other Northern boarding tribes of ancient Tamizhagam. Based on the opinions prevailed now two group of views may be derived. The first group claim that they were ancient tribes hebetated in northern borders of then Sangam age Tamizhagam. The second group claims that there was no relationship between the Sangam Age Banas and the Banas royal family known from 3rd cen. CE. According to this view the Banas were only the singing, composing, dancing professional group during Sangam Age.[1] The first group views that the Sangam literature gave two set of people in the nama Banar with no blood relation between them. Among one set of Banas were the singing, dancing and composing group, and taking them as their profession; they never been a warrior group. They were identified in different names such as Banar, Porunar, Kuthar Viraliyar, Vaiyiriar, Kodiyr, etc.[1] Since their main profession was singing and composing songs praising the kings and chieftains and their earning was sourced by the donation and endowments the royal families; hence their poverty was familiar as identified by Bakthavatchala Bharathi.[1] This Banas were travelers, continuously moving place to place as compelled by their profession; they do not own a country or territory exclusive. The other set of Banas were royals and ruling clans and warriors probably settled in the Northern boarding areas of ancient Tamizhagam; probably south banks of Krishna River.

Sangam literature gave reference to Bana's royal, warrior status and owning a distinct country.[1] Banar's nadu was located in northern side of Tamizhagam.[1] One Katti came forward to fight with a Banan, a wrestler in Tiththan's Uraiyur, Chola country. But hearing the roaring sound produced by the Tiththan and Banan he turned back without a fight.[1] A Porunan from Arya Nadu (might refer the land located above Northern region of ancient Tamizhagam) and Kanaiyan from Kudtai nadu together fought with a Bana and were go down to the Bana.[1] A festival celebrated in Bana country.[1] Vanar Sirukudi was mentioned in some poems.[1] One king in Pandiya line won the Chola Country and gave it to a Bana.[1] According to D.Parthiban these Banas were royals or small tribal chiefs, warriors and members of Bana Kudi (family) established initially northern boarding areas of ancient Tamizhagam, and were different from the other Banas, analogous by name, the singers, composers and dancers by profession. The Sangam Literarture which illustrated there was no others Kudi's than Tudiyan, Banan, Paraiyan, Kadamban, was only this Bana; not the Bana's of royal, warrior line. The earlier were free wanderers and lived by the support of the royals and chiefs. The later was royals and intrude into other country whenever opportunity provided to them, or invade and capture new territories to establish their sway.[1]

After Adiyaman Neduman Anji of Thagadoor Nadu defeated by the Chera Perumceral Irumporai, the northern bordering tribes and state-men slowly and steadily spread in to Thagadoor Nadu; one such group was the royal, warrior tribes Banas. The expansion spree of Sadavaganas in southern side induce these migration more serious and than ever.[1] This migration was confirmed by describing as 'the Bana family was the one of the dynastic float in all direction in South India. This flow of Bana on track so early that it was difficult to determine their original habitant'.[1] The Inscriptions of Banas appears from different regions point to the different territories over which Banas apprehended power at different times. Obviously the centres of their sway shifted from one place to another. Most authors

endorse that it was awfully uncertain that these Banas were belonged to a single line.[1]

Priestly most authors conclude that the Banas came in light in 3rd century CE and states that previously they served as chieftains of Sathavaganas of Andhra Country. At the time of Sadavahanas they were the chief of Kolar i.e., Kuvalalapuram.[1] After the fall of Sadavakanas they served as chieftains under the Kadambars in 4th Cen. CE. Thereafter whenever their territory was invaded by big powers they consent their overhead and continue to survive either as chieftains or political officials. Often utilizing the opportunity they marched into other territories enforces their sway. Thus different several branches of their family line were opened up. Mostly their sway came up as feudatory powers. We may assume that supporting in the wars of big powers, they received some territory from the big powers as a gift for their war contribution; they ruled that territories accepting the big powers suzerainty. In this way they served under Western Gangas, Chalukyas, Pallavas of Kanchi, Rastrakudas, Cholas, Pandiyas and Vijayanaga - Naiyak Empires and sustained up to 17th century. Thereafter they disappear from the history.[1]

From their initial location, Kolar they spread in Karnul districts in present Andhra Pradesh. At this time the Banar country was called Perumbanappadi also known as Vadugavali 12000. This Perumbanappadi was located west of Vadugavali. The Vadugavali was a highway or trade-route leading towards north from Tamil Nadu. Banappadi was located west of this Vadugavali. It was believed that this trade-route was leading from Kanchipuram to Nellur.[1] The Perumbanappadi was spread in Western Chittur District, North-western North Arcot District (present day, Velur, Thiruvannamalai, districts). The present Thiruvallam was Vanapuram the capital of Banas.[1]

The Bana kings were mentioned in the inscriptions of Ganga King, Sri Puruan, Chalukya king Kirthivaman, Renadu Chola king Vidyathithan. The Gudimallam inscription of Pandya king Nandhi Varman II, mentioned a name of a Bana king. If go with these references it was obvious that the Banas were belonged to different branches. Amongst these, the Bana feudatory of Nandivarma Pallavan was direct descendents of Banas.[1]

Banas in Dharmapuri District

The Banas loyalty to Kanchi - Pallavas was significant. When Nolambas and Gangas fought against Pallavas, Banas showed strong alliance with the Pallavas.[1] Nandivarma Pallavamallan Gangan, the Nandivarman II won in the battle with Sri Purusan and captures precious jewel (necklace) which contained the precious gem called “Ukrothayam”. At that time, the lands that captured from Gangas were given to Jaya Nanthivarman, chief of Banar. It was happened around CE 760.[1]

Around this time, one Sivakanda varman, a Pallava Chief from another Pallava branch, was mentioned in the Rayakotta copperplate. In which one Mahapali Vanathirayan was mentioned as his political chief. According to C.Mahalingam, Nandhi Varman II gave the lands captured from the Gangas to the other branch of Pallava chiefs. The Mavali Vanarayan mentioned in Rayakotta copperplate was the same person, the Jeyanthi Varman mentioned by K.A. Nilakandasatri. This Vanar should be chieftain to Pallava Sivakandavarman. Later, Nolamba Mahendran claims the title “Vanar Kula thuvamsan”. Hence it was obvious that, the Vanars and Nulambas became enemies.[1]

Few Banas inscription were available in Dharmapuri district. In most of them they were mentioned as chieftains of Pallavas and Gangas. Two Pappambadi or Irulappatti, in Harur taluk inscriptions were the oldest inscription in Dharmapuri district. They belong to 5th century. Names of Bana Chiefs were mentioned in both the inscriptions. In one of them the name of ‘Vanabaruma Araisar’ was mentioned.[1] Another inscription was belongs rein of Pallava king Vinnavarman. In his 4th regnal, a Bana king was died in the war between the Ganga and Bana.[1] Thus it was obvious the Bsnas kings mentioned in these inscriptions were chieftains of Pallavas.

A Skrimish was erupted between Anjinar sons (Makkal) and Vanavaraisar sons (Makkal) was in the

14th regnal year inscriptions of Pallava king Mahendra I.[1] One Kandavanathirayar was mentioned as a ruler of Puramalainadu was mentioned in the 3rd regnal year inscription of Sivamaran I, the Ganga king. During the same time another Vanaparumar came fromd another area to attacked Kandavanathirayar in Kudalur.[1] With this it was certain that, the Banas were belongs to different branches. In Oddampatti, Uthangarai taluk, Krishnagiri which records 22nd regnal year of Sivamaran II, the Ganganadu (different from Gangavadi) was ruled by a chieftain Mavalaivarayan, at this time the Rastrakuta king Indran invade in to Gangapadi.[1] The 10th regnal year inscription of Sri Purusan was found in Palavadi mentions the ruler of Ganganadu as Perumbana Mutharaisar.[1] Sri Pususas 21st regnal year inscription was found in Indur, it mentions the rule of Mavalaivanarayar in Ganga nadu.[1] It shows that in short period of 11 year two successive Bana kings ruled Ganga nadu one after one.[1] Based on the word Matharasar annexed with Perumbanar found in the inscription, it was claimed that, the Mutharaiyar were belong to the Bana family.[1] But this assumption should be reassessed.[1] During the 10th regnal year Kattanaiparumar which recorded in Ramakrishnampathi, Uthangarai taluk, Kirshnagiri district inscription the rule of Perumbanathi Ariyar in Ganganadu was mentioned.[1] The Harur taluk, Kailavaram inscription which records 37th regnal year of Kattanaiparumar mention Puramalainadu was ruled by one Kandavanathi ariyar.[1]

Kandavanathiraiyar

About six inscriptions were available in Thagadoor region (present Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri districts); they belong to Sivamaran I and Kattanaiparumar. During the Pallava Esvaravarman's 2nd regnal year one Kandavanathiraiyar fought with Western Ganga forces were recorded in Kukkudappatti inscriptions. At that time heroes from Kandavanathiraiyar force, Sathan son of Navannathiran[1] and Kannamaran son of Paramathayar were died.[1] The identification of this Esvaravarman was discussed in Pallava age. His age was assessed as CE 675.

Further Sivamaram, Ganga king's 3rd and 47th regnal year inscriptions mentions Kandavanathiraiyar as a chieftain ruled Puramalai nadu, under Gangas. This age was CE 717. This Kandavanathiraiyar ruled Puramalainadu up to Kattanaiparumars 37th regnal year. Thus, it was obvious the he was in reign for more than sixty years.

Arimirai Parumar

During 9th century CE, in 3rd regnal year Arimirai Parumar, a Vanar king found in Vellalapatti of Uthangarai taluk in Krishnagiri district, was ruled a huge area including the Ganganadu, Puramalainadu, Kovurnadu, Koyinurnadu, Mannananadu, Nayanurnadu and Velkalinadu.[1] Almost during this same time, the Nolambas attacked Banas and captured the territories of Banas in Thagadoor region. Nolamba Mahendran claim the title 'Vananar Kula Athangan' should be remembered.[1] During the Arimirai parumar reign, one Nolambam cunningly gained the relationship of Arimirai parumar and killed him. At that time his queen was pregnant. One loyal servant of Arimirai parumar known Sakkara Kuttiyar, protected the queen and waited till delivery of the queen and later he gathered warriors and marched on Nolamban defeated him gained Dharmapuri region back. In this illustrious act a hero named Naganthai Siru Kuttiyar allied Sakkara kuttiyar died in the battle and a hero-stone was erected in his memory. All these were mentioned in the inscription collected near Dharmapuri was in exhibition at Site Museum Dharmapuri.[1]

During 8-9th century CE one Mavalivanarayan ruled independently. The hero-stone inscription found in Kurumpatti of Harur taluk mentioned the rule of Mavalivarayan did not record any overlords' name. It gave an assumption of his independency.[1] We have already discussed about one Mavalivarayan mentioned in Royakottai copperplate of Pallava Sivakandavarman. About the same time one Kannada inscription found in Rayakotta record the 4th regnal year of Mavalivanarayan. He was considered a feudatory of Ganga.

The inscription found in Sulthanippadi near Narippalli in Harur taluk in which the kings and his regnal year portions were ruined. Paleographically it was assigned to 6th century CE. The readable portion of the inscription mentions the name Bana Arasar as Vanavakovaraisar.[1] It established the Vanar rule there. He might rule there under the Gangas as their feudatories.

The Makkanur, Dharamapuri inscription record the 4th regnal year of Mahendravarma Pallavan I, corresponding to his cyclic year CE 604, mentions the name Perumbana athiraraisar. It records the death of Achuthaparanai a servant of Sinhaparumar athiaraisar.[1]

The Alamelupuram, in Harur taluk inscription the opening line was ruined, mentioned the name Perumbanathi ariyar and dead of Veliya Nakkan a servant of Perumbanathi ariyar. It establishes the Bana rule there. Paleographically it was assigned to 8th cen. CE.[1]

When Nolambas rule was strong in Thagadoor, the Vanar ruled under them. Two of Nolamba king hero-stone inscription found in Sellampatti, record Thagadoor was ruled by Mavalivanarayar.[1]

The feudatory rule of Vanarayars was extended in Cholas reign also. At that time they served as village or Ur heads. It will be discussed in the Chola section of this chapter.

All these records show that Bana chiefs ruled different parts of Thagadoor region at different times throughout the reigns of Pallavas and Gangas, acknowledging their suzerainty. When opportunity came they free themselves from their overlords. One such incidence was revealed in Kurumpatti, Harur taluk.

Table 4-2: Inscriptions of Banas

S. No	Name of The King	Place	Issuer	Age	Reference
1	Vinnaparumar / 4th regnal year	Irulappatti/ Pappampadi	Ganga /Bana	5thCen. CE	Dpi-1/p.56/ no.1973/61
2	Vinnaparumar / ---	Irulappatti/ Pappampadi	Ganga /Bana	5thCen. CE	Dpi-1/p.57/ no.1973/62
3	Mahendravarman	Makkanur	Bana	CE 604	Pookundran 2017, p. 123.
4	Mahendravarman1 /14th regnal year	Mondukuli	Anji and vanakovar	CE 604	Dpi-I, p.65, no 1974/76.
5	Sivamaran I 3rd regnal year	Navlai	Ganga / Bana	8th Cen. CE	Dpi-1/ p.83, no. 1974 / 161.
6	Sivamaran I 47th regnal year	Kanappanur	Ganga / Bana	726 CE	Dpi-1/ p.7, no. 1973 / 47.
7	Sri Purusan 10th regnal year	Palavadi near Paupparappatti	Bana	8th Cen CE	Dpi-I, p.138, no.1973/126.
8	Sri Purusa Varuman 16th regnal year.	Muthanur	Ganga	8th Cen. CE	Dpi,p.I, p.62, no.1974/74; Poongundran 2017, p. 235.
9	Sri Purusan 21st regnal year	Indur	Ganga/ Banar	8th- 9th Cen. CE	Dpi-II, p.96, no.1973/43A
10	Kattaniparumar 37th regnal year	Kailavaram,	Kandavan athiaraiyar	8th Cen CE	Dpi-I, p.26, no.1973/5.
11	----	Palavadi	--- Paraikaiyanar vs or supported Thagadoor army	8th Cen CE	Dpi-II, p.139, no.173/127.
12	Mavalivanarayan	Kurumpatti	--	8-9th cen CE	Dpi. I/ p.20, no. 1974/66.
13	---	Sulthanippadi / Narippalli	Bana	6th cen. Ce	Dpi-I, p.19, no.1974/63.
14	---	Alamelupuram	Bana	8th cen. CE	Dpi-I, p.3, no.1974/58.
15	---	Sellampatti	Thagadoor Mavalivararayan	CE 898	Dpi-I, p.49, no.1973/14
16	Iyappadeva	Sellampatti	Thagadoor Vanavarayar	CE 900	Dpi-I, p.50, no.1973/15.

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The Nayak and Maratha Rule in Tanjore

Dr. B. Sathyanarayanan

With the arrival of the Europeans in the soil of the Tanjore the commercial rivalry and Protestant Christian Renaissance was started in Tamil Country, The European traders turned their attention to establish their trading centres and their settlements of the protection in the Tanjore Region. Tanjore seemed fertile region for the trading activities of the Europeans. The Nayak King of Tanjore invited all the European traders to avert the monopoly of any European Power. Madurai and Tanjore were under the control of the Nayaks who were the subordinates. Tanjore had quarrels with the neighbouring Kingdoms of Madurai, Pudukkottai and Tanjore, and the Nawabs of the Carnatic, When the Nayak Kingdom of Madurai was collapsed, the Nawabs of the Carnatic established their rule in Tamil Country. They frequently disputed with the Raja of Tanjore over the payement of tributes and territorial possessions. So there prevailed biiter rivalry beween them in the first half of the Twentieth Century. The aim of this paper is to reveal the political developments in Tanjore during the periods of the Nayaks and Marathas .Venkoji was the founder of the Maratha Kingdom in Tanjore in 1676.

The region in which the DanishMission worked stretched like a net from the small port-town of Tranquebar to various parts of the Thaniavur kingdom on the east coast of South India, the so-called Coromandel Coast.[1] This 20-30 km wide coastal strip with its fertile soil and crossed by wide-bedded rivers flowing into the Bay of Bengal presented favourable conditions for agriculture and enabled two harvests annually.[2]The climatic conditions on the south east coast of India, the succession of dry seasons and monsoon rain, the natural system of rivers, irrigation facilities and water tanks created the necessary foundations for a settled cultivation of land. The main crop of the region was rice; its production and processing influenced all spheres of social life. As the primary crop rice was a significant economic factor; in addition, it had important ritual functions as a component of religious symbolism in the temple and in the households. Textile production was important and its importance was, for a while,

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significantly enhanced by the increased demand from Europe in the Eighteenth Century.[3] Among other things, calico, a stiff white cotton cloth, was produced.

Along with Bengal, the Malabar region and Gujarat, the Coromandel Coast was one of the most important trade regions of India.[4] However, in most of the coastal cities, as was the case in Tranquebar, the large deep sea ships could not dock directly in the harbour but had to berth up to four miles into the sea. From there the goods were transported to the coast by Indian merchants, representatives of the *Karaiyar*caste, in coastal boats. It was only in port-towns such as Cuddalore, Porto Novo or Karaikal which lay at the estuaries of large rivers that ships could dock directly in the harbour.[5] The main export of the kingdom ofThanjavur was rice, which was transported from Thanjavur to Ceylon, the Malabar Coast and Bengal, among other places. Besides this, the port of Nagapattinam was a base for trade with South East Asia.

At the beginning of the Eighteenth Century the kingdom of Thanjavur is estimated to have had about one million inhabitants.[6] Hindus constituted over 90 per cent of the population, more than 5 per cent were Muslims. Catholics made up perhaps 2 per cent of the population. In contrast to other Tamil regions there was a relatively higher representation of Brahmins on account of the historical migration from North India into the heartland of the Chola dynasty (approx. 6-7 per cent). Besides them, the Vanniyars(agricultural workers) with roughly 30 per cent and the Vellalar(farmers) with 17-18 per cent were the largest caste groups. In addition, there were roughly 15 per cent Paraiyars.[7]

Historically speaking, the territory of the Hindu kingdom of Thanjavur encompassed the heartland of the earlier Chola Empire. After the downfall of this empire, which had, at one time, extended to Ceylon and South East Asia, the kingdom of Vijaynagar became its successor in 1336. The rulers ofVijaynagar sent out several military leaders to conquer South India. Following upon such conquests these leaders were installed as Nayakto administer the newly won territories. They were responsible for maintaining law and order as well as for collecting taxes. In addition, they were obliged to maintain an army to support the incumbent ruler ofVijayanagar in his wars, especially against the Muslim rulers in the north. The domains of the Nayakcontained smaller administrative units, which were managed by so-called Poligars, local military chiefs. On the one hand, there were often conflicts between the Poligarsand the Nayakregarding the ownership ofland and the question of power. On the other hand, the Poligarsmaintained troops, which they had to place at the disposal of the Nayakwhenever required.[8]

The downfall of the Vijayanagar Empire began after its defeat in the battle of Talikota in 1565.[9]The growing weakness of the central power in Vijayanagar was paralleled by the consolidation of power of the Nayakas local regents at the periphery of the empire who were able to establish their sovereign dominions in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.[10] Thus, the dynasty of the Nayakof Thanjavur began with SevappaNayak in 1532 (ruled 1532-80) and reached its zenith with RaghunathaNayak(1600-1634). Through innumerable wars against his neighbours, especially against the Muslim states of North India and the Nayakof Madurai, but also against the Portuguese colonial rulers, RaghunathaNayak tried invain to salvage the remains of the collapsing empire and to establish the supremacy of Thanjavur over the other Nayak.[11]The rule of the Nayakin Thanjavur came to an end in the second half of the Seventeenth Century. VijayaraghavaNayak(1634-73), son of RaghunathaNayak, was the last ruler of the NayakDynasty. On the whole, this period shaped the country both economically and culturally since most of these Hindu (Vaishnava) rulers had cultural, literary and scientific interests and were comparatively tolerant and open in religious matters. Music, architecture, sculpture and painting flourished.

The rule of the Nayakin Thanjavur ended as a result of VijayraghavaNayak's military conflicts with ChokkanathaNayak(1659-82) of Madurai and a simultaneous attack on Thanjavur in 1674 by Muslim armies from North India. The country was conquered by Madurai and placed under the administrative rule of a referee. He was replaced in 1674 with a descendant of the Nayakof Thanjavur with the help of the Marathas under their leader EkojiBhonsle (around 1630-84), who, after initial conquests in South India, began to display an interest in developments there. A year later, Ekoji himself became the ruler of Thanjavur and established the Maratha dynasty of the Raja of Thanjavur. After a victory in the battle of Valigandpura on 16 November 1677 Ekoji finally broke free of his brother Shivaji(1630-80) and had himself crowned as the first Raja of Thanjavur in 1678.[12]As a result of administrative reforms the country was divided into initially six and later seven districts: the central district Thanjavur and the six districts Mayavaram, Kumbakonam, Tiruvadi, Vallam, Mannarkudi, Pattukottai.

The subsequent history of the kingdom of Thanjavur is embedded in far-reaching changes in the political map of South India after the decline of the Mughal Empire. Several independent or semi-independent kingdoms consolidated their power. The Mughal Empire, established in 1526, lost its position as the dominating empire after the death of the last emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707). The influence of the once powerful central force diminished and was replaced by the consolidation of peripheral provincial administrations, limiting, in effect, the power of the Mughals in the Eighteenth Century to Delhi. Local representatives of the Mughals sometimes safeguarded their factual independence by recognizing the nominal authority of the Delhi Emperors. In the south of the sub-continent the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Nawab of Arcot with the Carnatic kingdom and the rulers of Mysore and Travancore, among others, created their own spheres of influence which, at the beginning of the Eighteenth Century, were under the administrative control of Mughal Governors. In the course of the Eighteenth Century these unstable constellations of power faltered and, with the weakening of the imperial centre, the shifting equations of power between the provinces were put to the test. Thanjavur was also affected by this.

After Ekoji's death his brother Shahji- II (1684-1712) ruled the kingdom. Nominally, these Maratha rulers, like the Nayakof Thanjavur since 1658, were dependent on the Mughal rulers in Delhi[13] and had to make annual payments of tribute to their representatives.The wars against Madurai, that had already begun under the *nayak*, continued. With support from the ruler of Pudukkotai Madurai went to war againstThanjavur and against the Setupathiof Ramnad in 1700. AlthoughThanjavur suffered a military defeat the Raja succeeded in signing a treaty of peace. As a result of the war the Setupathibecame independent in 1702 and in return for the support he handed over Arantangi Fort and its surrounding territories to Thanjavur. In 1709 Thanjavur supported Madurai against the Setupathisuffered a military defeat and had to return theterritories to him.[14] This war took place during a period of famine in the Setupathi'sregion, which lasted till about 1713. During this time many starving people fled to Thanjavur and Madurai.

In 1712 Serfoji I (1712-1728) took over the reins of government. In alliance with Madurai he tried to gain territories in the framework of the wars of succession in Ramnad from 1724 onwards. In the course of these conflicts, which continued till 1729, the Setupathiof Ramnad lost a large amount of territory. All the territory north of Pambar fell to Thanjavur. Two-fifths of the remaining territory went to the. hitherto independent state of the Raja of Sivaganga.[15] By 1720 Thanjavur had also recaptured Arantangi that had been occupied in the interim period by Pudukkotai.

At the beginning of his rule Tuljaji-I (1728-36) was successful in neutralizing the pressure applied

by the Nizam of Hyderabad at the northern boundaries of his kingdom. He was thus free to support the declining kingdom of Madurai. His attempt in 1733 to defeat the Setupathiof Ramnad was unsuccessful. A subsequent joint attack byThanjavur and Madurai against Pudukkotai was repulsed with help from Ramnad. The victors were then able to convince the Nawab of Arcot and Madurai to attack Thanjavur. Tuljaji- I was only able to make a peace with the promise of considerable funds. After wars of succession and civil wars the kingdom of Madurai became a part of the kingdom of the Nawab of Arcot/Carnatic in 1736.[16] The Nawab was a vassal of the Nizam of Hyderabad and a representative of the Mughals. With his accession to the throne the rule of the Nayakin Madurai came to an end.[17]

After the death of Tuljaji-I in 1736 there was a three-year interregnum in Thanjavur, in the course of which the country sank into chaos and battles were fought between pretenders to the throne. During this time the Nawab ofArcot occupied the country and plundered it. In 1739 the new Raja of Thanjavur, Pratap Singh (1739-63), had to hand over the port-town of Karaikal to the French in return for their help. In 1740 the Marathas descended on South India and thus saved Thanjavur from an attack by the Nawab of Arcot on account of unpaid tributes. After the Marathas left the Nawab himself appeared at the head of a large army and laid siege to Thanjavur. With a payment of 7,00,000 rupees Pratap Singh was able to make the Nawab lift the siege. In the 1740s the battles for the former territories of the Madurai Nayaks influenced the political situation in Thanjavur. In 1740-1741the Nawab of Arcot suffered several defeats and his state faced disintegration because of the intrusion of the Marathas in the battles for Madurai. Using differences among the Marathas as well as among the pretenders to the title of Nawab the Nizam of Hyderabad,AsafJah, intervened and, in 1743, restored the kingdom of Arcot to its earlier extent. From the second half of the Eighteenth Century the developments in Thanjavur were marked by the increasing rivalry between the British, the French and the Muslim elites of South India.

Some territorial possessions of the King of Tanjore irked the neighbouring Rulers of Pudukkottai, Ramnad and the Nawabs of the Carnatic . The small kingdom of Tanjore had many jealous neighbours who lost no opportunity for aggression. The King of Tanjore had thus a tough task waiting him. There were plenty of small wars in the history of the Tanjore Marathas . The external struggle for land and power went on merrily in the Eighteenth Century. Venkoji also called Ekoji was the first son of Shahji and , the founder of the Maratha Kingdom held his own against his neighbours and passed on his kingdom intact to his successors.

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Madurai Nayaks with Special Reference to Visvanatha Nayak – A Study

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Introduction

Archaeological evidence indicates that Madurai was an important South Indian City long before Vijayanagara was built.[1] Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529 A.D.) the Tuluva dynasty of greatest ruler of Vijayanagar Empire was distinguished as a marker of an era of multi sided personality. Krishnadeva Raya (1509-1529 A.D.), for easy and better administration, he had divided his empire into more than 200 Nayakdom.

In 1529, war broke out between the Chandra sekhara Pandya and Chola King Vira Sekhara. In the war Chandra sekhara Pandya was defeated, Consequently the latter appealed to the Raya for justice and for help in getting back his kingdom from the usurper. It is said that Krishnadevaraya deputed the General Nagama Nayak[1] to contain Chola King Vira Sekhara and re-install Chandra Sekhara Pandya as the King. Nagama Nayak defeated the Chola King as per the instruction of the Krishnadevaraya. A careful study of the Chronicles reveals the fact that as the Pandya King was unfit to rule the Pandya Kingdom, Nagama Nayak assumed himself as the King of Pandya Kingdom at Madurai. The Tanjāvūri Àndhra Răjula Charitra, which details the circumstances, explains Nāgama's position better. [1]

Inscription

An inscription at the ***Alagar Kovil temple*** in Madurai records the construction of the temple's entrance mantapam by Viswanatha Nayaka between 1559-1563 CE. This inscription, along with others in the temple, provides valuable insights into the temple's history, architecture, and the role of the Nayak rulers in its development. The inscription mentioning Visvanatha Nayak is located on the north wall of the ***entrance mantapam, of Alagar Kovil***. It states that Visvanatha Nayaka built the mantapam, which is part of the temple. The inscription dates the construction to the period between 1559 and 1563 CE. This inscription, along

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with others at the temple, provides a historical records of the temple's construction and subsequent patronage by the Nayak rulers. The inscriptions are written in ***Tamil and Sanskrit using Grantha and Tamil scri***pts.[1] Other inscriptions at the temple records donated by Krishnappa Nayak (1563-1572 CE) and renovations by Muthu Krishnappa Nayak (1572 – 1602 CE) , Tirumala Nayak's patronage is also documented in an inscription dating from 1623 – 1659 CE. (Nayak period inscription found – The Hindu.)

Fernao Nuniz was a Porguguese traveler chronicler and horse trader who spent three years in Vijayanagara capital of the Vijayanagara Empire in the time period 1535 – 1537 CE. His writings have brought to light many interesting details about Vijayanagara at that time. He pointed out that at ***Bisnaga*** (Vijayanagar), there were 200 captains called ***Amaranayakas***. Tamil country was divided into three Nayakships of ***Madurai, Senji and Tanjavur*** instead of Rajyas. [1]

Visvanatha Nayak

The ***Kūniyür Plates of Venkaṭa II*** seem to suggest that Viśvanātha's birth is not definitely known. Since the chronicles say that Viśvanātha was about sixteen when he was introduced to ***Krishṇadēva Rāy***a, he might have been born about 1495. ***The Dalavay Agraharam Plates of Venkata*** I,[1] mention that Viswanatha Nayak, belonged to the Wellen Chetti merchant community. One of the Mackenzie manuscripts 1 mentions that Wellen chetti would mean bangle seller, ie his ancestors were involved in the bangle trade.

Viśvanātha entered the service of the king as his 'betel-bearer ' The experienced and far-seeing Nāgama would have spared no pains to perfect his son's natural endowments. So Viśvanātha easily became one of the king's personal attendants. His handsome appearance, careful education, and manly courage enabled him to rise higher and higher in the estimation of the **Raya.** He seems to have accompanied him in his expedition against the king of Orissa. Perhaps his devoted service in this campaign gained him the command of a battalion in the attack on, and capture of Raichür in 1520. When he was thus at the height of his fame and established in the king's confidence, he was deputed to the South to perform a delicate and difficult task.[1]

Role of Vivanatha Nayak

It is said that Krishṇadēva Rāya was much enraged at Nägama's insubordination, and appealed to his officers as to who among them would volunteer to punish the rebel. Only Viśvanātha, the latter's son, responded to this call; and, after some hesitation on the part of the Raya, he was sent with a large army to deal with him. In the process, the Pandya King was installed as King by Viswanatha Nayak. Meanwhile, according to the chronicles, the Pandya race became extinct, and Viśvanātha became the sole ruler of the country.[1] Thus, in 1529, Madurai came under Nayaks‟ rule. Due to the series of succession wars at the Vijayanagara Empire, the Nayaks started establishing their own independent rule upon the weakened status of the Vijayanagara Empire itself.[1] Thus, the Nayak‟s rule in Tamil Nadu began.[1]

Achievements

Viswanatha Nayaka was the ruler of Madurai after the fall of the Vijayanagar empire.(1529-1564). He is the founder of the Nayak dynasty of Madurai, before the death of Krishnadevaraya in 1530.[1] Viswanatha Nayak ruled for 35 years, establishing his qualities of discipline, administrative skills and valour. His territories comprised the modern districts of Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli, Tiruciurappalli, Coimbatore, Salem and parts of Kerala State.[1] He brought in a variety of reforms and was responsible for the introduction of Palayagar system. He is considered as the backbone of Madurai Nayak rule and responsible for its century long stability. He stayed an unchallenged ruler, assisted by his General and Chief Minister Ariyanatha Mudaliar.[1] During his rule, Viswanatha Nayak removed the forests on both banks of Cauvery and Vaigai to free the people from the fear of thieves and dacoits. Palayagar had to pay the Nayak King one-third of their revenue arising out of the lands given to them and the remaining could be apportioned for the Army and their own administrative expenses.

Ettayapuram, Panchaalankurichi, and Pudukottai belonged to this system. Waynod, Kambam, and Gudalur were brought under the Madurai Nayak rule. Agriculture, handicrafts, and small industries were flourishing and people lived without any fear of civil disturbance or revolts.

From the Krishṇāpuram Plates of Sadāśiva it appears that Krishṇappa Näyaka, the son of Viśvanätha, played a prominent part and witnessed many events during his reign of the Madurai. During this time, the fierce battle of Thalakotta was fought between the Deccan Sulthans of Bijapur, Golkonda, Bidar, Pidar, and Ahmed Nagar, called as the Bahmani Sulthans and the Vijayanagar Empire.[1]

Administration

Madurai Nayakas followed a decentralized governance style. The king was supreme ruler. The Nayak kings were assisted by set of ministers and officials, who controlled both civil and military matters. Dalavay, Pradhani and Rayasam, formed the trio of the king's council. The three most effective dalavais were Ariyanatha Mudaliar, Ramappayya and Narasappayya. The next most important figure was the Pradhani or finance minister, and then the Rayasam, chief of the bureaucracy.[1] The kingdom was divided into provinces and local areas, each with its own governor and bureaucracy. The most basic unit was the village. Revenue would be earned through taxes on land. The Telugu Army Generals were called as Nayakas.[1] The Nayakas also had a parallel system of administration in Tamilnadu.[1]

Division into Palayams

The Nayak Rulers under the guidance of ***Dalavay Ariyanatha Mudaliar***, divided the kingdom into 72 Palayams each governed by Palayakkarars. These warrior chiefs had a considerable degree of autonomy and were responsible for law and order within their Palayams. They also provided military support to Nayak rulers when needed. The Palayakkarars maintained their own armed forces, which were crucial for the Nayak Kingdom's defence and expansion.

The Policy adopted by the Palegars was different. Vijayanagara kings had given powers of small regions to the local heads on the condition of paying the annual tax in between 1st September to 10th September and military help in case break-out of any war. These Palegars were the local people and popularly called by the names as Nayaka, Amaranayaka, Gowdas, Prabhus, Mandalikas, Mahamandalikas, Mandaleshwaras, Mahamandaleshwaras, Samanthas and Mahasamanthas. As long as the centre was strong and sound, the Palegars were very obedient. They were eager to help the king in the course of war. These Palegars started working independently after ascending the weak rulers in the Vijayanagara throne particularly after the Battle of Talikota in 21.01.1565 which gave death blow to the very existence of the Vijayanagara kingdom.1 They had to fight for the rescue of the Vijayanagara rulers and Palegars became more powerful during the last weak nominal rulers of Araveedu dynasty. Ultimately these Palegars rule was ended by Hyder and Tippu Sultan who was anti-Palegar landlordism.1

Ariyanatha Mudaliar was the Delavoy (General) and the Chief Minister of the greatest of the Nayaka domains established by the Vijayanagar viceroy and later ruler of Madurai, Viswanatha Nayak (1529–64). The Aiyraam Kaal Mandapam, or Thousand Pillared Hall, in the famous Meenakshi Temple was constructed by him in 1569. There is a statue of him at the entrance. It was Ariyanatha Mudaliar who built the hall of 1,000 pillars both in the Nellaiappar temple and in the Madurai Meenakshi Amman temple. (Taylor's Oriental History Vol II, page 90).1 According to the Madras District Gazette - Madurai Vol I, the statue of a man on horseback seen at the entrance to the hall in the Madurai Meenakshi temple is that of Ariyanatha.[1] Ariyanatha Mudaliar was born in Kanchipuram. Viswantha Nayak was succeeded by his son, Krishnappa Nayak, who together with Ariyanatha expanded the Nayak's Madurai kingdom and brought most of the ancient Pandyan territory under its rule. [1]

Conclusion

The Nayak dynasty emerged as a result of the decline of the Vijayanagara Empire, filling the power vacuum in the Tamil region. Nayak rulers like Viswanatha Nayak (Madurai), Kumara Krishnappa Nayak (Tanjore), and Venkatappa Nayak (Gingee) established efficient administrative systems, promoting trade and culture. They contributed to the growth of Tamil literature, arts, and temple architecture. But ***Succession Disp***utes like Constant struggles for succession weakened the Nayak states. Rival factions vied for power, often inviting external powers to intervene. The Nayak rulers heavily relied on subordinate feudal chieftains, who eventually grew powerful enough to challenge the central authority. Continuous warfare and extravagant spending on monumental architecture led to economic depletion, weakening the state's ability to sustain itself. The Maratha invasions, particularly in the Tanjore region, destabilized the Nayak kingdoms. Shivaji's expeditions into the Tamil region marked the beginning of external encroachments. Although Tamil Nadu remained relatively insulated from direct Mughal rule, the Deccan policies of the Mughals indirectly affected the Nayak states, often reducing them to tributary status. The Portuguese, Dutch, and later the British began establishing trading posts and fortifications, leveraging local conflicts to expand their influence.

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Decoding the Cultural Layers in Tamil Nadu

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Introduction

Tamil Nadu, situated at the confluence of history, religion, and tradition, embodies one of the oldest and most continuous cultural landscapes in the world. Its identity is shaped by multiple layers that have accumulated over millennia—prehistoric settlements, Sangam literature, classical dynasties, Bhakti movements, colonial encounters, and modern transformations. Each layer reveals a distinct yet interconnected dimension of social life, ranging from temple architecture, sculpture, music, and dance to agrarian practices, folk traditions, and linguistic expressions.To decode these cultural layers is to uncover the interplay of continuity and change: how ancient Dravidian roots were enriched by Jain, Buddhist, and Vedic influences; how Chola and Pandya legacies shaped religious and artistic idioms; how devotional currents such as Shaivism and Vaishnavism redefined social consciousness; and how colonial interventions and nationalist movements restructured political and cultural identities. Tamil Nadu's culture is thus neither static nor uniform but a stratified composition in which the past informs the present, and tradition negotiates with modernity.This exploration of cultural layers seeks to illuminate Tamil Nadu not merely as a repository of antiquity but as a dynamic space where historical experiences, collective memory, and creative expression converge, shaping one of the most distinctive civilizational narratives in South Asia.Tamil culture denotes the collective heritage of the Tamil people, whose identity is anchored in the Tamil language—one of the world's longest-surviving classical languages, with over two millennia of documented literary tradition.Archaeological investigations across the Tamilakam region reveal an unbroken continuum of human settlement for more than 3,800 years, underscoring the antiquity of its cultural foundations.

The region was historically occupied by Tamil-speaking Dravidian communities and successively shaped by powerful political formations. The Sangam era (3rd century BCE–3rd century CE) witnessed the ascendancy of the Chera, Chola, and Pandya polities, whose patronage of literature, warfare, and trade defined early Tamil society. The Pallavas (3rd–9th century CE) further advanced temple architecture and Sanskrit-Tamil intellectual exchange, while the Vijayanagara Empire (14th–17th century CE) consolidated artistic, religious, and administrative traditions on a larger scale.From the 17th century onwards, European colonial interventions, first by the Portuguese and later by the Dutch, French, and British, introduced new layers of economic and cultural transformation. British dominance persisted until Indian independence in 1947. Over this extended historical trajectory, Tamil culture absorbed, negotiated, and reinterpreted diverse influences, producing a cultural matrix that is at once ancient in continuity and dynamic in its adaptability.

Defining Tamilakam: Literary Conceptions and Cultural Boundaries

The term *Tamilakam* constitutes the earliest known designation for the cultural and territorial domain of the Tamil people. Its literary attestations occur in the classical corpus of Sangam poetry, notably in *Purananuru* (168.18) and *Patiṟṟuppattu* (*Patikam* 2.5), where the term functions as a geographical and cultural marker of Tamil identity. Subsequent textual traditions reinforce and expand upon this conception. The *Cirappuppayiram* (specific preface) to the *Tolkāppiyam*, although widely regarded as a later interpolation of uncertain chronology, provides one of the earliest explicit self-definitions of Tamil territory. It

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refers to *tamil-kurunal-lulakam* ("the beautiful world where Tamil is spoken") and *centamil … nilam* ("the land of refined Tamil"), situating the Tamil-speaking world between the northern Venkata hill and the southern Kumari. This interpolation, despite its contested authorship, reveals the emergence of an early geographical imagination in Tamil literary consciousness.

A more elaborate territorial description is articulated in the *Silappadikaram* (c. 2nd century CE), which delineates Tamilakam as extending "from the hills of Vishnu [Tirupati] in the north to the oceans at the cape in the south." Within this landscape, the text identifies four urban centers of cultural and political prominence: Madurai, associated with monumental temple complexes; Uraiyur, celebrated for its dynastic authority; Kanchipuram, a node of intellectual and religious vibrancy; and Puhar, the maritime hub at the confluence of the Kaveri and the Bay of Bengal. These urban references highlight the interconnectedness of political authority, religious institutions, and trade networks in shaping the Tamil cultural sphere. Despite these literary attestations, the boundaries of Tamilakam remain partially indeterminate. Neither the *Tolkāppiyam* preface nor the *Silappadikaram* provides explicit mention of the eastern and western limits. Modern scholarship generally interprets the seas as the natural boundaries, a view that accommodates the inclusion of present-day Kerala within the ambit of Tamilakam. Conversely, the Tamil-speaking regions of northeastern Sri Lanka are conspicuously absent in these early definitions, suggesting that their incorporation into Tamil cultural geography occurred in subsequent historical phases rather than during the classical age. Thus, *Tamilakam*, as a conceptual category, emerges not merely as a geographical unit but as a cultural and linguistic construct defined through textual tradition. Its significance lies in the articulation of a shared Tamil identity, anchored in language and extended across political formations, urban settlements, and ritual landscapes.

Cultural Layers of Kingship and Territorial Organization in Tamilakam

Between 600 BCE and 300 CE, Tamilakam was shaped by a complex layering of political and cultural formations. At its core stood the *Three Crowned Kings* (*Muvendhar*)—the Cholas, Pandyas, and Cheras—whose dynastic traditions not only defined the political landscape but also forged enduring cultural legacies. Alongside these major polities, independent chieftains such as the Velirs (Satyaputras) constituted a second layer of regional authority, bridging the gap between tribal polities and centralized kingdoms.The Chola dynasty, whose ascendancy can be traced to the pre-Sangam period (c. 3rd century BCE), consolidated its power in the fertile Kaveri valley. Their rule extended until the 13th century CE, producing monumental contributions in temple architecture, irrigation systems, and Tamil literary patronage. The Pandya dynasty, with its heartland along the Vaigai basin, transitioned from its early capital at Korkai, a maritime hub at the peninsula's tip, to Madurai, which later became a nucleus of religious and cultural efflorescence. The Chera dynasty, likewise rooted in Sangam antiquity, flourished until the 12th century CE, ruling over the western tracts of present-day Tamil Nadu and Kerala, embedding maritime trade and cross-cultural exchange into Tamilakam's cultural fabric.Beyond these dynasties, Tamilakam was divided into layered territorial units. Politically, it was organized into *Perunadu* or "Great Countries," of which Chera Nadu, Chola Nadu, and Pandya Nadu were the principal domains. Other significant units, such as Athiyaman Nadu (Satyaputra) and Thamirabharani Nadu (Thenpandi), were gradually subsumed into Chera and Pandya spheres by the 3rd century BCE. Tondai Nadu, originally part of Chola Nadu, emerged as the Pallava heartland by the 6th century CE, marking another cultural layer in Tamilakam's evolving political landscape.Concurrently, the region was stratified into thirteen socio-geographical divisions (*Nadu*), each with its own dialectical variation of Tamil, revealing the cultural diversity embedded within a shared linguistic identity. These included AruvaVadathalai Nadu, Kakkadu, Kuda Nadu, Kuttanadu, Malai Nadu, Puzhi

Nadu, Erumai Nadu, Panri Nadu, Punal Nadu, Sida Nadu, Thenpandi Nadu, Tondai Nadu, Tulu Nadu, and Venadu. Such divisions underscore how geography, dialect, and political authority interlocked to form multilayered identities within the Tamil cultural sphere.The cultural layers extended beyond Tamilakam itself. Literary evidence references external polities and regions—countries outside Tamilakam—that engaged in trade and diplomatic exchange, embedding the Tamil cultural world within wider circuits of interaction across the Indian Ocean Tamilakam's historical trajectory cannot be understood merely as a succession of dynasties. Rather, it represents an intricate layering of kingdoms, chieftaincies, territorial divisions, and socio-linguistic regions, all of which collectively shaped the cultural, political, and economic contours of early South India.Although the territory encompassed by the term *Tamilakam* was politically fragmented among multiple kingdoms, its recurring presence in ancient literature reveals a deeper substratum of shared cultural consciousness.

The collective use of the term suggests that the inhabitants of this region perceived themselves as bound by a common cultural or ethnic identity, one that distinguished them from neighboring peoples and polities. This represents the first cultural layer—the consolidation of Tamil identity through language, literature, and collective self-perception.Epigraphic evidence further substantiates this distinctiveness. Tamil inscriptions, dating from the 5th century BCE to the 3rd century CE, provide linguistic proof of Tamilakam's separation from the broader Dravidian south. These inscriptions, inscribed in early Tamil-Brahmi, mark the second cultural layer, where the written word reinforced linguistic identity and provided permanence to oral traditions.Non-Tamil inscriptions also attest to this distinctive cultural formation. Ashoka's edicts (3rd century BCE) explicitly refer to the independent states beyond the southern limits of his empire, underscoring both political autonomy and cultural separateness. Similarly, Kharavela's*Hathigumpha* inscription references the destruction of a "confederacy of Tamil powers," which highlights a third cultural layer: the recognition of Tamilakam as a unified cultural zone by external observers, despite its internal political divisions.Taken together, these sources suggest that Tamilakam was not merely a geopolitical designation but a layered cultural construct. Literature, inscriptions, and external references together shaped an enduring identity—one that integrated dynastic rule, linguistic traditions, and collective memory into the foundation of Tamil cultural history.

Agrarian Structures and Tamil Cultural Roots

In ancient Tamil society, the king possessed extensive tracts of land, yet he was not the sole proprietor. Royal authority was exercised alongside a network of land allocations to poets, Brahmins, educational institutions, hospitals, and temples, reflecting a deeply embedded cultural ethic of patronage. The majority of agriculturalists were smallholders, cultivating their own plots and sustaining themselves through direct engagement with the soil. These cultivators were known by various appellations: *Ulutunbar* or *Yerinvalnar*, denoting those who subsisted through the plough; *Vellalar*, regarded as custodians of water; and *Karalar* or *Kalamar*, signifying "rulers of the clouds," a metaphorical reference to their role in overseeing rain-fed cultivation. Women cultivators were referred to as *Ulathiar*.Among the Vellalars, social stratification was evident. The higher-class Vellalars derived sustenance from the produce of their lands and simultaneously held high civil and military offices under the king, assuming titles such as *Vel*, *Arasu*, and *Kavidi*, often intermarrying with royal lineages. Lower-class Vellalars, by contrast, worked directly on the land to secure their livelihood, exemplifying a cultural layering where property, occupation, and status intersected with agrarian practice.

In addition to resident landlords and cultivators, absentee landownership was significant. Royal grants of tax-exempt lands—*Brahmateya* for Brahmins, and equivalent allocations for poets, schools, and hospitals—often resulted in tenancy arrangements, with the actual cultivation performed by tenants or hired laborers, known as *Adiyor*. Despite the diversity of ownership and tenancy structures, a shared cultural ethos pervaded: pride in being producers of food

remained a central tenet of Tamil agrarian identity.Land and its produce were subject to taxation, with the king entitled to a portion as administrator. Taxes were classified as *Irai* or *Karai* on land, and *Vari* on produce, generally amounting to one-sixth of the harvest. During periods of flood or famine, royal authorities often remitted taxes, reflecting an ethical governance model embedded in Tamil polity. Tax collection was conducted by officials called *Variya* and *Kavidi*, assisted by accountants (*Ayakanakkar*), while public and private granaries (*Kalanjiyam*) ensured food security. Village councils (*Manram*) actively safeguarded the welfare of cultivators, illustrating a localized decision-making culture rooted in communal responsibility.Standardized units for land and produce measurement further underscore the sophistication of Tamil agrarian administration. Land parcels were designated as *Ma* (small) or *Veli* (large), with one Veli equivalent to one hundred *Kuli*. Produce was quantified using cubic measures (*Tuni*, *Nali*, *Cher*, *Kalam*) and weight measures (*Tulam*, *Kalanju*). Common vessels, including Ambanam, Nazhi, and Padakku (equal to two Marakkals), facilitated measurement, while balance scales (*Tulakkol*) ensured equitable transactions. The cubic vessels were designed with a broad waist tapering slightly at the top and bottom, reinforced with metallic bands, reflecting advanced craftsmanship and standardized practices.These agrarian structures, intertwined with social hierarchy, patronage, and administrative mechanisms, reveal a complex layering of Tamil cultural practices. They highlight not only economic and political organization but also the ethical and communal values that underpinned Tamil society, integrating ritual, governance, and everyday agrarian life into a coherent cultural framework.

Religious Layers and Historical Foundations in Tamil Cultural History

Sangam-era literary works demonstrate a sophisticated interweaving of geography, ecology, and religious practice. The *thinai* system classified landscapes into five ecological zones, each associated with a deity: *kurinji* (hills) with Murugan, *mullai* (forests) with Thirumal, *marutham* (plains) with Indiran, *neithal* (coasts) with Varunan, and *palai* (deserts) with Kotravai. Thirumal, venerated as *Paramporul* ("the Supreme One") in Sangam texts, also appears under various epithets—Māyavan, Māmiyon, Netiyōn, and Māl—illustrating the regional articulation of divinity. Shiva worship, while present, existed alongside Murugan cults, the latter attaining the status of *Tamil Kadavul* ("God of the Tamils"). Archaeological evidence of hilltop shrines and temple complexes, including the six *Arupadaiveedu* temples, corroborates the textual prominence of Murugan worship. Epic narratives further contextualize Tamilakam within a broader pan-Indian religious imagination. The *Ramayana* (7^{th}–5^{th} century BCE) situates Tamilakam as a critical geographic and sacred zone, narrating Rama's crossing to Sri Lanka via the Rama Setu from Rameswaram, an account that anchors local landscapes within cosmological and heroic frameworks. Jainism, historically patronized during the Kalabhra period (3^{rd}–7^{th} century CE), left tangible archaeological traces across Tamilakam. Excavations at Chitharal and the Samanar Hills reveal Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions, stone beds, and sculptures dating back over 2,200 years. Monumental constructions such as the KanchiTrilokyanatha Temple, Chitharal Jain Temple, and Tirumalai Temple Complex—including a 16-foot sculpture of Neminatha (12^{th} century CE)—attest to the sustained presence and artistic contributions of Jain communities. Buddhism likewise influenced the region before the later middle Ages. Historical texts mention a Vihāra in Nākappaṭṭinam during Ashoka's reign (3^{rd} century BCE), while relics excavated at Kaveripattinam (4^{th} century CE) substantiate the early spread of Buddhist institutions.

The ChudamaniVihara in Nagapattinam, rebuilt in the early 11th century CE under the patronage of Raja RajaChola I by the Srivijaya king Maravijayottunggavarman, illustrates continued trans-regional connections and royal sponsorship of Buddhist architecture. By the 7^{th} century CE, the Pandyas and Pallavas increasingly patronized Hinduism following the revival of Shaivism and Vaishnavism through the Bhakti movement. This movement generated distinct sacred landscapes, including the 108 *DivyaDesams* dedicated to Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi, and the

276 *Paadal Petra Sthalams* dedicated to Shiva, both extensively referenced in Alvar and Nayanmar hymns. The *PanchaBhutaSthalams*, symbolizing the five prime elements of nature, reflect the integration of cosmology, ritual practice, and local topography. Archaeological findings complement textual evidence and highlight the layered nature of Tamil religious culture. Inscriptions, temple ruins, Brahmi script epigraphy, and sculpture indicate overlapping religious practices, the coexistence of multiple faiths, and the interplay between royal patronage and popular devotion. Collectively, these historical and material traces illustrate Tamilakam as a dynamic cultural milieu, where indigenous traditions, trans-regional influences, and political authority coalesced to produce a complex and enduring religious heritage.

Occupations in Tamil Culture: Historical Roots

The occupational structure of ancient Tamil society was intricately linked to its agrarian, artisanal, and administrative foundations, reflecting a multi-layered cultural and social order. The agrarian economy formed the backbone of Tamilakam, with cultivators occupying the central stratum of society. Most agriculturalists were smallholders, tending their own plots and deriving sustenance directly from the soil. They were identified by specific titles that reflected their roles and social significance: *Ulutunbar* or *Yerinvalnar* denoted tillers of the soil; *Vellalar* were custodians of water and land, often exercising influence over irrigation systems; *Karalar* or *Kalamar* signified those who oversaw rain-dependent agriculture, metaphorically "rulers of the clouds." Women engaged in cultivation were recognized as *Ulathiar*, highlighting the inclusion of women in agrarian labor and household economy. Within the Vellalar community, social hierarchy was evident. Higher-class Vellalars derived sustenance from their landholdings and simultaneously held civil and military offices under the king, adopting titles such as *Vel*, *Arasu*, and *Kavidi*, and forming matrimonial alliances with the royal family. Lower-class Vellalars worked directly on land, emphasizing a cultural distinction between landownership and labor. Absentee landlords, often Brahmins or poets endowed with tax-free grants (*Brahmateya*), also formed part of the landholding structure, delegating cultivation to tenants or hired laborers (*Adiyor*). This pattern illustrates a layered occupational hierarchy where ownership, tenancy, and labor intersected with social status and cultural identity. Non-agrarian occupations complemented the agrarian economy. Artisans and craftsmen—such as blacksmiths, carpenters, potters, weavers, and jewelers—operated within guild-like associations, often linked to temple complexes or royal patronage. Merchants engaged in regional and maritime trade formed another occupational layer, connecting Tamilakam to broader Indian Ocean networks as evidenced by Roman trade, South-East Asian exchanges, and inscriptions documenting merchant guilds (*Ayyavole*). Administration and governance constituted a separate occupational stratum. Officials such as *Variya* and *Kavidi* collected land and produce taxes (*Irai/Karai* and *Vari*), assisted by accountants (*Ayakanakkar*), while village councils (*Manram*) oversaw local decision-making, dispute resolution, and resource management. Granaries (*Kalanjiyam*) in public and private spaces ensured food security during floods and famines, reflecting a culturally embedded ethic of communal welfare and governance. Occupational measurement and standardization further exemplify Tamil cultural sophistication. Land units such as *Ma* (small) and *Veli* (large, equivalent to 100 *Kuli*) were complemented by produce measures (*Tuni*, *Nali*, *Cher*, *Kalam*) and weight units (*Tulam*, *Kalanju*). Vessels like *Ambanam*, *Nazhi*, and *Padakku* (equivalent to two *Marakkals*), along with balances (*Tulakkol*), facilitated equitable trade and tax collection, demonstrating advanced administrative and technical knowledge. These occupational layers, spanning agriculture, artisanal production, trade, and administration, reveal a deeply interwoven economic and cultural system. They reflect not merely functional roles but the social ethos, ethical norms, and hierarchical structures that shaped Tamil society. Collectively, these historical roots underscore the enduring significance of labor, land, and craft in the cultural imagination of Tamilakam, linking everyday life to broader social, religious, and political frameworks.

Occupational and Industrial Practices

Weaving constituted one of the most significant industries in ancient Tamilakam, second only to agriculture. Both spinning and weaving were widely practiced, serving as full-time occupations for many and as supplemental rural work for cultivators. Women frequently engaged in spinning cotton threads during leisure hours and continued their work into the night by the dim light of wick lamps. The urban centers of Madurai and Uraiyur emerged as major hubs of textile production, renowned for their cotton textiles and fine muslins, which often featured intricate floral motifs likened in literary descriptions to the slough of a cobra or the vapour of steam. Silk weaving, distinguished by knot-work at thread ends, and embroidery catered predominantly to the aristocracy, while dyeing—particularly blue for loincloths—was a widespread ancillary industry. Specialized fabrics such as *SiraiMaravuri* and *Naarmadi*, crafted from wood fibre, were reserved for the priestly class, highlighting a culturally stratified utilization of textiles. Markets in Madurai facilitated trade in cotton, silk, and wool, where cloth merchants (*aruvaivanigar*) sold standardized lengths (*aruvai* or *tuni*) and tailors (*tunnagarar*) prepared stitched garments. Notably, weaving activity was absent in hilly regions, reflecting regional variations in occupational practice. Pearl fishing represented a lucrative industry during the Sangam period. The Pandyan port of Korkai served as the principal center for pearl collection, with Thoothukudi emerging as the modern locus of this trade, earning the moniker "Pearl City." Accounts from Greek and Egyptian voyagers, including the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, document the export of both high-quality and inferior pearls to foreign markets. Pearls were sometimes woven into fine muslins prior to export, while Roman demand for Gulf of Mannar pearls underscores the industry's global significance. Within Tamilakam, pearls adorned royal chariots and horses, and several Vedic references indicate their widespread ritual and ceremonial use. Pearl fishing itself was perilous; fishermen dived into the sea, navigating shark-infested waters to retrieve right-whorled chanks and sounding shells, with convicts often employed as divers in Korkai. The smithy (*Panikkalari*) played a central role in the material and military culture of ancient Tamils. Essential tools, domestic utensils, ploughs, iron wheels, and weapons were forged and repaired in these workshops, which employed bellows (*turutti*) to intensify heat for smelting and welding. Rural smithies were limited in number, serving multiple neighboring villages and often operating under significant strain. Goldsmiths engaged in producing ornaments, which became highly valued in foreign markets, particularly those exported from Karur, illustrating both local artisanal skill and trans-regional economic integration.

Shipbuilding and Maritime Craft

Shipbuilding was a native industry, supporting the extensive maritime trade networks of Tamilakam. Craft sizes ranged from small catamarans—a bundle of logs tied together—to large ships (Kappal) equipped with masts (Paamaram) and sails (Poy). Smaller vessels, such as ambi, padagu, and timil, facilitated river transport and fishing, while intermediate craft—Pahri, Odam, Toni, Teppa, and Navai—served coastal navigation. These maritime technologies underpinned trade and resource exploitation, connecting Tamilakam to regional and global networks. A diverse array of ancillary occupations complemented the primary industries. Carpentry was often hereditary, with apprentices beginning as children, producing toys, constructing homes, and participating in shipbuilding and chariot fabrication. Jaggery production, forestry for aromatic woods like sandal, and coastal fishing formed critical subsistence and commercial activities. Salt manufacture, pottery, rope making, chank-cutting, gem cutting, and the crafting of leather sheaths, bangles, temple structures, procession vehicles, and religious icons were other prominent industries. Wicker basketry was commonly practiced for storage of grains and dried goods, highlighting the integration of craftsmanship into daily life.

Conclusion

The cultural landscape of Tamil Nadu represents a complex and enduring synthesis of historical, socio-political, economic, and religious strata. Evidence from Sangam literature, archaeological excavations, and

epigraphic sources establishes *Tamilakam* as a region characterized by continuity in linguistic identity, urbanization, and socio-political organization over more than three millennia. These data collectively underscore a distinctive cultural consciousness that distinguished Tamilakam from adjacent territories while accommodating external influences through trade, migration, and intellectual exchange.Political and administrative structures exhibit a nuanced balance between centralized dynastic authority and localized governance mechanisms. The Cholas, Pandyas, and Cheras, alongside Pallavas and later Vijayanagara rulers, not only consolidated territorial control but also integrated localized institutions such as village councils (*Manram*) and guilds, producing an adaptive and resilient polity. Simultaneously, occupational and industrial practices—including agriculture, weaving, pearl fisheries, metallurgy, shipbuilding, and artisanal crafts—reflect both economic specialization and embedded cultural hierarchies, reinforcing social differentiation and sustaining the material infrastructure of Tamil society.Religious and ritual practices constitute another stratified layer, revealing a dynamic interplay between indigenous cults, early Sangam-era deities, and subsequent Bhakti movements, as well as Jain and Buddhist patronage. The integration of Shaivism, Vaishnavism, and regional devotional cults with urban and rural socio-economic structures demonstrates the interdependence of religious practice, political authority, and cultural production. Archaeological and literary evidence of temples, inscriptions, and sacred landscapes confirms the persistence and evolution of these religious networks across centuries.In aggregate, the cultural layers of Tamil Nadu exemplify a multidimensional historical ecosystem in which ecology, economy, polity, and religion intersected to produce enduring patterns of identity and social organization. Understanding these layers provides critical insights into the structural foundations of Tamil civilization, highlighting mechanisms of continuity, adaptation, and synthesis that have shaped both historical trajectories and contemporary cultural configurations. This integrated perspective reinforces the significance of Tamilakam as a site of sustained cultural innovation and socio-political complexity in South India.

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Beyond Borders: Social and Cultural interactions in the Palakkad–Coimbatore Region

Dr Geetha K

Introduction

The Palakkad Gap, a low mountain pass of about 30 kilometres in width, cuts through the otherwise continuous stretch of the Western Ghats. This geographical feature is one of the most significant connectors between the Malabar coast of Kerala and the Tamil plains of Coimbatore. Unlike the steep and difficult mountain ranges elsewhere, the Palakkad Gap has historically provided an easy passage for migration, trade, and cultural exchange between the two regions.[1]The Gap's topography has not only influenced climate patterns—allowing the movement of monsoon winds into Tamil Nadu—but also shaped the social and cultural history of South India. It became a corridor through which armies marched, traders carried goods, migrants settled, and ideas travelled.[1]

The study of history often emphasizes kings, wars, or dynasties. Yet in the Palakkad–Coimbatore region, geography itself acts as a historical force. The Gap's fertile river valleys, especially those nourished by the Bharathapuzha, offered rich agricultural potential. The presence of paddy in Palakkad and cotton in Coimbatore created a complementary economy, where exchange across the pass was mutually beneficial.[1]Thus, geography did not merely allow movement—it shaped the very structure of social life and economic organization. The Gap transformed into a cultural highway that brought together communities, languages, and traditions.

Traditional historiography often treats Palakkad and Coimbatore as distinct regions—Kerala with its Malayalam linguistic identity and Coimbatore as part of Tamilakam. However, this binary fails to capture the lived reality of people in the borderland. The Palakkad–Coimbatore corridor is not a dividing line but a zone of cultural fusion.Here, Tamil Brahmin *agraharams* exist alongside Malayalam-speaking villages; Carnatic music flourishes beside Kerala's Sopana Sangeetham; Tamil folk traditions mingle with Kerala's ritual practices. Over centuries, migration, intermarriage, and shared festivals have produced a hybrid cultural landscape that resists neat classification.[1]

This paper argues that the Palakkad–Coimbatore region should be understood as a dynamic contact zone where social and cultural interactions have continually reshaped identities. By examining historical exchanges, linguistic blending, religious practices, and economic ties, we can see how the region evolved into a living bridge between Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Historical Background

The Palakkad Gap has served as a trade corridor since antiquity. Archaeological and literary evidence shows that this route connected the Malabar coast, known for its spices, with the fertile Tamil plains that produced rice and cotton. Roman coins found in Kerala testify to early overseas commerce, which relied on inland routes such as the Palakkad Gap to move goods from ports like Muziris and Tyndis to the Tamil hinterland.[1]The Tamil Sangam literature (circa 300 BCE–300 CE) celebrates the bustling trade of pepper, ivory, and pearls, and hints at the role of passes like Palakkad in sustaining exchange between the Chera and Pandya territories.[1]Thus, even in the early historic period, the Gap acted as a cultural and economic lifeline.

From the early centuries CE to the medieval period, the Palakkad–Coimbatore zone was shaped by the shifting power struggles of the Chera, Chola, and Pandya dynasties. The Cheras controlled much of present-day Kerala, but the Palakkad Gap exposed their territory to incursions from the east.During periods of Chola expansion (9th–13th centuries), the Gap became a

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strategic gateway. Chola inscriptions in the region record land grants, temple patronage, and taxation systems that extended into Palakkad.[1] Similarly, Pandya influence in the 13th–14th centuries reinforced the intertwined political history of the Tamil–Kerala borderlands. Rather than being isolated, Palakkad functioned as a frontier zone contested by major powers, embedding the region within wider South Indian politics.The porous nature of the border facilitated long-term migration of communities. The settlement of Tamil Brahmins in *agraharams* around Palakkad—particularly in Kalpathy, Chittur, and other villages—illustrates how ritual, educational, and linguistic traditions of Tamil Nadu were transplanted into Kerala.[1]These agraharams preserved Tamil religious practices while interacting with the Malayalam-speaking environment, creating a distinct cultural synthesis.Similarly, weavers and artisan groups migrated through the Gap, enriching Kerala's textile traditions. Coimbatore and Kongu Nadu traders moved westward, while Malabar Muslims and Christians carried spices and forest products eastward. These exchanges laid the foundation for a shared social economy that blurred regional boundaries.

The 18th century marked another critical phase with the rise of Mysore under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. Their expansion into Malabar and Palakkad reconfigured settlement and political patterns. Palakkad fort, originally built by local rulers, was reconstructed under Hyder Ali in 1766, transforming the region into a military stronghold.[1]Tipu Sultan's rule saw new taxation systems, land reorganizations, and attempts to control trade through the Gap. His campaigns brought migration and displacement, as communities fled or were resettled. The Mysore occupation also enhanced military infrastructure and administrative centralization, binding Palakkad more closely to the politics of Mysore and, subsequently, to British colonial interests after Tipu's fall in 1799.[1]Thus, by the end of the 18th century, the Palakkad–Coimbatore corridor had evolved into a multi-layered historical landscape where trade, dynastic struggles, migrations, and wars continually reshaped its social and cultural character.

Bilingualism in Palakkad: the Malayalam–Tamil Interface

The Palakkad–Coimbatore region represents a classic case of bilingualism born out of geography. While Malayalam dominates the Malabar plains, and Tamil prevails in the Kongu Nadu belt, the Palakkad Gap has ensured constant interaction between the two linguistic traditions. In Palakkad, many households—especially among migrant communities—have historically been bilingual, with members conversing in both Tamil and Malayalam. Festivals, rituals, and markets demanded a fluid movement between the two tongues. This bilingual environment not only shaped everyday speech but also influenced cultural productions such as songs, proverbs, and oral narratives that carried mixed linguistic features.[1]Thus, Palakkad became a linguistic melting pot, where language was not a barrier but a bridge for cross-cultural communication.

One of the most fascinating linguistic outcomes of this contact zone is the emergence of Palakkad Tamil, a dialect spoken by Tamil Brahmin agraharam communities and sections of the trading class. Unlike standard Tamil of Coimbatore or Madurai, Palakkad Tamil carries phonetic, syntactic, and lexical borrowings from Malayalam.[1]For instance, Malayalam intonation patterns and vocabulary (e.g., "chetta," "ammachi") are freely inserted into Tamil speech, producing a hybrid that is mutually intelligible yet distinct. Scholars argue that this dialect reflects a borderland identity—not fully Tamil, not fully Malayalam, but uniquely Palakkad.The dialect is also a marker of social distinction, as agraharam residents used it as a cultural identity marker, while rural Tamil migrants often spoke variants closer to Kongu Tamil. This demonstrates how language intersects with caste, community, and migration history.

The Palakkad–Coimbatore corridor also became fertile ground for literary exchange. The Tamil Siddha tradition, rooted in mysticism, alchemy, and philosophical poetry, influenced ascetic communities and folk practices in Palakkad. Siddha texts, written in cryptic Tamil verse, circulated through wandering

healers, yogis, and performers, embedding themselves in Kerala's cultural soil.[1]At the same time, Palakkad's proximity to central Kerala exposed communities to Sanskritic scholarship and temple-centered learning. Namboothiri Brahmins and Sanskrit scholars in the Bharathapuzha valley produced works in Vyakarana (grammar), Mimamsa (ritual exegesis), and Kavya (poetics) that drew upon pan-Indian classical traditions.[1]The interaction of these two worlds—Tamil Siddha mysticism and Kerala's Sanskrit scholasticism—created a multi-layered intellectual climate. This is visible in the writings of later poets who effortlessly borrowed metaphors, idioms, and themes across languages. For example, medieval poets in Palakkad often wrote in *Manipravalam* (a mixed language of Sanskrit and Malayalam) but incorporated Tamil devotional idioms, reflecting the fusionist character of the borderland.

Literary exchanges in the region were not limited to elite texts. Oral ballads, folk songs, and temple narratives preserved shared histories of migration, war, and devotion. For instance, songs about Tipu Sultan's campaigns exist both in Tamil and Malayalam, often overlapping in vocabulary and imagery. Similarly, the Kalpathy Ratholsavam festival produced devotional hymns that circulate in both Tamil and Malayalam households, reinforcing a collective cultural memory that transcends linguistic boundaries.[1]

Temples as Cross-Border Institutions

Temples in the Palakkad–Coimbatore region functioned not merely as religious sites but also as social and cultural bridges. On the Kerala side, temples such as the Kalpathy Vishwanatha Swamy Temple and Chittur Bhagavathy Temple drew devotees from across the Tamil border. Similarly, in Coimbatore, temples like Perur Patteeswarar Temple and Marudhamalai Murugan Temple attracted pilgrims from Palakkad.These institutions facilitated ritual exchange. Tamil Brahmin priests officiated in Palakkad temples, while Kerala-style rituals influenced temple practices in Coimbatore. The temple economy—based on land grants, donations, and festivals—created a shared cultural economy, reinforcing bonds across the borderland.

The Kalpathy Ratholsavam (chariot festival) stands out as a striking example of cultural fusion. Celebrated annually in the heritage agraharams of Kalpathy, this festival combines Tamil Shaivite rituals with Kerala's community participation. The pulling of decorated chariots through the streets resembles Tamil Nadu's temple festivals, but the local involvement, musical styles, and festive ambiance carry a distinctly Palakkad flavor.Similarly, the Chittur Konganpada festival, commemorating the victory of local forces over the Chola army, reflects the memory of inter-dynastic conflict celebrated through ritual drama and martial processions.[1] Such festivals showcase how religion and politics intertwined, with narratives transmitted through ritual performances.

In Coimbatore, the Perur Patteeswarar temple festival regularly attracted traders and pilgrims from Palakkad, creating opportunities for cultural mingling. These events served as seasonal hubs of interaction, reinforcing shared cultural identities.The spread of the Bhakti movement from Tamil Nadu deeply impacted Palakkad's cultural life. Shaivite and Vaishnavite devotional traditions—especially those popularized by the Tamil *Alvars* and *Nayanmars*—entered Kerala through the Palakkad Gap. Temples in Palakkad, such as Kalpathy's Vishwanatha Swamy Temple, maintained ritual traditions rooted in Tamil Bhakti poetry.[1]At the same time, Kerala's own devotional streams—particularly Bhagavata traditions linked to Krishna worship—flowed eastward, influencing devotional practices in Coimbatore. This two-way exchange demonstrates how Bhakti was not a unidirectional movement but a dialogical process of cultural borrowing and adaptation.

The Palakkad–Coimbatore corridor is also remembered as a cradle of performing arts. Palakkad produced some of the most celebrated Carnatic musicians, including Palghat Mani Iyer and Palghat K.V. Narayanaswamy, whose training and styles blended Tamil and Kerala traditions.[1] Coimbatore, in turn, became a stage for Kerala musicians, ensuring artistic circulation across the border.Dance traditions also reflect this interaction. Bharatanatyam, rooted in Tamil Nadu's temple traditions, gained patronage

among Brahmin families in Palakkad, while Kathakali performers from Kerala often toured Coimbatore during temple festivals. This mutual patronage expanded the cultural horizon of both regions.Folk forms such as Bhagavata Mela (from Tamil Nadu) and Desa Natyam (local Kerala plays) often shared themes and performance structures, testifying to a hybrid cultural theatre born out of cross-border borrowings.

The cumulative effect of these religious and artistic exchanges was the creation of hybrid cultural identities. A Tamil Brahmin family in Kalpathy might participate in Kerala's temple Poorams; a Coimbatore merchant might sponsor Carnatic concerts in Palakkad. The fluidity of practice blurred linguistic and regional boundaries.Religion, rather than dividing people, functioned as a common cultural idiom, allowing communities to negotiate shared spaces. This underscores the idea of the Palakkad–Coimbatore region as a contact zone, where cultural borrowings were constant, and identities remained plural and adaptive.

Brahmin Agraharams and Cross-Border Identities

One of the most visible markers of Tamil migration into Palakkad is the establishment of Brahmin agraharams (traditional Brahmin settlements). The agraharams of Kalpathy, Chittur, and Govindarajapuram were modeled on Tamil Nadu's village layouts, with rows of houses facing temples dedicated to Vishnu or Shiva.Theseagraharams maintained strong ties with Coimbatore and other parts of Kongu Nadu through kinship, marriage, and ritual exchange. They preserved Tamil Shaivite and Vaishnavite traditions, but over time, they also absorbed elements of Kerala culture—such as Malayalam vocabulary in daily speech and participation in Kerala-style festivals like Poorams. Thus, the agraharams embodied a hybrid Tamil–Malayali identity, balancing continuity with adaptation.

Beyond the Brahmin elite, weaver and artisan communities played a crucial role in the region's social fabric. Tamil-speaking Kaikkolars (weavers) and Devangas migrated into Palakkad, bringing with them skills in cotton weaving that complemented Coimbatore's textile economy. They introduced techniques of handloom production, which enriched Kerala's traditional weaving clusters.[1]Artisan groups such as smiths, carpenters, and potters also moved through the Gap, settling in villages where agricultural surpluses created demand for tools and ritual objects. These migrations fostered craft-sharing networks, producing a cultural economy in which both Kerala and Tamil Nadu traditions thrived.

The Palakkad–Coimbatore region was also a meeting point for Muslim and Christian traders, who often acted as cultural and economic mediators. Muslim merchants from Malabar carried spices, areca nut, and forest produce into Coimbatore's markets, while Tamil Muslim traders brought cotton and textiles westward. These exchanges produced a shared mercantile culture, with mosques and bazaars serving as hubs of interaction.[1]Christian communities, especially the Syrian Christians of Palakkad, maintained networks that extended into Coimbatore's emerging urban economy. By the colonial period, Christian entrepreneurs became active in education, printing, and banking, thereby deepening cross-cultural linkages.

Intermarriage across communities and across the Kerala–Tamil Nadu divide further blurred boundaries. Tamil Brahmin families in Palakkad often married into Coimbatore lineages, reinforcing ritual and kinship ties. Artisan groups and traders similarly sustained cross-border marriage alliances that stabilized migration and settlement patterns.These kinship networks meant that cultural exchange was not confined to markets or temples but was embedded in the intimate structures of family life. Food habits, domestic rituals, and dowry practices frequently combined elements from both Kerala and Tamil traditions, creating blended cultural households.Markets, rivers, and roads provided everyday arenas for social mingling. Weekly bazaars in Palakkad attracted Tamil traders, while Kerala farmers sold paddy and coconuts in Coimbatore. Pilgrimage routes connected temples, mosques, and churches across the border, ensuring a constant circulation of people.In such shared spaces, cultural borrowing was naturalized: Malayalam speakers learned Tamil bargaining idioms in markets, while Tamil migrants adopted Malayalam culinary practices such as the use of coconut in cooking. These micro-level exchanges reveal how social

interaction created a common cultural zone, even amidst linguistic and caste-based differences.[1]

Economic Interactions

The Palakkad–Coimbatore region demonstrates how geography and cultural proximity translated into sustained economic exchange. Coimbatore emerged in the modern period as the "Manchester of South India," with its thriving handloom and later mechanized textile industries. This industrial base found a ready market in Palakkad, where traders imported cotton yarn, woven cloth, and textiles. Palakkad's own communities of weavers—migrants from Tamil regions—bridged the economies by combining Tamil weaving techniques with local consumption patterns.Weekly shandies and temple festivals became sites where textiles and agrarian products circulated side by side, symbolizing the interdependency of the two regions.

Kerala's spices—pepper, cardamom, and ginger—flowed through Palakkad to Tamil Nadu markets, while Coimbatore contributed dry grains, jaggery, and oil products. The exchange was not simply transactional but part of a broader socio-cultural practice, where traders, transporters, and middlemen maintained bilingual and bi-cultural identities.[1]The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed infrastructural transformations that tightened the economic linkages. The construction of the Palakkad–Coimbatore railway line under the British in the late 19th century created a direct conduit for agrarian and industrial goods. Simultaneously, the improvement of roadways enabled bullock carts and later motor vehicles to enhance trade flows. The rail and road networks also accelerated cultural mobility—pilgrims, students, and workers crossed the Gap with unprecedented ease.[1]The economic interdependence of Palakkad and Coimbatore thus transcended mere border trade. It produced shared markets, mutual reliance, and hybrid communities of traders and artisans. In many ways, the prosperity of Coimbatore's mills rested on the food security provided by Palakkad's granaries, just as Palakkad's agrarian surpluses depended on Tamil markets for distribution. The two regions, therefore, embody an intertwined economy rooted in geography and history.

Modern Period

The 19th and 20th centuries marked a turning point in the Palakkad–Coimbatore region. With colonial interventions, nationalist movements, and later, global migration, the cultural and social ties across the Palakkad Gap assumed newer dimensions. What was once an ancient trade corridor has now became a stage for modern revival, political consciousness, and transnational connections.The 19th century witnessed the spread of reformist ideas across the region. In Kerala, leaders such as Sree Narayana Guru advocated for social equality and religious reform, while in Tamil Nadu, movements like the Self-Respect Movement spearheaded by Periyar E.V. Ramasamy challenged caste hierarchies and Brahmanical dominance. These currents did not remain confined within state boundaries: Palakkad, with its Tamil Brahmin agraharams and mixed population, became a site where reformist ideologies and bhakti traditions intersected. The revival of temple festivals, literary societies, and music sabhas in Palakkad during this period reflected the region's openness to both Kerala and Tamil cultural transformations.

The early 20th century also saw the rise of working-class consciousness. With the growth of plantations, textile industries, and railway workshops, trade unions became powerful agents of social change. The Communist Party of India (Marxist), founded in 1964 after a split in the CPI, drew strong support from Palakkad's agrarian laborers and Coimbatore's industrial workers.[1] The cross-border solidarity was evident in joint strikes and peasant agitations, where workers often moved between the two regions in search of employment. Thus, the Palakkad–Coimbatore corridor became a shared political space where Marxist ideology, peasant struggles, and union activism transcended linguistic and state borders.The modern entertainment industry further blurred cultural lines. Palakkad and Coimbatore audiences patronized both Malayalam and Tamil cinema, with popular stars like M.G. Ramachandran and Prem Nazir commanding cross-border appeal. Theatre troupes frequently traveled across the Gap, performing dramas that incorporated bilingual dialogues to attract wider audiences. With the

rise of television and later social media, cultural exchanges deepened: Tamil serials gained popularity in Kerala households, while Malayalam films found a strong market in Coimbatore. These exchanges created a shared cultural sphere of popular imagination.

From the 1970s onwards, large-scale migration to the Gulf countries restructured family and community life in both Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Palakkad families often settled in Gulf states alongside relatives from Coimbatore, reinforcing bonds across the border.[1] Remittances flowed into both regions, funding education, modern housing, and temple/mosque renovations. Festivals like Kalpathy Ratholsavam or Marudhamalai temple festivals saw greater grandeur due to Gulf-funded contributions, symbolizing how transnational migration strengthened old cultural ties rather than weakening them.The modern period thus demonstrates how the Palakkad–Coimbatore region adapted to new realities without losing its historical interconnectedness. Reformist thought, working-class struggles, popular culture, and Gulf migration all point to a continuity of fusion, where geography and shared history continued to shape a unique borderland identity.

Conclusion

The Palakkad–Coimbatore region is not merely a frontier between Kerala and Tamil Nadu; it is a living laboratory of cultural hybridity. Across history, geography shaped human flows, and those flows, in turn, generated patterns of social and cultural fusion that defy rigid boundaries.The analysis of language, music, economy, religion, politics, and migration all point to the same conclusion: the Palakkad Gap is not a borderland in the restrictive sense but a corridor of exchange where traditions are constantly adapted, borrowed, and reinvented.In the age of globalization, the Palakkad–Coimbatore experience offers important lessons. It demonstrates that multicultural coexistence is not achieved by erasing differences but by allowing plurality to thrive in shared spaces. In a world increasingly marked by polarization and hardening borders, this region reminds us that cultural richness often emerges in contact zones, where negotiation and hybridity replace division and exclusion.

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Cuddalore under the British Rule C.E 1690 – C.E. 1947

Dr.Hameed Basha B

Physical setting

Cuddalore is a coastal town possessed both natural and physical advantages for the cause of development over the years.Cuddalore is a Taluk headquarter of the Cuddalore district, locatedLatitude between 11.45^0 and 11.78^o, Longitude between 79.45^0 and 54.92^o. [1]Cuddalore sharing border with Pondiicherry, a union territory of India to the North, the western boundary shared with Villupuram, Perambalur and Ariyalur to the west. Cuddalore occupies an area around 3564 square kilometer.Cuddalore has the transport facility which connected all the towns and villages through roadway and railway. Moreover, the East coast roadway connected the Cuddalore to Madras, the capital of Tamil Nadu. Gadilam and South Pennar are the major rivers in Cuddalore, and the minor rivers also existed in this region namely Vellar, Paravarnar, and Coleroon.[2]

British establishment

In the Coromandel region, the British have gradually established their power and authority region.[3]They had two reasons for enacting the British disbursement in Devanampatitinam. First, Elihu Yale, the author of the earlier Madras factory, sends his proposal to build the fort at Devanampattinam to the governor. Secondly, Nazir Muhammed Khan, the native governor of Gingee, under the Bijapur King was wished to liberate the Dutch and French residents of the area. Hence, the British had to visit their factories and build forts at Vazhudavur and Porto Nova. [4]The British wanted to found the subordinate settlement at Cuddalore and also wanted to erect the defensive architecture. During the British period, Cuddalore was divided into three portions called Cuddalore alias Old Town, Manjakuppam alias New Town, and Fort St. David. In 1690, the officials of the British made a truce with Ram Raja, the Maratha chief of Gingee, to buy an abandoned fort from the Portuguese. Due to heavy competition, the king raised the price for selling this fort. Finally, the British agree to purchase the fort for two lakh rupees, around 1, 20,000 pagodas, or Rs. 4, 20, 00, of which 1, 50, 000 was the setback at Fort Dockers were assigned to various subordinates for the remainder. The British replied by offering 40,000 *chakrams* plus another 10,000, including 4000 for the chief minters, 2000 for his brother, 3000 for the officers, and 1000 for the Kunimedu Subedar for the officers.[5]

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The British East India Company began negotiating with the "Khan of Gingee" for permission to settle there in 1682, which is when history of Cuddalore began. After the first structure was constructed in 1683, a formal lease was secured for the location of the modern town for the ports and trees the following year. The firm renovated their warehouses and built Fort St. David to secure the area in the ensuing 10 years as trade grew so quickly. After Madras fell in 1746, the British government relocated to Cuddalore, which the French under Dupleix twice unsuccessfully besieged. Up until 1752, when the administration relocated to Madras, this location served as the presidency's administrative centre.

Fort St. David

European merchants referred to Fort St. David as the "crown jewel of the Coromandel,"6 and it served as the British's second capital in South India, after Fort St. George. The French andBritish established forts in the Carnatic region in the Bay of Bengal, namely Fort St. David at Cuddaore and Fort St. Louis at Pondicherry). They have maintain their supremacy in the Cuddalore region, the British established the fort at Devanampattinam.[7]The fort was named Fort St. David for two major reasons. For starters, Elihu Yale, Governor of Madras, wanted to honour Saint David by naming this fort "Fort St David."[8].Another version has been prescribed to date.Elihu Yale named the fort while his son David, who died shortly before the containment of the new place, was alive. However, the records confirmed that the fort names belong to the Saint family.[9]

Random Shot

Following the fruitful agreement reached between the Nayak and the British, the governor of St. David was appointed**.** William Hatsell, who served on the council of Fort St.George, was nominated for this posting and will become the "first Deputy Governor" with an officer, gunners, 800 soldiers, 20 mattresses, 100 barrels, 30 great guns, 200 muzzleloaders, 100 barrels of powder, 100 cartouches, 100 swords, and immunization. For fixing the boundary line of the British possession, they used a technique called "random shot." The plan was approved by Nayak Rama Raja. While Mr. Hatsheel reached Devanampattinam on September 22 1690; he handed over the cash for 32000 pagodas[10], which was attributed to the Maharattas. The next day, it was Brewster, the gunner of this troop, who fired the series of random shots surrounding Devanampattinam. This random shot of the Great Gun was given to the British for the fall's benefit; including grounds, woods, and rivers.

Fortification

Mr. Hatshell desired to fortify this location for security reasons.In the years 1693, 1698, 702, 1740, and 1745 A.D., Fort St. David was enlarged.[11]Gradually, it was fortified with four bastions mounted with 12 guns each. The curtain, combined with the bastions, was hedged alongside a brick parapet. The primary outworks were a horn work to the north, mounting 34 guns. J.H. Garstin, Collector of Cuddalore, described the fortification as "fortified on three sides by a wall, and the north-eastern side had a small redoubt" in 1730.When Fort St. David replaced Fort St. George as the main colony on the Coromandel Coast, which was the most significant time in the fort's existence. The court of directions issues instructions for the construction of a fort on its eastern face in A.D.1725. Powder magazine was to be built in 1739 on the island between Cuddalore and the fort, but the defenses appear to have been in ruins at the time. During the invasion of the arts in Madras in 1740, some repairs were made to St. David first, and the Maharattas were plundering close to the Cuddalore bound. They entered the bounds the following year, despite a cannonade and a minor boycott from Manjakuppam and Vannarpettai.[12]

Battle of Cuddalore

It was a British success that stopped the French army from taking Cuddalore, a fortified station, which would have put Fort St. David, the key British bastion in southern India, in danger.[16]

Batle of Cuddalore, 1783

On June 30, 1783, a naval battle took place off the coast of Cuddalore between a British squadron of 17 ships led by Sir Edward Hughes and a French squadron led by Sully.The French, as usual, refused to come to

close quarters, and after a long-range battle in which Hughes lost 532 men, fighting was called off at nightfall, leaving him in control of the roads and able to prevent the capture of Cuddalore.Due to the American War of Independence, Vice Admiral Hughers' misfortune in war against the French army included five navel battles, namely Sadras, Nagapattinam, Triconamalai, and Cuddalore. Cuddalore was the final battle army of these five.The battle ended in June 1783 after a three-hour fight with no casualties on either side. Hughes retired north to Madras, having once again failed, giving the Frenchmen an advantage. The following ships were engaged in the war: Africa, Defense, Hero, Monarch, Superb, Bristol, Eagle, Inflexible, Monmouth, Cumberland, Gibraltar, Monoamine, and Sultan. Meanwhile in Europe, France and Britain had agreed on a cease-fire that would eventually lead to the signing of the Treaty of Paris on September 3. However, the news did not reach India before the garrison launched a second attack on the British siege position.[20]

Evangelization

Zigenbalg preached the Gospal in Cuddalore and Semmandalam, where the church is located. In 1717, Grundler also visited Cuddalore and started a Tamil and a Portuguese school, which, in 1718, Zigenbalg again visited. In 1726, Benjamin Schultz landed at Cuddalore on his way to Madras and was received by the governor and other officials in a friendly manner. He visited all the heathen schools in the town and preached in and around Cuddalore in many places. He visited all of the town's heathen schools and preached in a variety of locations in and around Cuddalore.Also, he visited five native schools in "*Devipatnam*(Devnampattinam)," situated to the north of Fort St. David, which Schultz mentions as a populous place. Now the atmosphere was completely gone. During the many sieges of Fort St. David, the town seems to have been burned and destroyed.

John Zachariah Kiernander

John Zachariah Kiernander was born in Akstad, Sweden in 1711. He was educated at the University of Upsala. He felt a desire to visit the foreign universities and arrived in 1735 at Halle in Saxony. After he had been employed by the Society of London and instituted for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, which applied to Dr. G. A. Frank, he wished to recommend Kiernander for the Cuddalore mission. When the French attacked Cuddalore in 1746, the missionary Geister fled to Batavia, but the Kiernander remained.On May 8, 1758, the French captitalizations at Fort St. David were finally successful. At once, On June 2, 1758, Fort St. David was given over to the French. As a result, Kiernander passed up all chances to extend his assignment in CuddaloreThen he turned his attention to other settlements, like Tranquebar and Bengal. Lally granted Kiernander permission to relocate to Tranquebar with his family and assets. Kiereder left Tranquebar on September 11 to stay with some of the Danes. On September 29, he arrived in Calcutta at Robert Clive's request.[21]

Slave Trade

The cruel practice of slave trade existed in the British Empire during the colonial period. Slaves are indeed exported in large numbers from Fort St. George to South India. The failure of the monsoon caused the people to become homeless, and they sold themselves to the rich on those days. other men and women, even children, worked as servants in every English household. The masters are providing clothes and food to the slaves. Slaves were transformed at the other British sites in India. All the English settlements needed labourers and coolies for agricultural works, the construction of houses, and defensive architecture. The slave trade enriched the company’s exchequer and added new avenues of revenue. According to British records, fourteen slaves were sent to Fort St. George and were also entertained for shipment to Anjengo. After paying customs, Captain Oyles transported approximately 45 slaves.Another incident highlights the importance of telling the truth about the slave trade, while some parents complain that their children are kidnapped from Cuddalore for slave trade. At once, the children are identified and returned to their parents.The

sheriff maintained the register of slaves and collected fees for the registration as delegated by the choulet court. There was a demand for 200 Madagascar, one-third females at the age of sixteen to twenty years old, and two-thirds males for Bencooleon. As a result of the June 30 consultation, the buying and selling of Muslims as slaves was prohibited in 1741. [22]

Economy

Cuddalore had two notable ports that drew the British to settle there: Cuddalore and Porto Nova.[57] The British exported the goods from Cuddalore to other Asian countries and their natives. Between 1731 and 1739 A.D., the ships were anchored at Cuddalore around eight times per year.There are a lot of goods exported from Cuddalore, like gingili seeds, food grains, jack fruits, greens, ginger, mangoes, butter, pepper, jiggers, salt, tobacco, weighting goods, firewood, calicoes, civet cats, saltpeter, nails, iron roads, lamps, and yarn. raw cotton, broadcloth, and painted cloth. [23]

Textile

The cloth was made in Cuddalore during the British period of high regard. The brown, white cloth was manufactured during the British period of high esteem. The brown, white, and blue cloths are produced and exported from Cuddalore. Apart from these cloths, *salempores*, *dimities*, *ginghemes*, and *succatoons* were produced. Perhaps the people have great skills like spinning, washing, dyeing, and hand printing in Cuddalore. To meet the need for the goods and materials, people enthusiastically migrated from several villages to Cuddalore. Fort St. David is described by Lockyer as "a port of great profit, as well as rents and income arising immediately there from, as well as competent quantities of calicoes and muslins brought there for Europe."[24]Many native merchants from Cuddalore had export agreements with the British in order to expand the cloth trade in these areas.They are Viabochetti, Vivaraghhava Chetti, Siva Perumal, Mukaddam Nina, Sadasiva Rao, and Yerram Raju. For several decades, they obtained authorship from the British to clothe commerce.

Conclusion

The European countries competed to occupy the Cuddalore area for the purposes of trade and commerce. However, the British won the rally and took control of the region in 1746 A.D. Moreover, it served as the prominent capital after Fort St. George. These regions were ruled by the British up until India's independence. This region was gradually urbanized after their occupation. Furthermore, the people of Cuddalore, particularly Anjalai Ammal, fought for independence from the British through agitation, both individually and collectively. Following Gandhi's leadership of the Indian National Congress, there were numerous minor uprisings in the Cuddalore region. The British lost their primary capital of Coromandel in the Carnatic region, while Cuddalore safeguarded the British for many years.

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Danish East India Company and Danish Missionaries in Tanjore

T.Jadayan

In the early period of the mission shipping transport between Copenhagen and Tranquebar was irregular, and the contact between the missionaries and Europe, therefore, lacked continuity and was undependable. In some situations this fact demanded a high degree of independence and decision-making on the part of the overseas mission employees. It also led to the fact that conflicts with the local Danish authorities, for example, were dragged out longer than was necessary since one had to wait months or years for instructions from Europe.

The co-operation between Halle as the spiritual centre and Copenhagen as the official seat and the organizational hub of the Tranquebar Mission was extended from 1710 onwards through intensive contacts with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) in London, that had been established in 1698 by Thomas Bray (1656-1730) and other English clerics. Its task was the (worldwide) spread of the Christian faith through education and through the distribution of Christian literature. Schools were established under the supervision of the S.P.C.K. not only in England and Wales, but the organization also viewed the support of overseas Christian missions as an important aspect of its work.[8] The Danish royal house tried to further consolidate its position as the initiator and promoter of the mission by setting up a Mission Board in 1714 with headquarters in Copenhagen. This was especially meant to underscore the position of the royal house vis-a-vis the trading authorities in Tranquebar who were representatives of Danish trading companies. The Mission Board, supported by Pietistic circles and the Church, officially administered matters concerning Danish overseas missions. It had decision making powers in financial and personnel matters and it worked on behalf of and in accordance with the guidelines and decrees issued by the king. In 1777 the Mission Board had to hand over its powers to the Crown, but retained its function as the link-institution to the mission. Once the Danish Mission Society was established in 1821 (which also carried out missionary work in India from 1860) there were two parallel institutions till the Mission Board was disbanded in 1859.

In the early years the missionaries lived and worked almost exclusively in Tranquebar. Each missionary received a sum of 200 Reichstaler annually, provided by the Danish king, and with which they had to manage not only their living expenses but also the work of the mission. In 1709 the missionaries bought land in Porayar and Tilaili, a few kilometers away from Tranquebar and also on Danish territory. After the initial difficulties and impediments, which had arisen chiefly out of the conflict with the local Danish authorities, small branches of the mission were

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established in these places. For organizational purposes the mission, after a period of time, was divided into different congregations: the Tranquebar station consisted of the 'Malabarian city congregation', the 'Portuguese congregation' and the 'Malabarian rural congregation'. The rural congregation, for its part, was made up of the congregations from several mission districts that were named, as a rule, after the capitals of these particular regions. In 1716 there were Christians to be taken care of in the following districts: Mayavaram, Tanjore, Mahadevpattnam and Marava. In 1728 three mission districts were mentioned. From 1729 to 1733 there were four rural districts, while from 1734 onwards there were six. Around 1740 the congregation of the Marava region was divided into the congregations of Tiruppalatturai and Kumbakonam. From 1743 onwards the missionaries always divided the rural congregation into five districts.

Already in 1709 Ziegenbalg had wanted to undertake a journey into the territory of the Raja of Tanjore,[9] and in January 1710 Johann Ernst Grundler (1677-1720) announced the intention of the missionaries to approach the king of Tanjore. They abandoned this idea since they could not finance the valuable presents to the ruler that apparently had to accompany such a petition. After these first attempts by Ziegenbalg and Grundler to establish contact with Tanjore had been dropped for various reasons, it was Benjamin Schultze who resumed these efforts in the 1720s. Schultze landed in Tranquebar in 1720.[10] He was in close contact with Telungarasa (died 1736), a representative of the ruling family in Tanjore (an uncle of the king), who visited him several times and corresponded with him.[11] Schultze himself, however, did not venture into Tanjore territory since Serfoji-I did not allow foreign missionaries to work in his kingdom.

The missionaries established initial contacts of a more permanent nature to the court of the Raja of Tanjore indirectly through their catechist Rajanayakkan (1700-71) during the rule of Raja Tukkaji (ruled 1728-1735). As an officer of the Tanjore Army Rajanayakkan had become personally acquainted with representatives of the Danish-Halle Mission in 1727 in Porayar during a military operation on Danish territory and had offered to work for the mission in Tanjore. After initial doubts the missionaries decided to use this contact. They appointed Rajanayakkan as catechist and allowed him to proselytize in their name in the Tanjore region. Rajanayakkan set up a school there and, for over twenty years, he was the 'vanguard' of the Tranquebar Mission. He was one of the chief forces for the spread of the Gospel and influence of the Tranquebar Mission into the adjacent Kingdom of Tanjore.[12] In July 1728, shortly after Rajanayakkan had begun his work, Christian Friedrich Pressier (1697-1738) travelled to Tanjore. At this point of time, however, a European missionary could not settle down permanently on the territory of the Raja of Tanjore. For the time being, Rajanayakkan and other co-workers had to be entrusted with the work of the mission in this region. Under the changed political conditions in Tanjore at the beginning of the 1750s the missionaries renewed their attempts to work there, this time successfully. In July and August 1753 Johann Christian Wiedebrock (1713-67) preached publicly for the first time in the city of Tanjore. With the start of missionary work in Tanjore, outside the territory of the Danish Company, the mission was then directly involved in political events in the region. At the same time, the Danes intensified their efforts at expansion, since it became increasingly clear to them that they would have to expand their territory if they wanted to remain players in the power equations in South India. This led in the 1750s to - sometimes military conflicts between the Danes and the Raja of Tanjore.[13]

Whereas the efforts to get permission for missionary work in the territory of the Raja of Tanjore did not meet with any success for a long time, the work in the regions controlled by the British was very intensive. In 1717 Ziegenbalg and Grundler reported on their first activities in Madras and Cuddalore in co-operation with the S.P.C.K.[14] Missionary work in Cuddalore began with the decision of the British authorities to set up a so-called charity school there, and they approached the Danish missionaries for school teachers.[15] Benjamin Schultze became the first missionary who officially went into the service of the S.P.C.K. Others followed. Despite the formal transfer to another mission society, these missionaries remained in

close contact with the Tranquebar Mission and the Francke Foundations. It was only in 1813 that the charter of the English East India Company allowed English mission societies to work in India.[16] Till this point of time the S.P.C.K. supported other foreign mission societies in India or used their employees for concrete tasks. In this way it could carry out its own projects, especially in the sphere of education.

While initially, only several schools were run in co-operation with the S.P.C.K., with Schultze's entry into S.P.C.K. in 1728 the picture began to change. From 1737, Johann Anton Sartorius (1704-1738) and Johann Ernst Geister (in India: 1732-1746, died: 1750) worked as missionaries for the British in Cuddalore. From 1742 Johann Philipp Fabricius had also been working for the British, continuing the work done by Benjamin Schultze for the S.P.C.K. in Madras from 1728 to 1742. Fabricius prepared a Tamil translation of the Bible which served as the basic instrument for the spread of the Gospel work and for the three later revision.[17] A close co-operation began in the 1760s between Christian Friedrich Schwartz and the S.P.C.K. The consolidation of the British position in South India in the 1760s was accompanied by a new surge in missionary activity. In 1768 Schwartz, along with the mission station he had established in Tiruchirappalli since 1762[18], was placed under the S.P.C.K. The initiative for missionary work in Tiruchirappalli had emanated from Tranquebar. In the efforts to expand the regional base of the mission into the interior of the country and into regions south of Tranquebar, this place proved to be favourable. In concurrence with the missionaries in Tranquebar, Schwartz, from the beginning, also worked for the British in Tiruchirappalli. Out of a feeling of 'of gratitude and protection'[19] he did not want to refuse their requests, especially with regard to the spiritual care of soldiers in the British garrison. Schwartz was afraid that the S.P.C.K. would take over his identity completely and in several letters to the Mission Board he repeatedly referred to the fact that he still wanted to be considered a Danish missionary and be regularly relieved by a colleague from Tranquebar, or, indeed, return to Tranquebar entirely.[20] However, the Mission Board and the S.P.C.K. together came to a different decision: Schwartz was to be taken over by the S.P.C.K; he was to be permanently stationed in Tiruchirappalli without being relieved, since he was the only missionary suitable for this post on account of his knowledge of English.[21] Schwartz acted judiciously, but he was dissatisfied and, even in 1771, three years after the takeover, he requested the Mission Board to still consider him a member of the Royal Danish Mission.[22]

In 1767 Christian Wilhelm Gericke (1742-1803) accepted an appointment by the English mission society in Cuddalore where he initially worked with Johann Zacharias Kiernander (1710-1799) and Georg Heinrich Conrad Huttemann (1728-1781).[23] From 1788 onwards Gericke worked in Vepery ,Madras. Although the transfer to the S.P.C.K. meant that these missionaries were formally not a part of the Tranquebar mission of the Danish royal house and that they were now financed by the British, the close link between the stations of the Tranquebar Mission and the so-called English stations was always maintained. After thirty years of work as a Royal Danish missionary Johann Peter Rottler (1749-1836) landed at Tranquebar in August 1776.[24] He entered the services of the S.P.C.K. in 1806 with the permission of the Mission Board.[25] While new European missionaries were increasingly being appointed by the S,P.C.K. for the English stations, the Indian national workers were gaining importance in Tranquebar. By the beginning of the Nineteenth Century there were hardly any missionaries being sent out directly to Tranquebar.

Although the last quarter of the Eighteenth Century already witnessed a decline of missionary work, with the beginning of the Nineteenth century the Tranquebar Mission lost its standing even more. The political conditions in Europe and the effects of the Napoleonic wars on Germany led to a decrease in the amount of financial support to the mission from its well-wishers. Young people were now also less interested in going to India and, therefore, new missionaries could not be recruited on a continuous basis.[26] In 1799, the relocation of the Danish factory from Tranquebar to Serampore led to a significant reduction in the frequency of Danish ships docking in Tranquebar. The situation deteriorated further when Denmark became

involved in the Napoleonic Wars, resulting in a decline in Danish trade. Additionally, British forces occupied Danish territories near Tranquebar during the years 1801-1802 and again from 1808 to 1815, disrupting the maritime connection between Tranquebar and Denmark. Friedrich Cammerer, who died in 1837, was the last missionary associated with Tranquebar. The Tranquebar Mission was officially recognized until the British acquisition of the settlement in 1845. By 1843, the Danes had already disbanded their Danish East India Trading Company, and since the late 1830s, there had been no Royal Danish Missionaries present in Tranquebar. [27]

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European Presence and end of the Maratha Rule in Tanjore

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The paper aims to highlight the political trends in Tanjore in the wake of the presence of the European powers and the successful annexation of Tanjore by the British Power in the tail end of the Eighteenth century. In this context, from the arrival of the Portuguese to the Tanjore to the British diplomatic moves there was traced out. So the European involvement in the affairs of the native Rulers of Tanjore, namely the Nayaks and Maratha Kings of Tanjore was highlighted. Further, the invasions of Hyder Ali,Tipu Sultan and the Nawab of Arcot was focused. The reasons for the surrender of Tanjore kingdom showed the success of the British in Tanjore and their ascendancy as well.

The Portuguese, who had been in Goa on the west coast of India since 1510 as conquerors and as a trading power, advanced to Nagapattinam in the Tanjore kingdom during the reign of the first Nayak, Sevappa Nayak, thus strengthening their presence in this South Indian region.[1] In order to create counter - balances to the Portuguese monopoly the Nayak of Tanjore, who were always hostile to the Portuguese, opened their realm to other Europeans.[2] The European presence in Tanjore increased primarily during the reign of Sevappa Nayak's grandson Raghunatha Nayak. Europeans set up their trading posts in places that had always functioned as ports and trading canters, or they established new settlements, factories and forts. Local rulers gave the Dutch almost exclusive rights to trade and commerce. Having signed a treaty in 1626 with the Zamorin of Calicut on the west coast of India, they ensured their rights over the former Portuguese possession of Nagapattinam on the southeastern coast in 1659.[3] In the Eighteenth Century the British and the French also entered the political arena in South India. Although the Dutch remained a strong trading power in the first half of the Eighteenth Century, the growing French role made it difficult for them to hold on to some of their possessions.[4] The British and the French also intervened in the conflicts surrounding the succession to the throne of the Nizam Asaf Jah who died in 1748. Whereas the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) had caused only minor skirmishes in India between these powers, the Peace of Aachen (18 October 1748) ensured that the French ended their occupation of Madras and returned it to the British. The French managed in ensuring power for those they supported in Hyderabad and Arcot and bound them through subsidy contracts. The surrender of the northern Sarkars by the Nizam then led to the temporary supremacy of the French in southeast India. The British, for their part, countered the alliance between France, Hyderabad and Arcot through a pact with Mysore and Tanjore. In 1749 the former Raja of Tanjore, Sayaji (ruled 1736-39) tried to win back his throne from Pratap Singh with the help of the British and offered to hand over Devkottai in return for their help. By supporting Sayaji in Tanjore the British intervened for the first time in an internal conflict in South India.[5] After capturing Devkottai in July 1749 the British neutralized Sahuji by setting him aside with an annuity. Pratap Singh, in the meantime, legalized the handing over of Devkottai through a treaty with the British and thus succeeded in winning them over to his side. Through this alliance with the rivals of the French Pratap Singh was able to withstand the attacks by the French and the Marathas in 1754 and 1758 respectively. However, in 1753 he lost all the districts of Ramnad, which Tanjore had been able to annex through treaties or wars.

After the futile attempt to lay siege to the fort of Tiruchirappalli and given the lack of support from Europe the French were forced in 1754 to cede

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the northern Sarkars to the British and to handover Arcot to the ally of the British. After this the decisive conflicts between the British and the French began. The Seven Years' War (1756-1763) in Europe also led to military conflicts in Southeast India, which ended with enormous loss of territory for the French, while the British occupied the territory of the Nizam of Hyderabad.

The second half of the Eighteenth Century witnessed an increase in the importance of the Kingdom of Mysore first under Hyder Ali (1722-1782), who had risen from the rank of a Nayak, and then under his son and successor Tipu Sultan (1749/ruled 1782-1799). After the ruling Hindu dynasty in Mysore had been overthrown by Hyder Ali in 1761 this kingdom had fought several wars against neighboring states. During these so-called Carnatic Wars, which began in 1763 and in which the British and the French fought for supremacy in South India, Mysore allied itself with the French. Earlier already, the French had had to accept severe blows from the British and their allies. At the beginning of the 1760s, when the French territories of Pondicherry and Karaikal were temporarily occupied by British troops, many French citizens and citizens of the cities had fled to the territory of the Danish Trading Company in the north, with whom the French had often co-operated. Hyder Ali extended his dominions on the Malabar Coast and in the Deccan and established a strong centralized state. This provoked resistance from the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad. In 1764 the Marathas attacked Mysore twice and defeated Hyder Ali. Despite this, Hyder Ali continued his conquests on the Malabar Coast and succeeded in deflecting a threatened attack by an alliance of the Marathas, the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Nawab of Arcot. With the help of different alliances Mysore fought against the consolidation of British rule in South India.

The first Anglo-Mysore War began in 1767 with the British invasion of Mysore. Hyder Ali countered this attack with a military force under the command of his son Tipu Sultan. As a result of this war, status quo was re-established in 1769 and a pact was signed between Mysore and the British. Under Pratap Singh's successor, Tuljaji-II (1763-87), Tanjore was embroiled in these wars and in a series of further conflicts that ravaged the country and caused an enormous loss of lives. In the 1770s Tanjore waged several wars against Ramnad and Sivaganga. In these conflicts the Nawab of Carnatic, Mohammad Ali (ruled: 1750-1795), supported the latter. Reacting to an alliance between Tanjore and Mysore, the Nawab and his British allies attacked Tanjore in 1771 and defeated the Raja of Tanjore in September of that year. According to the peace treaty the Raja had to cede some territories to the Nawab, surrender two provinces along with their revenue to him and pay the Nawab 3.25 million rupees towards the costs of the war. Vallam Fort had to be destroyed. In 1773 the Nawab and the British again invaded Tanjore territory for failure to comply with the treaty of 1771.[6] The Raja was dethroned; the country was occupied and ruthlessly plundered by the Nawab and the British. In this period the tax burden was almost doubled.[7] In 1776 the Governor of Madras, Lord George Pigot (1719-1777), was instructed to reinstate Raja Tuljaji- II of'Tanjore.[8] However, the ruler of Tanjore had to accept a distinct loss of sovereignty. The defense of the country was handed over to British troops; the Raja was not allowed to enter into any alliances with other powers without British consent and could not support enemies of the British. In addition, Tuljaji had to hand over 277 villages in the Nagore Settlement to the British.[9]

After the French king Louis- XVI (1754/ruled: 1774-91) called for a war against England in 1778, the conflicts -between the two European powers in India also intensified. In the Second Anglo- Mysore War (1780-84) an anti-British alliance consisting of Mysore, the Marathas, the Nizam and the French initially fought against the British. From May to November 1780 Hyder Ali invaded regions east of the Carnatic with the aim of destroying the territories of his opponents.[10]Tanjore was also devastated. The people were killed or driven out of the country by Hyder Ali's troops. In this way Tanjore lost about 40

per cent of its inhabitants. In order to run the state a repressive system of taxation was introduced. Simultaneously-with the consent of the British - Pudukkotai seized the opportunity to occupy the Tanjore forts of Kilanilai, Pattukkottai and Arantangi. In 1782 a renewed attack by Mysore on Carnatic laid waste to the places Sir kazhi, Kumbakonam and Mayavaram.[11]

The coalition between Mysore and its allies broke up in the course of the conflicts, increasingly leaving Mysore alone against the British. The Second Anglo-Mysore War ended in March 1784 with the Treaty of Mangalore, which provided for the withdrawal of Mysore from Carnatic and the British from the Malabar. Hyder Ali died during this war on 7 December 1782.[12] His eldest son, Tipu Sultan, 32 years old at that time, took over from him. In negotiations lasting several months after the war a mutual and comprehensive return of the territories as well as strict neutrality was agreed upon. In the same year the British passed the Pitt's India Act, and under the terms of this Act Company representatives were required to refrain from unnecessary interference in India's internal affairs and expected to maintain a politically neutral position.[13] From 1785-1787 Tipu Sultan waged a war against his former allies, the Marathas and the Nizam (Mysore - Maratha War), in which the British intermittently supported the Marathas.

In the Third Anglo-Mysore War from 1790-1792 in which the British allied with the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad to fight against Mysore while the French remained neutral, the British gained a victory over Tipu Sultan. Tipu now found it difficult to realize many of his more ambitious plans although he again managed to reach Pondicherry in January 1791. This war ended in February 1792 with the signing of the Treaty of Seringapatnam (Srirangapattanam), which provided for the return of all territories north of the river Krishna, formerly occupied by Mysore, to the Marathas; of the territories between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra to Hyderabad and the transfer of territories around Salem and Dindigul, as well as a significant part of the Malabar Coast, to the British.

Tipu Sultan used the time between the end of the war in 1792 and the beginning of a new war in 1798 to strengthen his weakened political and economic power, to recoup the losses of the Third Anglo-Mysore War and to prepare for new conflicts with the British. In 1799 he saw the possibility of a new war against the British and, therefore, sought alliances with France and Turkey. His efforts, however, were unsuccessful. The British reacted in 1799 with a march on Seringapatnam, the capital of Mysore, which was captured after a brief siege in which Tipu Sultan died. After the victory over Tipu Sultan on 4 May 1799[14], the British installed a Hindu dynasty in Mysore and handed over large parts of the country to Hyderabad.

When Tuljaji - II's successor, Amar Singh (ruled 1787-1798), assumed the throne. Tanjore's payments to the British were increased to such an extent that financial collapse of the state was imminent. By a settlement dated 25 October 1799, Serfoji - II (1798-1833), therefore, finally handed over the country to the British in 1799. Nominally, Serfoji II remained the Raja of Tanjore, but his power extended only to the cities of Tanjore and Vallam. The British gave him subsidies in return. In 1801 Tanjore became a part of the Madras Presidency.[15] By placing Hyderabad under a treaty of subsidies (1799) and by occupying the nominally independent Carnatic (1801) the consolidation of British rule in Southeast India was complete.[16]

Among the European Powers the British consolidated their position by applying various strategies and alliances in Tanjore in dethorning the last Maratha King Serfoji - II. From the second half of the Eighteenth Century the political developments in Tanjore were marked by the increasing rivalry between the British, the French and the Muslim Powers regarding the possession of the Tanjore Kingdom. In the power struggle, the final winner was the British mainly due to their diplomacy and military power.

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Prison: A Strategic Instrument for Freedom Struggle

M. Subhiksha[1] and Dr. M. S. Fathima Begum[2]

The intensification of nationalist agitations and rise of popular struggles in nook and corner of state resulted in mass incarceration. Prison institution became a popular political weapon of British, to crush the rise of political uprising at the nascent stage. They inorder to sustain their power and to keep people in their circle of trepidation, enforced new laws and arrested and imprisoned the political leaders under theirmaliciouspanopticon's prison.[1] Political leaders were categorised under a separate categorytagged as political prisoners and projected them as criminals and terrorist under the state judiciary. The colonial power's prison reforms showcased a dominant, hegemonial and authoritarian body enacted with vigorous and repressive

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laws to shut off nationalists frompolitical agency. British used prison institution as wield power to safeguard them from surge of any remonstrance.

The remonstrance of major three Gandhian movements paved way for the Government to arrest the political prisoners under several repressive and draconian penal sanctions. One of the British Indian Penal code actspromulgated, that"Whoever, by words, either, spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the government established by law in India shall be punished with imprisonment for life with fine".[1] In the act of arresting political prisoners, British showcased the one-upmanship, by ghettoizing the Indian citizens and depraved them into prison subjects and criminals for the cause of their own munificence.The political active groups or the resisters were propagated as antagonist in the British eye, led to a deep rancour among the Indian citizens.

In order to showcase their power and dominant trends on Indian people, Britishers banned people in indulging any sort of political activity by imposing censorship, restriction and infringement against them by subjugating their freedom of speech. Through this strict and iniquitous laws, people were encircled with restrictions. Notably banned from conducting meeting, devise assembly, forming political parties and voicing out their political opinions. The breaking of such vicious laws and promulgating their national sprit consciousness led to violent tribulations of police officials to imprison the leaders.

Arduous behaviourbyPolice Official

The formulation of Defence of India Act, Regulation of 1818and Rowlatt Act of 1919promulgated revolutionary activities as a crime. These acts propagated any violence against the Government as a punishable offence. The British in order to showcase their dominant trends on the people, harnessed them with strict diabolical laws like section 124A, 153A, 103,144, 108,188,121,122 etc,[1] that kindledpeople, to enact a strong civilian opposition against the power. Several leaders with divergent views in Madras Presidency were arrestedand crammed inside prison walls,by three kinds of police units notably armed reserves police, armed troops and armed punitive police.[1]These police units had a substantial power under the British power andshowcased a great upmanship against the leaders, where they were given powers to arrest political leaders without warrant or any judicial approach.

The role of police officials during the Gandhian movement displayed a high sense of power, dominion and authority that stifled the people from participating in freedom struggle. They in order to tranquilize the mass non- violent agitation, used all sort of vigorous methods to supress the nationalists from escalating political power[1]. The political leaders were terrorised seeing the ruthless act of police and articulated the behaviour of them in several newspapers.[1] In one of the prominent newspapers (sundanrira Sangu), opined that "the police beaten up the satyagrahis like dogs".[1]

They were beaten up with all sort of weapons like cudgels, lathis and even shot dead by guns. In order to condemn the transgression of British law, a throng level of political leaders averse them through hartals, strikes, rallies, meetings, fasting etc. The incessant oppositions, triggered a sense of collectiveness in every nook and corner of the state. Several leaders opined the police officials as a "poison to Indian society" in their speeches to educate people the knowledge of political weapon against the power. British in order to safeguard their position in Madras province incarcerated leaders.[1]This led to multitude arrest of political leaders under the British Indian penal code structure.

Political Prisoner's Imprisonmentin Madras Presidency

British prison structure:

Due to mass arrest, cramming of prisoners and lack of prison cells, the leaders were imprisoned in panopticon camps and huts without proper infrastructure and facilities. These political leaders were imprisoned in different category cells separate from other class prisoners with a tag called "political prisoners" or "criminals". There are fifteen district jails in Madras presidency especially encircling present day Tamilnadu,

they are Cuddalore, North Arcot, Vellore, Madras, Coimbatore, Salem, Chingleput, Nilgiris, Madurai, Ramanad, South Arcot, Tanjore, Tirunelveli and Trichinopoly. [1]These classification of jails are categorised according to the criminal accounts; example Vellore jail is completely for the women political prisoners.

Under the British prison reforms, the arrested prisoners are locked up in three different class prisons, they are notably "A", "B" and "C". The "A" and "B" class prisons are for British criminals with an extravagant infrastructure.[1] But "C" class prisons are for the murderers, dacoits, prostitutes and most importantly the political prisoners with an arduous and weak infrastructure[1].They were hurdled with other criminal offenders and were treated the same. Under the classification of prisons there are two grades of jails, one first class prison and second -class prisons. The examples of first-class prisons are Vellore, Trichinopoly and Coimbatore. And second- class prisons are Madras, Madurai and Salem. These prisons even though they are classified as first or second- class prisons, their maltreatment to the political prisoners was inhumane and hostile. They were even segregated, inside prisons according to their caste or communal base which was a trickery move of Britishers. The British officials separated them to trigger communal pressure against the groups. But the political leaders were staunch followers of fraternity and were strongly acted according to it.

Mental and physical suffering:

Political prisoners had gone through all sort of sufferings both physically and also mentally inside prison walls. According to mental abuse, they experienced racial discrimination, arrogant bureaucrats and foul languages by the officials. In means of physical abuse the leaders were victimised of bad infrastructure of prisons. They were under miserable circumstancesof improper dieting and bedding, environmentally- linked infections and strict remission system. The political prisoners were given same food of what given to other criminal offenders.[1]Kanji was the food given to all prisoners that consists of all sort of dirt, dust and stones which was not edible,prison fare and were given only two times a day.[1] Bedding was also poor under British prison administration, were they had to sleep on filthy grounds suffering from all sort of bug bites,foul smell, and handcuffing to iron rods.[1]

The other sufferings that they had to go through was spread of environmentally- linked infections such as cholera, dysentery, tuberculosis, leprosy, ashthma, dropsies, anaemia, scurvy, Typhus etc.[1]The prisoners were huddled together in a small and dark prison cells, where diseases spreaded easily. Even the food pot they had was not hygienic, because they had to use it for all purposes like food, drink and latrine[1].The diseased patients were not taken care of, and were rotted in jails due to maltreatment. Even though some political prisoners were shifted to other political jails, they died without proper medication by British officials.[1]Many prominent political prisoners voiced out the prison struggles through pamphlets and prison diaries which later became historical records. The struggles and sufferings of political prisoners were not only because of poor infrastructure, but also due to strict remission system.

Harsh prison system:

Political prisoners during their imprisonment were occupied with harsh prison labouring system. The prison labour system was cruel and vicious towards the political prisoners and tortured them inhumanely. They had to work under strict panopticons camps in a miserable circumstance. They were given all sort of deplorable works inside the prison walls. These works were mostly degraded their self-esteem. If political prisoners objected the works, they were given strict remission system. These punishments were usually of a physical and sanguinary character. The punishments were whipping, flogging, cramming in dark prison cells, handcuffing to iron rods, or even shot dead.[1] These sanguinary punishments were severe at sometimes wereseveral political prisoners died inside prison walls.

Prison as a new political weapon:

British used prison as a new political weapon in stabilising their upmanship in Madras presidency. Prisons were used as an institution of supressing

nationalism at nascent stage and building strong hold in their state administration. When Britishers gave all sort of physical and mental pressure on political prisoners, they suffered and struggled miserably. Political prisoners inside prison felt the animosity from the officials in every aspect, that led to widespread growing of hatred and anger.The rising of tempest among the political prisoners led them to wield prison as a political weapon against the British power. They in order to protest against the British, fasted and showcased their opposition. Fasting was their new strategywhich promulgated every political active satyagrahi into freedom struggle.1 British in order to stop prisoners from fasting, forcefully fed them with tubes. This shows the stubbornness of prisoners and their strong determination in achieving their swaraj.

Several prominent political prisoners used legends to express their emotion,such as jail diaries, pamphlets, memoirs, songs and poems which later becamea path to freedom struggle. People being flag bearers of leaders trailed from every nook and corner of the state, used prisons as a space to cultivate their political ideology.[1] In order to advocate the jail-going, people all over the country supported and participated in Gandhian movements and got arrested and imprisoned in jails. Jail going became a new trend where people voluntarily marched into prisons.[1] Political leaders used prison walls to spread their political ideas,the jails became the space of political meetings and gatherings of leaders to promulgateand indulge different communities to fightagainst the power. Each community represented different approach in getting swaraj. Their way of approach was different but were united together by means of shared goal and common principle. As prison became a new political weapon, people barged into prisons as a pride and service to the country. Especially in Madras presidency even women and youths voluntarily entered into jails.[1] And to honour one of such personality is Rukmani Lakshmi Pathy (the first women to get imprisonment). These historical evidences speak the contribution of political prisoners, their struggles, their sufferings, and their woeful account.

Conclusion:

The political prisoners were staunch followers and flag bearers of prominent leaders and their political ideologies. They risked their life and limb for the freedom struggle, but faced vigorous imprisonment under British penal sanctions. During Gandhian movements they were crammed in multitude level and imprisoned in prison walls. They undergone brutal and violent castigation including inhumane labour, foul treatment and morally despicable behaviour.

British used prisons as a political weapon, to encircle political prisoners from opposing them. This tactful move showcased outwitting the political prisoners and tormented them. The political prisoners endured harsh condition and ghettoisation, that led to resist against power through Gandhian ideology: such as non-violence, fasting, dharma and love.[1] Their resilience showcased the animosity of colonial repression and provoked every citizen into freedom struggle. The courage and sacrifices of these political prisoners, played a pivotal role in uniting Indians across class and cultural lines.

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CAR (RY) ING the Wounded in High Seas: The Voyages of H.S. Madras

Dr. K. Ashok

Madras Presidency played a significant supportive role in serving the British interest in World War by providing men, material and war equipment's. The war activities Presidency were mainly organised and executed by the then Governor of Madras Pentland. More than 60,000 men from the Madras Presidency served with the forces Of his Majesty the King-Emperor in the Great War. The men from the Presidency served in Mesopotamia, in Persia, in Arabia, in Sinai, in Palestine, in Syria, in East Africa, in Gallipoli, in Macedonia, in France and in Flanders. Interestingly the origin of the Indian Army is from Madras, it was Major Stringer Lawrence in 1748 created the Madras Army which later evolved as British Indian Army. Major Stringer Lawrence is called as the Father of Indian Army." The number of Madras men who lost their lives in the Great War was over 1500. Madras was the only Indian city to be bombarded during World War I." The German Cruiser Emden shelled the city on 22nd September 1914. Among the earliest contribution of the Madras to the War was the supply of thirty fully equipped Motor Cyclists. Madras Presidency supported the British war efforts in all possible manner; leather products of a value of six and half crores, large export of castor seeds and coconut oil, in addition large quantities of tea, coffee, rubber and timber were exported. Madras also supported the war financially. The total amount subscribed by the Madras Presidency floated by the Government of India was Rs.5, 74,03,000. Pentland created a War Fund raised through subscriptions known as Madras War Fund. The Madras War Fund was instituted on 11th August 1914 one week after the outbreak of War to give help to the British and Indian Troops at the Front.

The establishment of Madras War Fund:

The Madras War Fund was conceived, inspired and directed by Lord Pentland. By the mid of September

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1914 before other provinces had formed separate funds, the Madras War Fund had collected 17 lakh Rupees a sum equal to the fund collected from the whole of India for the Imperial Indian Relief Fund. A series of telegrams were sent to generous Rajas for raising the fund by the Madras Government. Altogether the Madras War Fund raised nearly 74 lakhs of rupees, making with other special funds a total of nearly a hundred lakhs from Madras and nearly 18 lakhs for the Imperial Indian Relief Fund. The Madras War Fund as a part of its fund raising designed the Madras War Stamp and sold it for 32 for a rupee and was able to raise Rs. 21000 by the sale of War Stamp. Three Industrial Exhibitions and Park Fair were organised during the Christmas session of 1915-16, 1916-17 and 1917-18 for the benefit of the war funds. The Ladies Depot of the Madras War Fund was instituted in September 1914 for the supply of Red Cross articles and other comforts to troops overseas.xiiAfter the war, the Fund supplied Red Cross comforts to the troops in Mesopotamia and to all the Military station Hospitals in the Madras Presidency. On 12th June 1919, Lord Willingdon the Governor of Madras and President of the War Fund held a meeting of the subscribers and it was decided to hand over the balance in hand to a 'Post War Fund Committee',xiii

The Making of Hospital Ship Madras (HS Madras):

The Hospital Ships was in use right from the ancient times. The ancient Greek and Roman fleets contained hospital ships. The Roman fleet had an Aesculpius, named after the ancient god of medicine. His symbol, an aesculpis, a rod bearing an entwined snake, now represents the symbol of physicians throughout the globe. The sixteenth-century Spanish Armada fleet is considered to have contained fifteen hospital ships. The first recorded British hospital ship Goodwill joined the Mediterranean Fleet in 1620.x As the years passed numerous vessels served briefly as hospital and store ships but their numbers were negligible from 1793 to 1854. On average the hospital ships served for a period of seven years. There was no appreciable expansion of the British hospital fleet until the onset of the First World War. The First World War saw the war on new heights on waters and the Hospital Ships were deployed in reasonable numbers.

Pentland decided to support the Imperial War interest by providing a Hospital Ship through the Madras War Fund. He was supported by Commander Huddlstone R.I.M., Sir Francis Spring, Chairman of the Madras Port Trust, Colonel G GGiffard C.S.I., I.M.S., and other as experts as part of the advising Committee of the Madras War Fund for his venture of introducing the Hospital Ship. Sir Harold Stuart then the first member of the Governor Council had full praise for Pentland. He remarked Honourable Excellency send a cable to Lord Inchcape, the Chairman of the British Indian Steam Navigation Company (B.I.S.N. Co.,) who replied promising to send a charter one of their new ships of 7000 tons S. S. Tanda. The Ship was designed for Eastern cooly traffic and not for cargo and therefore it's easy to convert the ship as a Hospital Ship. But the ship came with a heavy price. The hire of the ship with coal and water cost one Lakh a month and the Hospital expense will be an additional 30,000 a month. Pentland tried to get as much as subscriptions for the ship. Lord. Inchcape gave the first subscription by giving Rs.10,000 p.m., which he later raised to 20,000. The fund was raised mainly by contributions from Chiefs and Rajas, from firms, from the members of the Government Services, both European and Indian and by organising entertainments all over the Presidency, S.S.Tanda is a new steel twin-screw steamer, built by Messrs. Stephens and Sons, of Glasgow, with a length of 430 feet, a breadth of 58 feet, and a moulded depth of 28 feet. Her engines are of the twin-screw type, and develop 5,200 horse-power, with a speed of 12 knots, while her gross tonnage amounts to 7,000 tons. She has accommodation for fifty first-class and fifty-two second-class passengers- all amidships-and is fitted throughout with fans and electric light.

The Ship had five decks as follows:xix

1. Boat deck upon which the ship's officers and Engineers have their cabins
2. Saloon deck with two first class saloons, music room and smoking room
3. Main deck with first and second class cabins and second class dining room (now the operation theatre)

4. Upper 'tween deck (9 feet high) running the whole length of the vessel leaving only the engine room casing in the middle
5. The lower 'tween deck consisting of one pillared hall forward of the engine room and bunkers, and a similar hall right aft

The B.I. ship Tanda arrived at the coast of Madras on 12th October 1914 from Rangoon and on 17th November she sailed out for East Africa as a clean white Hospital Ship Madras H.S. Madras with 300 beds, operation theatre, X-ray and sterilizing rooms and all the latest apparatus. Her hull was painted white with a broad red band, broken in the centre by a Geneva cross which was illuminated at night by electric lights from above. This task of conversion was carried by Colonel Giffard assisted by Captain W.B.Huddleston, R.I.M., C.M.G., Sir Francis Spring and the workmen of M. and S.M. Railway. On her maiden voyage she was fitted with 300 beds six months later it was increased to 500 and in 1916 again to 600. Giffard wrote later; every firm and every company and every individual gave most willing help for the conversion of B.I. to Hospital Ship and he remarked it was possible because of the labour of love of every Madrasi.

The ship had a Senior Medical Officer in charge who was a member of the Indian Medical Service, three Military Assistant Surgeons, five Civil Assistant Surgeons, one MatronSuperintendent, Six Nurses and an X-Ray Assistant and a Photographer. There were also the other miscellaneous staffs usual in a Hospital Ship.

The Voyages of HS Madras:

HS Madras started its first voyage on 17th November 1914 and was in operation up to 31" May 1918 then it was handed over to the Army Department. It made a total of 56 voyages, 3 double Voyages to Mombasa, 27 to Basra, 11 to Suez, 2 to Alexandria and 13 to Shat-el-Arab. It carried a total of 23,174 people including 595 British Officers, 5177 British rank and file, 313 Indian Officers, 16, 682 Indian rank and file and 407 German and Turkish Prisoners. Captain Hugh Stott L.M.S., O.B.E., who was one of the medical staff in the ship, wrote: During the first year of the war her military value was almost incalculable. The Madras was the only Hospital Ship available for the Government of India in Eastern Waters. In Mesopotamia it was a common saying that time was measured by the Madras-when she left and when she would come again..... And what of her history from the social aspect? There we were thrown together at sea, all shades of colour, creed and caste. The Hon. Sir Arthur Lawley GCSI, GCIE., KCMG who served as the Governor of Madras was later appointed as the Red Cross Commissioner in 1916 to Mesopotamia and wrote a book A Message from Mesopotamia in 1917 in which he wrote 'She was the first Hospital Ship to cross the bar and make her way to Basra and for many months she was the only Hospital Ship in Tigris Waters. Of all, the work accomplished by Voluntary effort for the sick and wounded in this Great War, none has been more effective or more valuable that which has been done by the Hospital Ship Madras'. He records 'I am strengthened in my conviction that nothing is left undone on board the Madras which skill and care and devotion can achieve for the welfare of the sick and wounded-no matter what their rank or what the colour of their skin may be vi

The Merits of H S Madras

As no one had seen a Hospital ship at Madras it became a blessing in disguise the ship was designed as a first class civil hospital with all amenities. It was for the first time European Nurses looked after Sepoys. European soldiers and Sepoys were treated in the same place which was later followed by other military hospitals and ambulances. It was at HS Madras everyone worked together without any discrimination. HS Madras carried patients British (from Australia, Canada or Africa), Indians (Baluchis, Bengalis, Brahmans, Dorgas, Garwhalis, Jats, Madrasis, Mahrattas, Pathans, Parsis, Punjabis, Rajputs or Sikhs), Mongalians (Gurkhas, Chinese, Burmese or Nagas), Africans (Egyptians, Nigerians, men of the King's African Rifles), West Indians and enemy prisoner subjects (Germans, Austrians, Turks, Kurds and Arabs) all pulled together. The ship initially carried many caste cooks to support each caste group, finally two Goorkhas cooks stayed in the ship for a long time and prepared food for all and slowly the concept of separate dining halls also waned away. As time passed at H S Madras slowly caste-procedure disappeared. H.S. Madras

differed from all other hospital ships equipped for the war, in that she was an affiliated College of the Madras University so that during the first six months and whilst the Medical College students remained on board, practical classes took place when the ship was full of patients and a series of theoretical lectures were given by the staff of the Ship who for the time being were considered to be Professors in an affiliated College,

Take Over of HS Madras:

The Marine Department of Government of India decided to take over the Hospital Ship from Madras. In the Letter No. 5772 dated 2nd May 1918 from the Secretary to the Government of India communicated the same and it was acquired by the Government of India from 1ª June 1918. The HS Madras had a long and distinguished career as a hospital ship during WWI. In 1920 the vessel was returned to the BISN Co and reverted to being the SS Tanda. It was sold to the Eastern and Australian Steam Ship Co in 1924 and remained in service till 1944. On July 15, 1944 while it was on a journey from Melbourne to Bombay via Colombo, it was torpedoed and sunk by a U-boat off Mangalore. It had begun its life just before WWI and it was fated to be destroyed during WWII.

Conclusion:

Madras had contributed significantly to the British War Efforts during First World War. Lord Pentand raised a fund through subscriptions known as Madras War Fund and supported the war. He bought a ship from the Madras War Fund and converted it into a Hospital Ship named as HS Madras. It had made 56 trips carrying 23174 people of various nationalities and caste. Mark Harrison refers that most of the hospital ships carrying the sick and wounded men from the war zones were inadequate to deal with the wounded as many were carried on vessels that were not fit for purpose. The only exception was the hospital ship 'Madras' that was fitted properly for the evacuation of the wounded and sick from the front, The conversion of a passenger ship as a Hospital Ship in a month is an evidence for the technical expertise available at Madras. The important legacy of the ship was caring and carrying of sepoys and soldiers through the combat waters in a common space.

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Political Conditions in Madras Presidency (1909–1919): Extremism, Reforms, and Communal Politics

Mr. V. Kathalingam

National and Provincial Political Climate (1909–1919)

The younger generation of nationalists rejected the "mendicant policy" of the Moderates, favoring more assertive approaches to achieving self-rule. At the **23rd session of the Indian National Congress** held at Surat in 1907, a rift emerged between Moderates and Extremists over the election of the president: Moderates supported Rash Behari Ghose, whereas Extremists backed Lala Lajpat Rai.[3] Though the session ended in confusion, this division became permanent and influenced Congress politics for years.

The Moderates, meeting at Allahabad in April 1906, drafted a Congress constitution, maintaining loyalty to constitutional methods and avoiding confrontation with the British. British presidents-George Yule, William Wedderburn, Alfred Webb, and Henry Cotton—were deliberately chosen to demonstrate the Congress's moderate and non-racial character.[4] Extremist leaders, including Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai, were deliberately prevented from assuming leadership.

Despite the dominance of Moderates, Extremist ideology continued to spread. In April 1906, "the bomb made its appearance on the Indian political scene," signaling the beginning of radical agitation.[5] The message of **Swaraj** reached rural populations, ushering in a new era of mass politics. The Indian National Congress convened multiple sessions in Madras, dispelling claims that the Presidency was politically quiescent.[6]

Rise of Extremist Leaders in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu emerged as a vibrant center of nationalist activity. **V.O. Chidambaram Pillai**, a lawyer from Tuticorin, became a prominent leader by founding the **Indian Steam Navigation Company** to challenge British monopoly and organizing strikes in British-owned textile mills.[7] He collaborated closely with **Subramania Siva**, whose slogan, "India is for the Indians and not for the foreigners," attracted British attention.

Kavi Subramania Bharathi contributed through impassioned poetry and journalism, founding the Tamil weekly *India* to propagate Extremist ideas.[8] His works, influenced by Mazzini, sought to awaken national consciousness and mobilize the masses.

Tinnevelly became the epicenter of Extremist activity. On 9 March 1908, Pillai and Siva organized public meetings to celebrate Bipin Chandra Pal's release, defying police orders, and were subsequently arrested. Their arrests triggered hartals, riots, and widespread unrest, with public buildings damaged or burned.[9] Both leaders were sentenced to transportation, later reduced on appeal.

Terrorist activities in Madras were limited compared to Bengal and Punjab. A notable incident was the assassination of **Collector Ashe** by Vanchi Aiyar at Maniyachi railway station, after which Aiyar committed suicide.[10] Despite repression, Extremist leaders utilized vernacular propaganda to engage the masses, integrating Swadeshi principles with constitutional methods. By 1911, extremist activities declined following the annulment of Bengal's partition.

Moderates and the Congress Constitution

Contrary to claims of political inactivity, the Indian National Congress convened six annual sessions in Madras before 1915, demonstrating the Presidency's importance to the nationalist cause.[11] These sessions brought together leaders from across India and provided a platform for debate on constitutional methods, reforms, and the future of representative governance. The Moderates, who dominated Congress during this period, believed that loyalty to the Crown combined

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with persistent advocacy for Indian rights would eventually secure political concessions. Their approach found resonance among sections of the educated elite in Madras, particularly lawyers, teachers, and professionals who valued incremental reform.

At the imperial level, **John Morley**, Secretary of State for India, advocated a policy of conciliation rather than repression. He consulted Indian leaders, including **Gopal Krishna Gokhale**, who frequently corresponded with Madras-based reformers. Simultaneously, **Lord Minto**, the Governor-General, acknowledged that rising political consciousness in provinces like Madras was shaped by English education, democratic ideals, and international developments.[12] Though both Morley and Minto insisted on retaining ultimate British sovereignty, they sought to implement administrative reforms that would appease moderate opinion, encourage cooperation, and strengthen constitutional politics.[13]

Thus, the Madras Presidency became a significant stage where Moderate politics, reformist ideals, and cautious British concessions converged, laying groundwork for later constitutional debates.

Morley-Minto Reforms and the Indian Councils Act, 1909

The **Indian Councils Act of 1909**, popularly known as the Morley–Minto Reforms, represented a turning point in colonial policy, extending the earlier provisions of 1892 and cautiously widening Indian participation in governance. The Act enlarged legislative councils at both the central and provincial levels, and in provinces such as the Madras Presidency, non-official Indians were granted a more visible role in debates and decision-making. Members could now discuss budgets, propose resolutions, and question the administration-though without binding authority.[14] These provisions gave moderate leaders in Madras a forum to articulate grievances, particularly on issues of taxation, education, and public health, thereby reinforcing the appeal of constitutional politics.

A significant and controversial innovation was the introduction of **separate electorates for Muslims**, along with the inclusion of Indians in the Viceroy's and Governors' Executive Councils.[15] While these measures symbolically ended the exclusive British monopoly on administration, they also institutionalized communal divisions. In Madras, this precedent directly influenced the non-Brahmin elites, who soon began demanding similar protections against Brahmin dominance in public services and education. The reforms thus simultaneously appeased Moderates-who saw in them the first steps toward representative government-while also sowing the seeds for organized communal and caste-based politics.

Communal Representation and Minority Politics

The introduction of separate electorates for Muslims in the Morley–Minto Reforms set a precedent that reverberated across India, particularly in the Madras Presidency. While Punjab saw Sikh leaders press for safeguards, in Madras it was the non-Brahmin communities-Vellalars, Mudaliars, Chettiars, and other intermediate castes—that began demanding protective measures against the perceived dominance of Brahmins in government service, education, and politics.[16] The reforms encouraged these groups to articulate their identity in explicitly political terms, laying the foundation for the Non-Brahmin Movement.

In Madras, the call for safeguards soon crystallized into demands for communal representation in councils, government jobs, and educational institutions. Inspired by the precedent granted to Muslims, non-Brahmin leaders argued that equitable participation required legally sanctioned quotas and separate political recognition. This pressure culminated in the formation of the **South Indian Liberal Federation (Justice Party)** in 1916, which openly endorsed communal representation as the only path to social justice. Although these reforms temporarily secured moderate cooperation with the colonial state, historians emphasize that they also entrenched caste and community divisions.[17] By 1919, Madras politics had shifted from being primarily nationalist to increasingly communal and sectional, a development that profoundly shaped the Presidency's political trajectory in the decades leading to independence.

The Non-Brahmin Movement and the Justice Party

The emergence of the Non-Brahmin Movement in the Madras Presidency between 1909 and 1919 reflected deep-seated resentment against the disproportionate dominance of Brahmins in government service, education, and the professions.[18] Despite forming a numerical minority in the population, Brahmins had secured significant representation in the colonial bureaucracy and the Indian National Congress, which generated fears among other caste groups of political and social marginalization. This sense of exclusion crystallized in 1916 with the formation of the **South Indian Liberal Federation (SILF)**, popularly known as the **Justice Party**, named after its English-language journal *Justice*.[19]

The Party drew support from influential **zamindars, wealthy peasants, and rising urban professionals**, particularly from intermediate and "backward" castes. Its leaders-**T.M. Nair, C. Natesa Mudaliar, and P. Theagaraya Chetty**—openly rejected the Congress claim of representing all Indians. They argued instead for **communal quotas, reservations, and political safeguards** to ensure equitable opportunities for non-Brahmins in administration, education, and public life.[20]

Encouraged by British officials who sought to counterbalance Congress nationalism, the Justice Party **opposed Annie Besant's Home Rule agitation** and distanced itself from Extremist politics.[21] Though its mass appeal was limited, the Party's advocacy of caste-based rights marked the first organized expression of non-Brahmin political identity. In doing so, it laid the **ideological and institutional foundations of Dravidian politics**, which profoundly reshaped Tamil Nadu's political trajectory in the twentieth century.[22]

Home Rule Movement in Madras (1916–1919)

The **Home Rule Movement**, initiated by Annie Besant in 1916, sought to secure self-government for India within the British Empire and represented a significant strand of nationalist politics in the Madras Presidency. Besant's efforts drew on her international reputation and reformist credentials, inspiring both urban elites and educated classes to advocate for political decentralization and increased Indian participation in governance.[1]

In Madras, the Home Rule League mobilized support primarily among **Brahmin-dominated professional and student circles**, emphasizing petitions, public meetings, and publications to promote constitutional reforms. The League's activities highlighted the contrast between the moderate constitutionalists within the Congress and the more assertive demands of Home Rulers, while also positioning the movement against Extremist tactics of violent agitation.[2]

However, the rise of the **Non-Brahmin Movement and the Justice Party** complicated the reception of Home Rule in the Presidency. Many non-Brahmin leaders viewed Annie Besant's initiative as **Brahmin-led nationalism**, and thus chose not to participate fully. The Justice Party, in particular, actively opposed the Home Rule agitation, seeking to maintain its alliance with the British and safeguard non-Brahmin interests in administration and education.[3]

Despite these limitations, the Home Rule Movement succeeded in **raising political consciousness**, expanding the discourse on self-governance, and demonstrating the growing regional diversity of Indian nationalism. In Madras, it laid the groundwork for **later mass movements**, even as communal and caste-based politics continued to assert a parallel influence.

Conclusion

The decade between 1909 and 1919 in the Madras Presidency reflects a **transformative phase** in Indian political history, marked by tensions between reform and resistance, moderation and extremism, unity and communal division. The rise of extremist leaders such as **V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, Subramania Siva, and Subramania Bharathi** demonstrated how Tamil Nadu became a vital center of nationalist assertion. Their efforts—whether through strikes, vernacular

propaganda, or powerful poetry-fostered a mass political awakening that challenged British authority and broadened the scope of India's struggle for self-rule.

Simultaneously, the dominance of the Moderates and their emphasis on constitutional methods ensured that the Congress retained a platform for negotiation and reform. The **Morley–Minto Reforms of 1909** provided limited concessions by expanding councils, introducing elected representation, and opening space for Indian participation in governance. Yet, by institutionalizing communal representation, the reforms sowed the seeds of long-term division. For Muslims, and later for non-Brahmins in the Madras Presidency, separate electorates became instruments of political identity and protection, but also fragmented the national movement.[23]

By 1919, the political landscape of the Madras Presidency reflected both progress and paradox. On one hand, the participation of Indians in legislative processes, the growth of political consciousness, and the spread of nationalist ideology laid a foundation for future movements. On the other, the fragmentation between Moderates and Extremists, coupled with the rise of communal politics, complicated the path to unity. Ultimately, the experience of this decade revealed the possibilities and limitations of colonial reforms, the resilience of regional nationalism, and the complex interplay of unity and division in India's struggle for independence.

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Women's Participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement and their Prosecution, with Special Reference to Coimbatore District

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The Civil Disobedience Movement

The Civil Disobedience Movement arose from the rupture between the Congress and the British government at the close of 1929. At Lahore the Congress put aside Dominion Status in favour of *purna swaraj* and called upon the country to observe 26th January 1930 as Independence Day.[1] The programme it sanctioned was a broad one: breaking the salt law, a boycott of schools and offices, picketing of the shops that sold liquor, opium and foreign cloth, and refusal to pay taxes.

Salt was chosen as the issue because it touched every household, and since anyone could boil salt from sea water, large numbers of people could break the law without any equipment; this made the issue well suited to a mass campaign.

On 12th March 1930 Mr Gandhi set out from Sabarmati for Dandi with seventy-nine members of the Ashram, and on 6th April he lifted a handful of salt on the beach and in this symbolic way broke the law.[1]

Women had no place in the original plan. Those who marched out of Sabarmati were all men, and Mr Gandhi's first idea was that women were better suited to picket the shops selling liquor and foreign cloth.[1] The Women's Indian Association protested, and Margaret Cousins wrote to Mr Gandhi that "the division of sexes in a non-violent campaign seems unnatural and against all the awakened consciousness of the women".[1] Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay regarded the salt law as a chance for women to liberate themselves, and in Madras Durgabai Deshmukh pressed for the inclusion of women.[1]

Events did not wait for his permission. Women from villages and from well-to-do city households joined the marchers, raided salt depots and boiled sea water in earthen pots. At Dharsana Sarojini Naidu declared that "the time has come when women can no longer seek immunity behind the shelter of their sex but must share equally with their men and comrades all the perils and sacrifices for the liberation of their country".[1]

Commencement and Spread of the First and Second Phase of the Civil Disobedience Movement in Tamil Nadu

In the Madras Presidency the movement started in the first week of April 1930. The Tamil Nadu Congress Committee shifted its headquarters from Madras to Tiruchirappalli under its secretary T.S.S. Rajan, chose Vedaranyam on the Thanjavur coast as the centre of the campaign, and elected C. Rajagopalachari president on 5th April.[1] The police raided the Tiruchirappalli office, and the Congress office was moved to Coimbatore.

Madras city had a salt satyagraha of its own. On 25th April about a hundred volunteers, including Durgabai and one other woman, left the Swarajya office for the High Court, and the police halted them, separated the women and charged with lathis. The Chief Presidency Magistrate banned all assemblies and processions under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, but women volunteers helped the men to make salt in the city on 13th, 15th, 18th and 19th April, and on 21st April they formed themselves into batches and broke the Salt Act.[1]

The Gandhi–Irwin Pact of 5th March 1931 brought the first phase to a close. In Madras the sentences of all women satyagrahis were remitted, and the picketing of foreign cloth shops went on in the city, "confined to women under the leadership of Durgabai and Margaret Cousins and apparently with only the qualified approval of the local Congress leaders".[1]

The second phase began in far harsher conditions after Mr Gandhi's arrest on 4th January 1932. Across the Presidency 3,490 persons were arrested and

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sentenced in the movement, 291 of them women, and the women received sentences ranging from four months to two years.[1] Mr Gandhi withdrew the movement entirely on 7th April 1934.

The Course of the Civil Disobedience Movement in Coimbatore

The toddy shop boycott in Coimbatore district cost the government a revenue of Rs 1.25 lakhs, and to make good this loss the volunteers of Coimbatore, Pollachi and Udumalpet were dealt with by repressive orders, and many were arrested and imprisoned.[1] In March 1931 the women Ammubai, Seshubai, Bhagirathibai and Govindammal picketed the town's foreign cloth shops and forced them to close.

With its cotton trade and the khadi establishment of the All-India Spinners' Association, Tiruppur was the main centre of the movement in the district. On 29th November 1930 the Stationary Sub-Magistrate of Palladam issued an order under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code forbidding a "Flag Salutation" procession through Tiruppur, and eight accused were charged under sections 188 and 151 of the Indian Penal Code. After Mr Gandhi's arrest in January 1932 the District Magistrate issued a section 144 order on 6th January against the leading Congress workers of Tiruppur.[1]

Savithri Ammal and Janaki Ammal were convicted by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Pollachi on 11th February 1932. In the autumn the Coimbatore Town Congress Committee was itself declared an unlawful association, and women who picketed the cloth shop of Viswanatha Ayyar in Coimbatore town on 21st September 1932 were prosecuted for it.[1]

Tamil Nadu Women's Part in the Civil Disobedience Movement in Coimbatore

The Coimbatore women who took part in the Salt Satyagraha in 1930 are named as Savithri Ammal, Padmavathi, Bagiyalakshmi Ammal and Kamalammal. Padmavathi Asher, born at Tiruppur in 1908, was the wife of P.D. Asher, a prominent cotton merchant of the town. She received six weeks' imprisonment in 1930–31 under section 143 of the Indian Penal Code and, with Bagyalakshmi Ammal, was fined Rs 100 and imprisoned in default, both being classed as "A" class prisoners. When the movement revived in January 1932 she was dictator of the Coimbatore District Congress; she and her husband were convicted under section 107 of the Indian Penal Code and section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code for defying the order by taking out a flag procession in Tiruppur, and were committed to the Central Jail at Coimbatore and the Presidency Jail for Women at Vellore, she once more being placed in "A" class.[1]

Bagyalakshmi Ammal, born in 1885, wife of the late V.V.S. Iyer, was sentenced to six weeks under section 143 in 1930, to six months under section 4 of the Ordinance of 1932, and to nineteen months under section 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act in 1933. Govindammal, born in 1905, was the wife of an employee of the Spinners' Association at Tiruppur. On 18th January 1932 she walked with a national flag, singing national songs, from the khadi shop at Punjaipuliyampatti towards Coimbatore, and was sentenced to six months' imprisonment under section 188; on 7th August 1933 she was convicted again under section 17(1) and given six months' rigorous imprisonment in "C" class.[1]

Savithri Ammal, born at Podipatti in Udumalpet taluk in 1899, wife of Govindasamy Naidu, belonged to the Hindustan Seva Dal and took part in picketing toddy shops in 1931. With her elder sister Janaki Ammal she picketed the Taluk office and persuaded people not to bid at an auction. On 11th February 1932 the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Pollachi convicted them under section 4 of the Ordinance V of 1932 and section 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908, and sentenced them to six months' and two years' rigorous imprisonment, to run concurrently; as respectable people used to a superior mode of living they were placed in "B" class.[1]

The women of Coimbatore town were prosecuted later in 1932. Kamalambal, born in 1911, was convicted in January 1932 under section 188 for disobeying a section 144 order, and on 21st September 1932 she and Muthulakshmi Ammal were charged under section 17(1) with assisting the unlawful Coimbatore Town

Congress Committee by picketing a cloth shop in the town. Ambujammal, who was also examined, said that she had picketed on her own initiative and not under a mandate from the Committee; the three women were sentenced to four months' rigorous imprisonment, and Bagirathi Ammal received six months' rigorous imprisonment under section 188 and was recommended for "B" class.[1]

In the records most of these women appear as the wives or daughters of merchants, Congress workers and employees of the Spinners' Association, and their work was what the Congress assigned to women throughout the Presidency: picketing toddy and cloth shops, flag processions and defying orders under section 144. "The Congress Government beckoned women to every form of national service. They did most of the picketing work. They went to prison. They were often chosen as the dictators of the local committees."[1]

The System of Prosecution of Women Volunteers

The government used two kinds of machinery against its women volunteers: the ordinary law and the special laws of 1932. Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure empowered a magistrate to forbid meetings and processions, and such orders were issued widely directly after Mr Gandhi's arrest in January 1932. To disobey such an order was an offence under section 188 of the Penal Code, as in the cases of Govindammal and Kamalambal. Section 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code was applied to Margaret Cousins, who declined to furnish a bond of Rs 10,000 and was sentenced to one year's imprisonment.[1]

The special laws were the ordinances of January 1932. The Prevention of Molestation and Boycotting Ordinance V of 1932 was enforced throughout the Presidency, and its section 4 was applied to the picketing of shops; it occurs in nearly every case against the women, generally together with the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. That Act enabled the government to declare an association unlawful, and a woman who joined in the work of a body such as a Town Congress Committee so declared was charged under section 17(1) or, in a more serious case, 17(2). The notifications were published in the *Fort St George Gazette*, and by September 1932 the Coimbatore Town Congress Committee was on the list.[1]

The procedure followed much the same course in all the cases. The woman was arrested on a charge sheet and tried summarily before a sub-divisional or district magistrate, as at Pollachi. The sentence was a term of imprisonment, frequently with a fine and a further term in default, and Padmavathi Asher and Bagyalakshmi Ammal were imprisoned when their fines were not recovered. The Government Orders of the Law (General) Department recorded each conviction, with the woman's age, family and prison class.[1]

A woman's class in jail depended on her standing. Under Rule 1(3) of the classification rules a non-habitual prisoner of good character used to a superior mode of living could be placed in "A" class. Padmavathi Asher and Bagyalakshmi Ammal were put in "A" class, Savithri Ammal and Janaki Ammal in "B" class, and Govindammal in "C" class. Complaints were raised in the Madras Legislative Council that the women's bangles and *kumkum* were taken off, that they were forced to grind and eat ragi, and that Hindu women were made to wear the white sarees worn only by widows.[1]

Conclusion

The Civil Disobedience Movement drew the women of Coimbatore district into the public life of the national movement as the earlier campaigns had not. Women of the merchant and Congress families of Tiruppur, Pollachi and Udumalpet, and of Coimbatore town picketed toddy and cloth shops, marched in defiance of orders under section 144, headed the district Congress as its dictator, and were sent to the jails at Coimbatore, Vellore and Cannanore. The government which in 1922 had wished to keep women out of the jails now confronted them with the Penal Code, the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Ordinances of 1932, and placed them in prison classes according to the standing of their families.

In this the women of Coimbatore shared with the women of Madras, Madurai and Tirunelveli the experience of standing in the forefront of the movement and of being prosecuted for it. The Civil Disobedience

Movement would always remain the movement in which Indian women entered the jails in numbers.

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Temple Entry Right- A Struggle of the Self-Respectors to Attain Human Right in Tamil Nadu

Dr. G. Rengaraju & Dr. Mallika Begum

The achievement of temple entry rights for the marginalized communities in Tamil Nadu can be attributed to the dedicated efforts of numerous social reformers and leaders committed to social justice. Temples are revered as sacred spaces; however, certain groups within Hindu society, such as the Nadars and other marginalized communities, were historically barred from accessing significant temples in locations such as Thanjavur, Kamudi, Kalugumalai, Srivilliputhur, and Sivakasi, which were dedicated to Brahmanical deities. Although these individuals were recognized as part of the Hindu community and permitted to adhere to the same religious practices and worship the same deities, they were still excluded from entering restricted areas of the temples. In cases of unintentional pollution, the idols were subjected to purification rituals and ceremonies to cleanse them of any perceived contamination.[1]

Conflicts surrounding access to temples, temple festivals, and pathways extend beyond mere caste disputes; they represent significant human rights struggles with substantial implications. The right to enter various mandapas within temples is often restricted even for those belonging to unpolluted castes, leading to disputes among these groups regarding the ability to pull the temple car, perform pooja, and participate in temple rituals. Temples, intended as places of worship, have become arenas of conflict and violence, adversely impacting the human rights of marginalized communities due to the prevailing authority of caste-Hindus. Consequently, the inclusion of outcastes in temple entry is viewed as an expansion of democratic phase in contemporary society.2

The Mysore region set a precedent for allowing entry to marginalized communities as early as the Twelfth Century, particularly in the Krishna temple at Melukote in the Mandya District, largely due to the influence of Saint Ramanuja.[3] Certainly, the Nadars were the forerunners in attempting to gain temple entry right for the lower caste people in Tamil Nadu. They organized protests at various temples in Thanjavur, Madurai, Erode, Arupukkottai, Kamudi, Kalugumalai, Srivilliputhur, Sivakasi, Tirunelveli, and Tiruchendur, which unfortunately resulted in communal tensions between the Nadars and caste-Hindus.[4] In response, the Nadars resolved to construct new grand temples in the Brahmanical architectural style, while awaiting a broader awakening among other marginalized groups and guidance from socially conscious leaders.[5]

In the early decades of the Twentieth Century, social reformers recognized the temple entry movement as a crucial aspect of the struggle against untouchability. The Tamil-speaking regions of the former Madras Presidency were among the last to draw inspiration from neighbouring states such as Kerala, Karnataka, and Bombay.[6] The Ezhavas of Kerala at first launched their initiative for temple entry in 1919. However, it was in the 1920s, with the emergence of E.V.R as a champion for non-Brahmins and marginalized communities in Tamil Nadu, that the demand for temple access began to gain significant traction. E.V.R's Self-Respect Movement asserted that marginalized individuals not only had the right to enter temples but also to access the sanctum sanctorum as Hindus and human beings. Motivated by a sense of Brahminophobia and a quest for equal rights, the Self-Respectors undertook provocative actions that provoked resistance from orthodox factions and Brahmin priests within the temples.

Madurai Temple Entry, 1927

E.V.R concluded that the origins of various social injustices were rooted in Hinduism, particularly the

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prevalence of caste discrimination in Tamil Nadu. Consequently, his followers, known as the Self-Respectors, rejected the notions of pollution and purity that were upheld in Hindu temples. Across different regions of Tamil Nadu, they made efforts to enter temples alongside individuals from marginalized backgrounds.

The Self-Respectors defended their actions by claiming that access to the temple was also their right and those those who denied them this entry into temples would be regarded as opponents of a social order which was orignated on a classless and casteless society. The Self-Respectors achieved partial success in certain areas while encountering setbacks in others.[7] In January 1927, a group of non-Brahmins attempted to enter the Madurai Meenakshiamman Shrine but were thwarted. The temple priests secured the main entrance of the *arthamantapa* (inner shrine). Consequently, the frustrated Self-Respectors returned and resorted to breaking coconuts and lighting camphor as a form of protest. On February 4, 1927, the Self-Respectors, led by J.N. Ramanathan, an ardent follower of E.V.R, convened a meeting to denounce the priests' obstruction of their temple entry efforts. Following this, on February 7, 1927, inspired by J.N. Ramanathan, the Self-Respectors made another attempt to access the temple, which led to significant unrest among their ranks. The priests once again offended the non-Brahmins by enlisting police assistance, who responded swiftly and effectively.[8] Despite these challenges, J.N. Ramanathan and other non-Brahmins continued to advocate for the recognition of temple entry as a fundamental social right.[9]

Attempt at Tiruvannamalai, 1927

In 1927, J.S. Kannappar, a leader of the Self-Respect Movement, along with several supporters, attempted to gain entry into the Siva temple at Tiruvannamalai. They were denied access under the claim that they adhered to atheistic beliefs.[10] On February 8, 1927, the temple authorities initiated legal action against J.S. Kannappar. The Sub-Magistrate delivered a ruling in April 1928 that favoured J.S. Kannappar, imposing a fine on the temple authorities. The ruling was based on the principle that J.S. Kannappar and his followers were Hindus and thus entitled to enter any Hindu temple, provided they did not disrupt the temple's activities or its sanctity. The Self-Respect Movement viewed this verdict as a significant triumph, which subsequently served as a substantial encouragement for social reformers in their ongoing efforts.[11]

Tiruchirappalli and Triplicane Temple Entry, 1928

In a notable event, J.S. Kannappar, J.N. Ramanathan, and S. Dhandapani Pillai, along with several other advocates of Self-Respect, made an effort to gain entry into the Rock Fort temple in Tiruchirappalli. However, their endeavour was thwarted when the temple authorities closed the doors against them.[12] In response to this incident, the temple officials initiated legal action, resulting in the Magistrate of Tiruchirappalli issuing a prohibitory order that permanently barred J.N. Ramanathan and S. Dhandapani Pillai from accessing the temple. Undaunted by this setback, S. Dhandapani Pillai attempted to enter the Sri Parthasarathi temple in Triplicane, Madras, on July 6, 1928. As he approached the second *gopura* gate, he was obstructed and the entrance was shut, prompting him to seek an alternative route for entry. Unfortunately, this effort also proved unsuccessful. Subsequently, he filed a lawsuit with the assistance of attorney H. Vasudev, detailing the humiliation he experienced at the hands of the Brahmin priests and temple authorities. The High Court of Madras affirmed that any individual identifying as a Hindu possesses the right to enter the temple; however, this ruling did not alter the stance of the orthodox community.[13] During a special session of the South Indian Reformers Conference on November 28, 1928, E. V. R., serving as the President of the Conference, urged the Self-Respectors to persist in their struggle for equality within temples. He also called upon notable figures such as P. Subbarayan, A. P. Patro, Panagal Rajah, and R. K. ShamugamChetty to provide a political platform for the Self-Respectors to articulate their perspectives on the temple entry matter. The session culminated in the passage of a resolution aimed at dismantling the barriers preventing certain individuals

from entering the temples. The other Self-Respectors indicated that, until that point, no efforts had been made to facilitate temple entry; rather, it was solely the Self-Respectors who took the initiative to advocate for the inclusion of members from the depressed classes in temple access.[14]

Erode Temple Entry, 1929

E.V.R., serving as the chairman of the Devaswam Committee in Erode, unanimously adopted a resolution supporting the temple entry for all social classes.[15] This resolution permitted all Hindu sects to access the sanctum sanctorum and worship the deities managed by the Erode Devaswam Committee.[16] However, prior to the announcement of this resolution, inspired by Ponnambalam and Gurusamy, Eswaran, along with two members from the depressed classes, Pasupathi and Karuppan, and ten others, forcibly entered the Fort Eswaran temple in Erode on April 4, 1929, without E.V.R.'s knowledge, as he was temporarily away from Erode.[17]

MuthusamiGurukkal, the temple priest, barred the Self-Respectors from entering by securing the doors and subsequently informed MutuNaicker, the temple trustee, of the incident, which further escalated tensions. Upon returning from Uttukuli, MuthuNaicker lodged a complaint with the police, alleging that the Self-Respect leaders had forcefully entered the Dwarabalagar*Mandapa*and threatened the Bhattar to permit them access to the sanctum sanctorum for conducting *poojas* and other customary religious rites. On April 18, 1929, the three accused individuals were charged under Section 154 of the Criminal Procedure Code. They were promptly arrested but released on bail with the stipulation that they must appear before the Stationary Magistrate's Court for a timely inquiry. When the accused presented themselves at the inquiry, they expressed skepticism regarding the impartiality of the Magistrate, who was a Brahmin. They submitted a request for the case to be transferred to a different court; however, the Magistrate dismissed their plea and instructed them to return to court on April 22, 1929. In the meantime, the Self-Respectors, in solidarity with the three accused, organized a meeting in Erode. They faced a dilemma: whether to engage in satyagraha to fill the jails or to participate in debates to maintain their position. However, due to E.V.R.'s absence, they were unable to reach a consensus. Their commitment to social justice also led them to support the Justice Party politically. They remained resolute in their determination to secure the right to temple entry at any cost for the marginalized members of society.[18]

On April 22, 1929, the temple entry case was brought before the Stationary Magistrate of Erode for investigation. K.C. Subramaniyam, a barrister from Nagapatnam, represented the accused during the proceedings. In court, MuthusamyGurukkal testified that the entry of the outcastes into the temple constituted pollution, which could only be remedied through a purification ceremony followed by the usual *poojas*. Following the inquiry, the case was postponed until May 1, 1929, with an order for the parties to reappear on that date.[19] After a span of seven months, on January 22, 1930, the Sub-Magistrate delivered a judgment declaring the three accused guilty, imposing a fine of Rs. 60 on each.[20] Subsequently, due to the intervention of the Deputy Collector, this fine was reduced to Rs. 30 per individual.[21] Should they fail to pay, they would face two months of rigorous imprisonment. E.V.R. viewed this incident as a breach of his principles and leadership, leading to various unfortunate events. He advocated for the imprisonment of the accused volunteers, thereby drawing significant public attention to the temple entry issue. Conversely, when the two accused were released from jail after paying their fines, E.V.R. felt disheartened. He then collaborated with Swami Sahajananda, a leader of the Adi-Dravida community, to secure the release of Eswaran by paying his fine. Nevertheless, he remained steadfast in his struggle for temple entry.[22]

Perspective of *Tamil Nadu*

In the aftermath of the Erode temple entry agitation, the Self-Respectors made another effort to gain access to the VenkatesaPerumal temple in Varagoor, where individuals from lower castes were prohibited from entering. They initiated legal proceedings; however, the court's ruling was

unfavourable to the activists. In response, T. Varadarajalu Naidu criticized Justice Wallace's decision in his newspaper,*Tamil Nadu,* stating that if Justice Wallace had contemplated the principle that all individuals were equal in the eyes of the divine, it was likely that his conscience would have disallowed such a ruling. [23]

Rejection of Temples

Following these unsuccessful endeavors to obtain rights for temple access, the Self-Respectors resolved to collectively boycott temples and places of worship as a means to instigate change in the attitudes of the Brahmins. If this proved unattainable, they aimed to encourage the community to disregard temples altogether.[24] The Self-Respectors viewed religious institutions and numerous Hindu rituals performed by Brahmins as enduring sources of unearned wealth for the priestly class.25 To deter non-Brahmins from financially supporting temple worship and the Brahmin priests, the Self-Respectors urged the community to abstain from spending money on temple services, reject the assistance of priests, and halt the construction of new temples. They also proposed that the revenues from existing temples and religious endowments be redirected towards advancing technological education, industrial research, and public health initiatives.26 Even after shifting their ideology towards rationalism and atheism, the Self-Respectors maintained that it was the inherent right of the community to access public spaces from which they had been excluded. K.M. Balasubramaniyam, a member of the Self-Respect League, asserted that unrestricted access to temples constituted a social right, and securing this right would effectively dismantle a fundamental aspect of the caste system.27

The adherents of E.V.R., referred to as 'Self-Respectors,' have consistently championed the inclusion of marginalized communities in temples, grounded in E.V.R.'s principles. Across various regions of Tamil Nadu, the Self-Respectors actively asserted their rights to access temples that had historically barred low caste non-Brahmins. In this endeavour, E.V.R.'s philosophy received strong support from J.N. Ramanathan and J.S. Kannappar. During their efforts to gain entry into temples, the Self-Respectors encountered significant resistance from orthodox factions and faced numerous challenges, including legal battles. Although their initiatives were largely unsuccessful due to the absence of legislative support, E.V.R. and his followers emerged as trailblazers in advocating for temple access for the oppressed classes in the modern era. In response to the backlash from Brahmin communities, the Self-Respectors shifted their ideological stance towards atheism while maintaining that temple entry was a fundamental right, urging Brahmins to adopt a more inclusive attitude towards temple access for all castes. They regarded the temple entry bill proposed by P.Subbarayan as a prudent initiative and expressed their support for it. Following E.V.R.'s lead, the struggle for temple entry was further pursued by B.R. Ambedkar in Nasik in 193028, by Kelappan in Guruvayur in 193129, and by A. VaidhyanathaIyer in Madurai and T.S.S. Rajan in Srirangam in 193930. A KudiArasuarticle criticized the sudden interest of the Congress in temple entry struggles.31 Yet, E.V.R. welcomed the Temple Entry Indemnity Act of 1939 in the Madras Presidency, introduced by Rajaji, as a timely and appropriate measure.32

In the 1920s, the Self-Respectors made attempts to gain entry into various orthodox temples across Tamil Nadu, including locations such as Madurai, Erode, Tiruchirappalli, Triplicane, and Tiruvannamalai. Although these efforts did not succeed in granting temple entry rights to the outcaste communities, they succeeded in fostering a social consciousness that continually advocated for these rights. The Indian National Congress, as the principal nationalist party, recognized the political necessity of supporting the temple entry rights for marginalized groups. Following the disappointments of the non-cooperation and civil disobedience movements, Mahatma Gandhi took the initiative to address the claims of the Untouchables. To garner their support for the nationalist cause, the Congress and its leaders, in accordance with the Poona

Pact, promised temple entry rights to marginalized individuals during the 1930s. Subsequently, the Travancore Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936 led the Rajaji Ministry facilitating access to orthodox temples for the Untouchables. Thus, the Self-Respectors laid the groundwork for the struggle for temple entry rights, and under the influence of E.V.R. and his followers, the Congress ministry ensured the human right of temple entry for outcastes in the Madras Presidency since 1939.The role of the Self-Repectors was commendable in attaining temple entry right , a human right which was denied to the macroscopic section of the society.

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Student Power and the Rise of M. Karunanidhi (1960-1969)

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The Crucible of Discontent: The Collapse of the Old Guard

The dominance of the INC in Madras State was a formidable political reality for two decades following independence, largely built on the strength of its national brand and the leadership of influential figures like K. Kamaraj. However, by the early 1960s, the party's foundations were beginning to show cracks. A major contributing factor was Kamaraj's resignation as Chief Minister in 1963, a decision made to dedicate his efforts to the national revival of the Congress party.While well-intentioned, this created a significant leadership void at the state level that his successor, M. Bhaktavatsalam, was unable to fill.The new administration lacked the charisma and political acumen of its predecessor, leaving the party vulnerable to public criticism[1].

This administrative frailty was compounded by widespread public discontent over everyday issues. The state government faced persistent accusations of ministerial corruption and was heavily criticized for its mishandling of food shortages.The scarcity of rice and other essential commodities was perceived by the populace not as a natural occurrence but as an "artificial scarcity" resulting from administrative bungling and private hoarding. This compounded sense of economic grievance was a crucial, underlying factor that created a fertile ground for a political challenge[1].The most potent source of anti-Congress sentiment, however, was a deepening North-South divide, a core tenet of Dravidian politics. The Dravidian movement framed the political discourse as a conflict between a dominant, Hindi-speaking North and a neglected, culturally distinct South. The push by the central government to make Hindi the sole official language was not merely a linguistic concern; it was seen as a form of "language imperialism" and a direct threat to the future of Tamils[1]. Proponents of Dravidian ideology argued that the imposition of Hindi would give an unfair advantage to native speakers in civil service examinations and education, forcing Tamils to learn three different languages with different scripts to compete for federal jobs. This antagonism was also socially charged, as the opposition to Hindi was intertwined with the Dravidian movement's long-standing anti-Brahminical stance, with Brahmins being seen as the primary proponents of Sanskritized Hindi.

The DMK, under the visionary leadership of C.N. Annadurai, masterfully capitalized on these grievances. While the ruling Congress government could only offer "small demonstrations" and "hollow assurances" to placate the public, the DMK provided a coherent and impassioned platform for resistance[1]. The party demonstrated its strategic political maturity by holding anti-Hindi conferences, such as the one in Trichy in January 1965, which garnered support from a broad coalition of opposition parties and even wealthy industrialists who shared the fear of northern dominance. The compounding series of internal and external pressures on the Congress party- from Kamaraj's departure to the administrative failures and the linguistic crisis-created a political fragility that the DMK was uniquely prepared to exploit[1]. The Congress's internal weakening was a necessary precondition, but the DMK's strategic readiness turned a period of "frustration without coherence" into a political revolution.

M. Karunanidhi's Ascendancy: A Maestro of Student Mobilization

M. Karunanidhi's political journey was not just parallel to the student movement; it was intrinsically linked to it from his early teens. At just 14 years old, he was already an active student mobilizer, organizing anti-Hindi protests in his hometown of Tiruvarur. His

commitment to activism was immediate and profound, leading him to found his own handwritten student magazine, Maanavanesan (Friend of Students), at the age of 15.He later established the Tamil Nadu Tamil Students Association, which served as a forum for peace and justice[1]. This early foray into journalism and activism not only honed his skills as a communicator but also established him as a leader among his peers. This led to his founding of Murasoli in 1942, a publication that would become the official mouthpiece of the DMK and a daily dialogue between the leader and his cadres.

Karunanidhi's genius lay in his ability to translate the intellectual tenets of Dravidian ideology into a powerful and popular cultural narrative. As a playwright and screenwriter in the Tamil film industry, he created stories and dialogues that articulated the socio-economic frustrations of the masses in their own language[1]. Films like Parasakthi(1952) were not mere entertainment; they were powerful vehicles for his reformist ideals, bypassing literacy barriers and reaching a broader audience than political speeches alone could. This mastery of populist communication became a core component of the DMK's propaganda, creating a unique advantage over the more traditional political messaging of the Congress party.Karunanidhi's political credibility was cemented by his dramatic involvement in the Kallakudi demonstration in 1953[1]. This protest, sparked by the renaming of a town after a northern industrialist, was a symbolic act of defiance against what the DMK called the "exploitation of South India by the North". By lying on the railway tracks, Karunanidhi created a powerful visual that resonated deeply with the public, earning him the moniker "KallakudiVeerar" (Hero of Kallakudi). His subsequent imprisonment for this act further solidified his image as a courageous and principled leader, a martyr for the Dravidian cause.

The political trajectory of M. Karunanidhi was not just a result of his individual skills but a strategic cultivation of a unique, multi-faceted public persona. He was an activist, a journalist, a writer, and a party strategist, each role reinforcing the others. His use of film and print media created an emotional, familial bond with the party's grassroots members, whom he affectionately called his *'udanpirappukal'*. This personalized communication style was a far cry from the institutionalized politics of the Congress and made him a living embodiment of the Dravidian movement's aspirations[1]. The Dravidian movement's ideology needed to be disseminated beyond formal political channels to truly become a mass movement. Karunanidhi identified this need early and fulfilled it through his literary pursuits, which served to propagate the movement's ideals to a mass audience. His success in film provided a medium that could bypass literacy barriers and reach millions, embedding the DMK's message within popular entertainment.The Kallakudi demonstration then provided the symbolic political action that gave substance to his literary messaging. This unique combination of populist communication and dramatic action created a leader who was not just a voice of the movement but its most relatable and popular avatar among the youth and the common people.

The Storm of 1965: The Anti-Hindi Agitation as a Political Reckoning

The 1965 Anti-Hindi Agitation was a culmination of decades of linguistic and cultural resistance, serving as a political flashpoint that decisively altered the state's political landscape. As the constitutional deadline for Hindi to become the sole official language approached on January 26, 1965, the DMK, having long championed the anti-Hindi cause, declared the day a "Mourning Day" in protest of the Union government's decision. While the DMK provided the political framework, the agitation was primarily led by a decentralized and politically conscious network of college students[1]. What began as a peaceful protest quickly escalated into widespread riots across the state, marked by violent clashes, arson, and even self-immolation.

The student movement proved to be a formidable political force, effectively organized through the Tamil Nadu Students Anti-Hindi Agitation Council. The agitation was supported by a broad coalition of opposition parties and even wealthy industrialists who feared the influence of the North if Hindi were made the official language. Key student leaders, many of whom were pro-DMK, coordinated the protests, even as they

deliberately kept the movement "apolitical" on the surface to maintain broad appeal. The sheer scale and fervor of the protests forced the closure of colleges and the postponement of exams, illustrating the students' power to bring the state to a virtual standstill.

The Congress government's response to the protests was a profound political miscalculation. The state's Chief Minister, M. Bhaktavatsalam, adopted a hardline stance, threatening "stern action" against the students. The ensuing police brutality, which resulted in the deaths of over 70 people and two policemen, deeply discredited the incumbent government in the eyes of the public. In contrast, the DMK's anti-Hindi platform was validated and its popularity surged as the party provided a political outlet for the raw energy and frustration of the youth. The agitation's success in forcing the Union government to amend the Official Languages Act to guarantee the indefinite use of English was a tangible victory for the protestors and a massive political boon for the DMK[1].The 1965 Anti-Hindi Agitation acted as a political baptism for an entire generation of future leaders. It transformed student activism from a series of intermittent protests into a legitimate, alternative pathway to political power. The movement produced a new cadre of leaders-such as P. Seenivasan, DuraiMurugan, and L. Ganesan-who would go on to hold prominent positions within the DMK and the state government for decades. This demonstrated that the DMK's leadership was not a static, inherited hierarchy but a meritocracy where commitment to the cause, proven during the agitations, was a ticket to political relevance. The violence of the agitation, while tragic, served to dramatically highlight the government's heavy-handedness and the righteousness of the student's cause. This political fallout created the perfect storm for the 1967 elections, as the DMK's victory was not an isolated electoral event but the culmination of a decade of ideological work and grassroots mobilization, validated by a brutal, student-led uprising.

From Protest to Power: The 1967 Victory and the 1969 Succession

The 1967 legislative assembly election was a historic political reckoning that cemented the legacy of the Anti-Hindi Agitation. The DMK, having become a "more popular and more powerful political force" due to the agitations, "routed" the incumbent INC, ending its twenty-year stronghold. The extent of this political shift was dramatically illustrated in the defeat of Congress veteran and "kingmaker," K. Kamaraj, in his own constituency of Virudhunagar by a young, student-backed candidate, P. Seenivasan. This symbolic defeat was the most potent illustration of the shift in political legitimacy from the old guard to the new generation that had been galvanized by the student protests[1].

The DMK's landslide victory was a result of several converging factors. The party's founder, C.N. Annadurai, was a masterful strategist who forged a broad, anti-Congress coalition that included disparate parties such as the Swatantra Party and the Communist Party of India. The DMK's manifesto resonated deeply with the electorate, promising a host of socio-economic reforms that directly addressed public frustrations. These promises included a two-language policy (Tamil and English) to counter Hindi imposition and the introduction of subsidized rice, which was a powerful populist measure. The election was a testament to the DMK's long-term association with the Tamil film industry, which it leveraged for its propaganda campaigns, a key differentiator from the Congress party.The DMK's victory, forged in the fires of student protest and cultural nationalism, set the stage for a new political reality in which Dravidian parties would exclusively hold power in Tamil Nadu. The DMK's victory was a testament to the effectiveness of a multi-pronged approach. Annadurai's political diplomacy and manifesto provided the strategic framework, while the student movement provided the mass mobilization and the dramatic, emotional impetus[1]. The rise of Karunanidhi from a student activist to the state's highest office became the ultimate testament to the power of this new political formula, where grassroots credibility and populist appeal superseded traditional political networks.

1967 Madras State Legislative Assembly Election Results

Party	Leader	Seats Won	Popular Vote (%)
Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)	C. N. Annadurai	179	52.59%
Indian National	M.	51	41.10%

Congress (INC)	Bhaktavatsalam		
Other/ Independent	N/A	4	6.31%
Total		234	100%

Annadurai's untimely death in February 1969 created a power vacuum, but the succession was remarkably swift and seamless. M. Karunanidhi, having demonstrated his political acumen as a minister in Annadurai's cabinet and his long-standing bond with the party's grassroots cadres and youth, was the natural choice to take the helm. His first public appearance as Chief Minister was at a college, a powerful symbolic act that acknowledged his debt to the student movement that had enabled his ascent. Karunanidhi's unique role was to act as the key link between these two spheres, a conduit through whom the raw energy of the youth was translated into a cohesive political force.This made his succession in 1969 not an act of chance but the logical conclusion of a political journey that had been meticulously, and often dramatically, unfolding for over a decade.

Conclusion

The analysis confirms that the student-led Anti-Hindi Agitation of the 1960s was the critical, transformative variable that directly led to the DMK's historic 1967 electoral victory. This was not a standalone event but a culmination of political decay within the Congress, a deepening North-South divide, and the DMK's strategic capitalization on a pre-existing Dravidian cultural nationalism. The DMK's ability to mobilize and provide a political platform for the students frustrations proved decisive.This report presents a nuanced view of the symbiotic relationship between M. Karunanidhi's strategic leadership and the raw, grassroots energy of the student movement. His personal political journey-from a teen activist and journalist to a cinematic wordsmith and populist leader-demonstrates that his rise was both a product of the movement and a force that shaped its very character. The political legitimacy he gained from his decade of work with the youth and his dramatic anti-Hindi activism made him the undisputed successor to Annadurai.The lasting legacy of this period is profound. The 1967 victory created a new political paradigm where power has since exclusively alternated between Dravidian parties. The two-language policy, a direct result of the agitations, remains a cornerstone of Tamil Nadu's political identity. Most importantly, the student movement institutionalized a new path to political leadership, where commitment to Dravidian ideology and grassroots mobilization became the new measure of political success. The trajectory of a student activist to the state's highest office became the ultimate testament to the power of this new political formula, setting a precedent that continues to define politics in Tamil Nadu today.

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Role of S.A. Deivanayagam Ayya in Indian Freedom Struggle

S.Sunavathi[1] and Dr. P.Dhandayuthapani[2]

Introduction

Indian freedom struggle has a very noble place in the world history. This struggle has faced so many challenges for less than century. Freedom struggle is not only a political movement. This is a symbol of the long term dream, sacrifice, opposition and the love for the nation of the Indian people. Apart from the Ahimsa movement launched by Gandhiji, the struggles in various forms such as the intense freedom struggle followed by Bhagat Singh, Subash Chandra Bose and V.O. Chidambaranar are done all over the nation. Many leaders involved themselves in those struggles. In this way, S.A. Deivanayagam Ayya is one of the significant freedom fighters of Indian who went to prison by following the principle of Ahimsa introduced by Gandhiji.

S.A. Deivanayagam Ayya was born as the son of Aravamudhu on 8th of August in 1901 in Siruvanthadu. He took part in the freedom struggles and went to prison many times. Later, he joined Indian National Congress party and worked in various positions and served as the member of Legislative Assembly.

Non-Cooperation Movement

Gandhiji started this movement in 1919-1920 in order to voice against the Jalian Wala Bhag and Rowlatt act and to show the non-acceptance for the less powers given to Indians in the Indian law in 1919. This movement was started in the year 1920. It involved in many freedom struggles all over India till February 1922. The freedom fighters like C.N. Dhandapani Pillai, O.P. Ramasamy Reddiyar and S.A. Deivanayagam Ayya poloraised the people for the Non-Cooperation movement in South Arcot district at the end of September in 1920.[1] S.A. Deivanayagam Ayya and his associates went towards a toddy shop in Panruti on 19th October in the year 1921 and started fighting against it. Due to this, S.A. Deivanayagam Ayya got arrested and imprisoned for six months in Cuddalore prison.

Neil Statue Removal Protest

When Sepoy Mutiny happened in the year 1857, a person named Colonel James Neil worked as British army officer in Chennai. He controlled the Sepoy mutiny and died on 25th September in the year 1857. As an appreciation of his service, the British government has created a statue at Anna Salai in 1861 in Chennai. The people like N. Somayajulu, Muhammed Saliya, Padmasini, Anjali Ammal and S.A. Deivanayagam Ayya have done many protests in order to remove the statue. Somayajulu was initially the director of this protest and later Muhammed Saliya became the director.[2] They got arrested and imprisoned. Then S.A. Deivanayagam Ayya took charge as the director of it. He has created a Satyagraha committee in Villupuram in order to remove Neil Statue and has given many speeches in South Arcot district through it.

Salt Satyagraha

The Englishmen laid salt tax on Indians. As an opposition to this, Gandhiji has overridden all the obstacles and started the march at Dandi in Gujarat on 12th March in the year 1930. Salt collecting protest was done in Vedaranyam beach under the leadership of Rajaji on 13th April in the year 1930. The people like A.N. Sivaraman, G. Ramachandran, Duraisamy, Kalki Sadhasivam, Coimbatore Raju, G.K. Sundaram, O.V. Azhagesan, R. Venkatraman and Mattaparai Venkataramayya have got arrested in this protest. Anjali Ammal, M.V. Sudharsanam Naidu, Kumarasamy and Deivanayagam Ayya took part in this protest. Deivanayagam Ayya was imprisoned for nine months for taking part in this protest.[3]

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Swadeshi Movement

As a part of the freedom struggle, the protests were done all over the country by boycotting the foreign products in order to weaken the economy of the Englishmen. The protest was done very seriously in places like Chennai, Tirunelveli and Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu. Deivanayagam Ayya got imprisonment for one year and three months for taking part in the protest done in Chennai.[4]

Quit India Movement

The Quit India resolution was executed in the Indian National Congress Conference held in Mumbai on 8th August in the year 1942. Gandhiji called out for this movement as "Do or Die". The municipality tabernacle of Cuddalore was burnt on 15th August in Cuddalore. The three Congressmen who tried to siege the Cuddalore district court was arrested on 17th August. Then they have prepared the people by campaigning house by house and by arranging for meetings for Quit India Movement. More than 500 people of a group were involved in picketing on the way to District Collector office on 20th August.[5] In this protest, Thulasilingam from Villupuram, R.Devasigamani from Tirukovilur, S.A. Deivanayagam Ayya from Panruti, V.V. Sesha Iyer, Kanagarathina Raja, G. Rajagopal Reddiyar, S.A. Krishnasamy Padayatchi, Dhasaratharaman and Vithanapathi Naidu got arrested and were imprisoned.

Member of Legislative Assembly

He joined as the member of Indian National Congress and worked as the Congress leader and secretary of South Arcot district. Then he had been the member of general legislative assembly of Cuddalore from 1946 to 1952. When he was a member of Legislative Assembly, he talked about the famine in Tamil Nadu and about the situation of the weavers in the first sitting of the second Legislative Committee on 3rd June in 1946 under the Indian government law of 1935.[6] He talked about appointing high level of members in machinery factories in order to improve the weaving business and talked about the malpractices done by the brokers and officers in providing thread to the weavers. He took part in the same session on 17th August in 1946 and demanded to correct the Motor Transport Act which was already in practice. Then he also talked about the overtime work of motor workers, maternity grants for their wives, arranging for medical facility and creating fund for future purpose.[7]

Conclusion

Thus, he participated in various freedom struggle events held in the South Arcot district and was sentenced to three years, 8 months and six days in prison. He also served with distinction in various positions such as a member of the Congress party, South Arcot district president, secretary, etc. While he was a general assembly member of the Cuddalore Legislative Assembly, he also spoke in the Legislative Assembly about the famine prevailing at that time, the problem of weavers, and the condition of motor workers.

End Notes

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தமிழக அரசியலில் இடதுசாரி தத்துவத்தின் தாக்கம்

ஆ.சிலம்பரசன்

தமிழக அரசியல், சமூகநீதி, சாதி அடக்குமுறை எதிர்ப்பு மற்றும் தொழிலாளர் உரிமைகளின் போராட்டங்களின் அடிப்படையில் உருவாகியுள்ளது. இந்த அரசியல் மாற்றங்களில் இடதுசாரி தத்துவம் - குறிப்பாக மார்க்சியமும் கம்யூனிச சிந்தனைகளும் - தனித்துவமான பங்களிப்பைச் செய்தன. 1920களிலேயே தமிழகத்தில் வேரூன்றிய இந்த சிந்தனைகள், திராவிட இயக்கத்துடன் கை கோர்த்து சமூக சீர்திருத்தங்களை வலுப்படுத்தின. தேர்தல் அரசியலைத் தாண்டி, நிலச் சீர்திருத்தம், கல்வி, சுகாதாரம், உணவு பாதுகாப்பு போன்ற நலத் திட்டங்களின் சிந்தனைக் களமாகவும் இடதுசாரி தத்துவம் செயல்பட்டது. எனவே, அதன் வரலாற்று தோற்றம், வளர்ச்சி, தாக்கம் ஆகியவற்றை ஆராய்வது, தமிழகத்தின் அரசியல் அடையாளத்தைப் புரிந்துகொள்வதில் முக்கியத்துவம் வாய்ந்ததாகும்.

தமிழ்நாட்டில் இடதுசாரி சிந்தனையின் ஆரம்பக் கட்டங்களை 20ஆம் நூற்றாண்டின் தொடக்கத்தில் காணலாம். இரஷ்யப் புரட்சி (1917) உலகளவில் ஏற்படுத்திய தாக்கம், இந்திய சுதந்திர இயக்கத்தில் ஒரு புதிய அரசியல் தேடலாக வெளிப்பட்டது. இதன் முன்னோடியாக, மு. சிங்காரவேலு (1880-1946) விளங்கினார். 1923 ஆம் ஆண்டு சென்னையில் நடந்த முதல் மேதினக் கூட்டத்தைக் கொண்டு வந்தவர் அவரே. ''ஸ்வராஜ்ஜியம் யாருக்கு?'' போன்ற நூல்களின் மூலம், மார்க்சிய சிந்தனையை தமிழ்ச் சமூகத்தில் பரப்பினார். சிங்காரவேலு, 1925 இல் தொடங்கிய பெரியாரின் சுயமரியாதை இயக்கத்துடன் இணைந்து, சாதி எதிர்ப்பு மற்றும் சமூக சமத்துவக் கோட்பாடுகளை முன்னெடுத்தார். இதனால், இடதுசாரி அரசியல் திராவிட அடையாளப் போராட்டத்துடன் தொடர்புபட்டது.

தமிழ்நாட்டில் பொதுவுடைமை இயக்கத்தின் நிகழ்முறை தேவைகள்

1911 மக்கள் தொகை கணக்கெடுப்பு → சுமார் 1.91 கோடி 1921 மக்கள் தொகை கணக்கெடுப்பு → சுமார் 1.84 கோடி (இந்தியாவில் நடந்த 'மக்கள்தொகை குறைவு' காரணமாக, 1918 காய்ச்சல் தொற்று - Spanish Flu) ஆகவே, 1920இல் தமிழ்நாட்டின் மக்கள் தொகை சுமார் 1.85 கோடி என மதிப்பிடப்படுகிறது. அக்காலத்தில் நகர்புறத் தொழிலாளர்கள் சுமார் 7-8 லட்சம் பேர் (சென்னை, மதுரை, கோயம்புத்தூர், துறைமுகங்கள், ரயில்வே, புகையிலை, அச்சு, நெசவு, சுரங்கம்).சென்னை துறைமுகம், ரயில்வே, புகையிலை → சுமார் 1.5-2 லட்சம் மதுரை, கோயம்புத்தூர் நெசவு ஆலைகள் → சுமார் 3-4 லட்சம் மற்ற நகரங்கள் (திருச்சி, சேலம்) → 1 லட்சம் மொத்தத்தில், 1920களில் 6-8 லட்சம் தொழிலாளர்கள் செயற்பட்டனர். 1918-1925 காலத்தில் பல்வேறு வேலைநிறுத்தங்கள் நடந்தன. 1923-24 கோயம்புத்தூர் நெசவு வேலைநிறுத்தம் - சுமார் 40,000 பேர். மொத்தத்தில் 1920களில் ஒரு லட்சம் தொழிலாளர்கள் வரை பல்வேறு காலங்களில் வேலைநிறுத்தங்களில் பங்கேற்றனர். தினக்கூலி தொழிலாளர்களின் ஊதியம்: 4-6 அன்னா (25-35 பைசா). 1918 சென்னை அச்சுத் தொழிலாளர் வேலைநிறுத்தம் - சுமார் 3,000 பேர் 1919 புகையிலை தொழிலாளர் போராட்டம் - சுமார் 10,000 பேர் 1920 சென்னை துறைமுக வேலைநிறுத்தம் - சுமார் 20,000 பேர் 1921 மதுரை நெசவுத் தொழிலாளர் வேலைநிறுத்தம் - சுமார் 25,000 பேர்

முன்னெடுப்பாளார்கள்

1918-19 களில் ஏற்பட்ட உலகப் பொருளாதாரச் சிக்கல்கள் (World War I பிந்தைய மந்தநிலை, வி

முழுநேர முனைவர் பட்ட ஆய்வாளர், வரலாற்றுத் துறை, பெரியார் அரசு கலைக் கல்லூரி, கடலூர்

லை ஏற்றம்) தொழிலாளர்களின் வாழ்வை மேலும் கடுமையாக்கியது. 1920களில் தமிழ்நாட்டின் தொழிலாளர் சிக்கல்கள் ஆங்கிலேயர் ஆட்சிக்காலத்தில் சென்னை, மதுரை, கோயம்புத்தூர், நெய்வேலி போன்ற இடங்களில் நெசவு, அச்சு, புகையிலை, துறைமுகம், ரயில்வே, சுரங்கம் போன்ற தொழில்துறைகள் வளரத் தொடங்கின. தொழிலாளர்களின் ஊதியம் குறைவு, நேரம் அதிகம், சுகாதார வசதி இல்லாமை, வீட்டு வசதி பற்றாக்குறை, பெண்கள் மற்றும் குழந்தைகளின் கடுமையான உழைப்பு ஆகியவை மிகப்பெரும் பிரச்சினைகளாக இருந்தன. 1920களில் மதுரை மற்றும் கோயம்புத்தூரில் நெசவுத் தொழிலாளர்கள் அடிக்கடி போராட்டங்களை நடத்தினர். தொழிலாளர்கள் அமைப்பில்லாமல் தனித்தனியாக போராடியதால், பிரிட்டிஷ் அரசு அவற்றை எளிதில் அடக்கின. இரஷ்யப் புரட்சியின் தாக்கத்தால், இந்திய சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்திலிருந்த ஒரு பகுதி இளைஞர்கள் மார்க்சியம் நோக்கித் திரும்பினர். தமிழ்நாட்டில் மு. சிங்காரவேலு (1880-1946) இந்த சிந்தனையை முன்னெடுத்தார். 1923 இல் சென்னை மேதினக் கூட்டம் நடத்தப்பட்டது - இந்தியாவில் நடந்த முதல் மே தினக் கூட்டமாகும். அவர் ""Labour Kisan Party" (சூரியோதய சங்கம்) உருவாக்கி, தொழிலாளர்-விவசாயிகளை அரசியல் தளத்தில் ஒன்றிணைத்தார். சென்னையில் இந்தியாவின் முதல் மே தினத்தை (மே 1, 1923) ஏற்பாடு செய்தார். மெரினா கடற்கரை மற்றும் திருவான்மியூர் கடற்கரையில் நடந்த பொதுக்கூட்டங்களில் சிவப்புக் கொடி முதன்முறையாக உயர்த்தப்பட்டது. திரு. வி. கல்யாணசுந்தரம் (திரு. வி. க.) (1883-1953) பத்திரிகையாளர், எழுத்தாளர் மற்றும் தொழிற்சங்கவாதியான திரு. வி. க., தமிழ்நாட்டில் தொழிலாளர் உரிமைகளை வலியுறுத்திய முக்கிய முன்னோடி. அவர் 'நவசக்தி' இதழை நடத்தி, மார்க்ஸியத்தை தமிழில் பரப்பினார். 1918இல் இந்தியாவின் முதல் ஒழுங்கமைக்கப்பட்ட தொழிற்சங்கமான மெட்ராஸ் லேபர் யூனியனை பி.பி. வாடியா, சிங்காரவேலு ஆகியோருடன் இணைந்து நிறுவினார். 'நவசக்தி' மூலம் தொழிலாளர்களின் உரிமைகளையும், காலனிய சுரண்டலையும் விமர்சித்தார். அவரது பேச்சுகள் மற்றும் எழுத்துகள் தொழிலாளர்களை அரசியல் ரீதியாக எழுச்சி அடையச் செய்தன.

திரு. வி. க. தமிழ்நாட்டில் தொழிலாளர் இயக்கத்தை அறிவார்ந்த முறையில் வளர்த்தார் மற்றும் கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கத்தின் ஆரம்பகால வளர்ச்சிக்கு உதவினார். 'தமிழ்நாடு கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கத்தின் தந்தை' என்று அழைக்கப்படும் ஜீவானந்தம், கம்யூனிஸ்ட் கட்சியை மக்களிடம் கொண்டு சென்றவர். தொழிலாளர் மற்றும் விவசாயிகள் இயக்கங்களை ஒருங்கிணைத்தார். 1930களில் இந்திய கம்யூனிஸ்ட் கட்சியை (CPI) தமிழ்நாட்டில் வலுப்படுத்தினார். தொழிற்சங்கங்களை விரிவாக்கி, விவசாயிகளையும் இணைத்தார். தமிழில் மார்க்ஸியத்தை எளிமையாக விளக்கி, பொதுமக்களிடையே பரப்பினார். 'ஜனசக்தி' இதழை நடத்தி, சமூகநீதி மற்றும் சமத்துவத்தை வலியுறுத்தினார். சாதி அடக்குமுறைக்கு எதிராகவும், தொழிலாளர் உரிமைகளுக்காகவும் போராடினார். பெரியாருடன் இணைந்து சமூக சமத்துவத்தை முன்னெடுத்தார். ஜீவானந்தம் கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கத்தை தமிழகத்தில் பரவலாக்கி, தொழிலாளர்-விவசாயிகள் இயக்கங்களை ஒருங்கிணைத்து, இடதுசாரி அரசியலுக்கு வலுவான அடித்தளத்தை அமைத்தார். பி. ராமமூர்த்தி (1908-1987) தமிழ்நாட்டில் இகஜ மற்றும் பின்னர் CPI(M) இன் முக்கிய தலைவர்களில் ஒருவர். தொழிற்சங்க இயக்கங்களை வலுப்படுத்தி, இடதுசாரி அரசியலை முன்னெடுத்தார். 1930-40களில் சென்னை, மதுரை, கோயம்புத்தூர் ஆகிய இடங்களில் தொழிற்சங்கங்களை ஒருங்கிணைத்தார். ரயில்வே, டெக்ஸ்டைல் தொழிலாளர்களை ஒருங்கிணைப்பதில் முக்கிய பங்கு வகித்தார். எம்.ஆர். வெங்கடராமன்: தொழிற்சங்கத் தலைவராகவும், CPI(M) உருவாக்கத்தில் பங்கு வகித்தவராகவும் இருந்தார். 1940களில் சமாதானப் போராட்டங்களை

ஒருங்கிணைத்தார். ந. சங்கரையா: இகஐ(ஹ)-இன் முக்கிய தலைவர்களில் ஒருவர். சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்தில் பங்கேற்று, இடதுசாரி இயக்கத்தை மதுரை, தென் தமிழ்நாட்டில் வலுப்படுத்தினார். இவர்கள் தொழிலாளர் மற்றும் விவசாயிகள் இயக்கங்களை ஒருங்கிணைத்து, CPI(M)&I தமிழகத்தில் ஒரு முக்கிய சக்தியாக மாற்றினர். கே. முருகேசன்: மதுரையில் தொழிற்சங்க இயக்கங்களை வலுப்படுத்தினார். எஸ்.வி. கோவிந்தராஜன்: சென்னையில் தொழிலாளர் இயக்கங்களை ஒருங்கிணைத்தார். பி. நல்லகண்ணு தமிழ்நாட்டில் இந்திய கம்யூனிஸ்ட் கட்சியின் (CPI) முக்கியமான தலைவர்களில் ஒருவராகவும், தொழிலாளர் மற்றும் விவசாயிகள் உரிமைகளுக்காக தொடர்ந்து போராடியவராகவும் அறியப்படுகிறார். அவரது பங்களிப்பு தமிழகத்தில் இடதுசாரி இயக்கத்தை மக்களிடையே ஆழமாக வேரூன்றச் செய்தது, 1925ஆம் ஆண்டு, தமிழ்நாட்டின் தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டத்தில் உள்ள ஒரு கிராமத்தில் பிறந்தவர். இளம் வயதிலேயே சமூக அநீதிகளுக்கு எதிரான உணர்வால் ஈர்க்கப்பட்டு, கம்யூனிஸ்ட் சித்தாந்தத்தை ஏற்றார். 1940களில் இந்திய கம்யூனிஸ்ட் கட்சியில் (CPI) இணைந்து, தனது அரசியல் பயணத்தைத் தொடங்கினார். நல்லகண்ணு, தஞ்சாவூர் மற்றும் கிழக்கு தமிழ்நாட்டில் விவசாயிகள் உரிமைகளுக்காக பெரும் பங்களிப்பு செய்தார். 1940-50களில் நிலச் சீர்திருத்தங்களுக்காகவும், நிலமற்ற விவசாயிகளின் உரிமைகளுக்காகவும் போராடினார். தஞ்சாவூர் பகுதியில் நிலப்பிரபுக்களின் அடக்குமுறைக்கு எதிராக விவசாயத் தொழிலாளர்களை ஒருங்கிணைத்து, கூலி உயர்வு மற்றும் நில உரிமைகளை கோரினார்.

நல்லகண்ணு பல சட்டமன்றத் தேர்தல்களில் போட்டியிட்டு, இடதுசாரி இயக்கத்தின் குரலை சட்டமன்றத்தில் எதிரொலிக்கச் செய்தார். அவரது பேச்சுகள் மற்றும் அரசியல் நிலைப்பாடுகள் சமூகநீதி மற்றும் தொழிலாளர் உரிமைகளை வலியுறுத்தின. 1967 மற்றும் பிற தேர்தல்களில் CPI-யின் கூட்டணி மூலம் தமிழகத்தில் இடதுசாரி செல்வாக்கை வலுப்படுத்தினார். பி. நல்லகண்ணு, சாதி அடக்குமுறைக்கு எதிராகவும், சமூக சமத்துவத்திற்காகவும் தொடர்ந்து போராடினார். திராவிட இயக்கங்களுடன் (DMK, AIADMK) கூட்டணி அமைத்து, சமூகநீதி கொள்கைகளை முன்னெடுத்தார். தலித் மற்றும் பிற ஒடுக்கப்பட்ட சமூகங்களின் உரிமைகளுக்காக குரல் கொடுத்தார், இது இடதுசாரி இயக்கத்தை தமிழகத்தில் அனைத்து தரப்பு மக்களிடமும் சென்றடையச் செய்தது. நல்லகண்ணுவின் போராட்டங்கள், 1950-60களில் தமிழ்நாட்டில் நிலச் சீர்திருத்தச் சட்டங்களை அமல்படுத்துவதற்கு அழுத்தம் கொடுத்தன. இவை விவசாயத் தொழிலாளர்களுக்கு நில உரிமைகளைப் பெற உதவின. அவரது தொழிற்சங்கப் பணிகள், தமிழ்நாட்டில் தொழிலாளர்களுக்கு சிறந்த பணிச்சூழல் மற்றும் ஊதிய உயர்வுகளைப் பெறுவதற்கு வழிவகுத்தன.

திராவிட இயக்கத்துடன் இணைவு

1920களில் தமிழ்நாட்டில் சாதி அடிப்படையிலான சமூக அடக்குமுறை பல்வேறு தொழிலாளர் மற்றும் விவசாயியர்களின் வாழ்வை பாதித்தது. கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கங்கள் வர்க்கப் போராட்டம் கோட்பாடுகளை கொண்டு தொழிலாளர் சிக்கல்களை அரசியல் உரிமை இயக்கமாக மாற்றின. பெரியார் (1925) தொடங்கிய சுயமரியாதை இயக்கம் சாதி, மத, சமூக பாகுபாடுகள், பெண்கள் உரிமை, கல்வி சமத்துவம் ஆகியவற்றை முன்வைத்து சமூக சீர்திருத்தத்தை நோக்கினது. கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கங்கள் தொழிலாளர்-விவசாயி உரிமைகளை வலியுறுத்தின. திராவிட இயக்கம் சமூக சமத்துவத்தை வலியுறுத்தி சாதி மற்றும் மத அடிப்படையிலான பாகுபாடுகளை எதிர்த்தது. இதனால் இரு இயக்கங்களும் ''சமத்துவக் கோட்பாடு'' என்ற பொதுக்காணொளியில் இணைந்தன. பெரியார் கம்யூனிஸ்ட் சித்தாந்தத்தின் சமத்துவக் கோட்பாட்டை ஆதரித்தாலும், இந்திய கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கத்தை சாதி, பிராமண ஆதிக்கம் காரணமாக 'பயனற்ற' என்று விமர்சித்தார். அவர் தொண்டர்களுக்கும் கம்யூனிஸ்ட்களுக்கும்

இணைந்து சாதி ஒழிப்பு, வகுப்புச் சுரண்டல் எதிர்ப்பு செய்ய வேண்டும் என அறிவுறுத்தினார்.

தமிழ்நாட்டில் இடதுசாரி இயக்கத் தோழர்கள் முன்னெடுத்த களங்கள்

இடதுசாரி தோழர்கள், பிரித்தானிய காலனிய ஆட்சியாளர்களின் சுரண்டல் மற்றும் பொருளாதார கொள்கைகளுக்கு எதிராக விழிப்புணர்வு நிகழ்ச்சிகள், பட்டறைகள், பத்திரிக்கைகள் மற்றும் மக்கள் போராட்டங்களை முன்னெடுத்தனர். இது விவசாயிகள், தொழிலாளர்கள் மற்றும் சமூக வகுப்புகளை நேரடியாக சுயாதீனமாக்கும் முயற்சியாக இருந்தது. சமுதாயக் கலை, அறிவியல் மற்றும் மக்கள்தமிழ் இயக்கங்களின் ஊடாக மதவாத அடிப்படை சக்திகளின் அதிகாரத்தை சவால் செய்தனர். இது தனித்துவமான மற்றும் சமூக சமத்துவ அடிப்படையிலான அரசியல் எண்ணங்களை வளர்க்க உதவியது.

பிரிவினைவாதத்திற்கு எதிராக செயல்பாடு

சாதி மற்றும் வர்க்க அடிப்படையிலான பிரிவினைகளை ஒழிக்கச் செயல்பட்டனர். சட்டரீதியான இடஒதுக்கீடுகள், கல்வி மற்றும் வேலை வாய்ப்புகளில் சமத்துவத்தை நிலைநாட்டும் முயற்சிகள் இதன் பகுதியாக இருந்தன.

சாதி-தீண்டாமைக்கு எதிரான அரசியல்

இடதுசாரி இயக்கத்தினர் ''சாதி-தீண்டாமை'' பிரச்சனைகளை எதிர்த்து, அனைத்து சமூகங்களுக்கும் சமமான அடிப்படையில் கல்வி, வேலை மற்றும் சமூக நலத்திட்டங்கள் வழங்கப்பட வேண்டும் என்பதில் வலியுறுத்தினர்.

கோயில் நுழைவு உரிமை போராட்டங்கள்

பெண்கள் மற்றும் தீண்டாமைகளுக்கு கோயில் நுழைவு உரிமை போன்ற சமத்துவ உரிமைகளை வழங்குவதற்கான போராட்டங்கள் கம்யூனிஸ்ட் மற்றும் இடதுசாரி தோழர்களின் முக்கிய நடவடிக்கையாக இருந்தது. இது மத மற்றும் சமூக ஒழுங்குகளில் சீர்செய்தல் நிகழ்த்தியது. இத்தகைய களங்களில் இடதுசாரி இயக்கத் தோழர்கள் செயல்பட்ட போது, அவர்கள் அந்த சமூகத்திற்குரிய தன்மைகளையும், நிலைப்பாடுகளையும் நன்கு புரிந்து, அதற்கேற்ப கட்சிக் கட்டமைப்பையும் மக்கள் இயக்கங்களையும் வடிவமைத்தனர். இது ஒரு மாற்று அரசியல் முறையை உருவாக்கியது; சமூக விடுதலை, சமத்துவம் மற்றும் மக்கள் அதிகாரத்தை முன்னெடுத்தது.

பண்ணை அடிமை முறைக்கு எதிரான போராட்டம்

நில உரிமை மற்றும் பண்ணை அடிமை முறைக்கு எதிரான போராட்டங்கள் தமிழகத்தின் பல பகுதிகளில் நடந்தன. விவசாயிகள் உரிமைகளுக்கு, நிலப்பிரிவுக்கு மற்றும் தரமான உற்பத்திக்கான ஆதரவுக்கு இடதுசாரி இயக்கத்தினர் வழிகாட்டினர்.

சுரண்டலுக்கு எதிரான வர்க்கப் போராட்டம்

தொழிலாளர் சங்கங்கள் மற்றும் விவசாய சங்கங்களை அமைத்து, தொழிற்சாலை மற்றும் பண்ணை அடிமைகளுக்கு எதிரான கூட்டமைப்புப் போராட்டங்களை வழிநடத்தினர். இதன் மூலம் பொதுமக்கள் அதிகாரத்தின் சுரண்டலை எதிர்கொள்வதில் ஒன்றிணைந்தனர். கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கம் முறையாக தோன்றுவதற்கு முன்னதாகவே, அன்றைய தோழர்கள் இந்திய தேசியக் காங்கிரஸ் இயக்கத்திலும் சமூக சீர்திருத்த அரசியலிலும் செயல்பட்டு வரலாற்றுப் பின்னணியை உருவாக்கிக் கொண்டிருந்தனர். இடதுசாரி இயக்கத்தின் வளர்ச்சி, ஆளும் வர்க்கத்திற்கும் முதலாளித்துவச் சூழலுக்கும் எதிரான கடுமையான சூழலில் ஏற்பட்டது. அந்த நெருக்கடிகளை எதிர்கொண்டு, தோழர்கள் மக்களுக்காக போராடும் நிலையை எடுத்துக் கொண்டனர்; பலர் தங்கள் உயிரை சுதந்திரச் சேவைக்காகத் தியாகம் செய்தனர். இடதுசாரி இயக்கத்தின் நிலைப்பாட்டை வலுப்படுத்த, தோழர்கள் பல துணை அமைப்புகளை உருவாக்கினர்:

- தோழர் ஏ.எஸ்.கே, இளைஞர்கள் பௌதீகக் கழகம் என்ற அமைப்பை உருவாக்கி இளைஞர்களை இயக்கத்தில் ஈடுபடுத்தினார்.

- *1934*-ஆம் ஆண்டு, தோழர் ஜீவா தலைமையில் தொழிலாளர் பாதுகாப்புச் சங்கம் நிறுவப்பட்டது.
- மதராஸ் துறைமுகத் தொழிலாளர்கள் சங்கம், சென்னை துறைமுக ஐக்கிய தொழிலாளர்கள் சங்கம், சென்னை துறைமுக ரயில்வே தொழிலாளர்கள் சங்கம் போன்ற பல சங்கங்கள் தோழர்களின் வழிகாட்டுதலால் உருவாக்கப்பட்டன.
- பல்வேறு பகுதிகளில் தோழர்கள் மக்களை சமூக விடுதலைப் போராட்டங்களில் ஒருங்கிணைத்தனர்:
- பி. சீனிவாசராவ், சென்னை கம்யூனிஸ்ட் குழு மூலம், தஞ்சைப் பகுதியில் நிலவிய பண்ணையாளர்களின் கொத்தடிமை முறைக்கு எதிராக மக்களை திரட்டினார். மூக்குப்பொடி தொழிலாளர் சங்கம் மற்றும் கள் இறக்கும் தொழிலாளர் சங்கம் ஆகியவற்றை உருவாக்கி தொழிலாளர்களின் உரிமைக்காக போராடினார்.
- ஏ.எம். கோபு, நாகப்பட்டினத்தில் மாணவர் காலத்தில் பைந்தமிழ் இளைஞர் கழகம் அமைத்து, கும்பகோணம் பகுதியில் *18* கிராமங்களில் விவசாய சங்கங்களை உருவாக்கினார், இதன் மூலம் விவசாயிகளின் நில உரிமை பாதுகாப்பில் நடவடிக்கை எடுத்தார்.
- ஜி. கண்ணபிரான், *1948*-ஆம் ஆண்டு இயக்க தடை செய்யப்பட்ட காலத்தில், தலைமறைவு வாழ்க்கை வாழ்ந்தபோதும் கட்சி வேலைகளை தொடர்ந்தார். பஞ்சாலைத் தொழிலாளர் சிக்கனக் கூட்டுறவு சங்கம் மற்றும் குடியாத்தம் கூட்டுறவு வீட்டு வசதி சங்கம் ஆகியவற்றை நிறுவி, *400* உறுப்பினர்களுக்குச் சொந்த வீடுகளை வழங்கினார்.
- எஸ். சுப்பிரமணி சர்மா (சர்மாஜி), *1930*-களில் கல்லூரியில் தோழர்கள் மன்றம் என்ற அமைப்பை உருவாக்கி இளைஞர்களை இயக்கத்தில் ஈடுபடுத்தினார்.
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- இவ்வாறு உருவான தொழிலாளர் சங்கங்கள்:
- சுருட்டுத் தொழிலாளர்கள் சங்கம்
- லாரி - பஸ் தொழிலாளர்கள் சங்கம்
- நகரசுத்தித் தொழிலாளர்கள் சங்கம்
- ஓட்டல் தொழிலாளர்கள் சங்கம்
- நெசவுத் தொழிலாளர்கள் சங்கம்

என்று தமிழ்நாட்டின் பல ஊர்களில் பரவியிருந்தன. இச்சங்கங்கள் கம்யூனிஸ்ட் கட்சியின் அடிப்படை வலுவை ஊட்டின; ஊர்வட்டங்களில் மக்கள் இயக்கத்தில் நம்பிக்கையுடன் இணைந்தனர்.

முடிவுரை

சமூக சமத்துவம், தொழிலாளர் உரிமைகள், விவசாய நில உரிமைகள், மற்றும் பொதுவுடைமை ஆதாரங்கள் ஆகியவற்றை முன்னெடுத்ததில், தமிழ்நாட்டின் சமூக மற்றும் அரசியல் மாற்றத்தில் நீடித்த பங்களிப்பை வழங்கின. முதலாளித்துவ சமூகம் மற்றும் சாதி அடிப்படையிலான அடக்குமுறையை எதிர்கொண்டு மக்களுக்கான மாற்று அரசியலை உருவாக்கும் முயற்சிகளின் வரலாற்று முக்கியத்துவத்தை வெளிப்படுத்துகிறது. தோழர்கள் உருவாக்கிய சங்கங்கள், அமைப்புகள் மற்றும் போராட்டங்கள், தமிழ்நாட்டில் இடதுசாரி இயக்கத்தின் சமூக, அரசியல் மற்றும் பொருளாதார தாக்கத்தை ஆழமாக புரிந்துகொள்ள உதவுகின்றன. தமிழ்நாட்டில் கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கங்கள்

தேர்தல்களை கூட்டணிகள் மூலம் கையாண்டு, வெகுமக்கள் பிரச்சனைகளுக்கு போராட்டங்கள் வழியே பங்களித்தன. அவை சமூகநீதி, உரிமைகள் மாற்றங்களை ஏற்படுத்தினாலும், திராவிட ஆதிக்கத்தால் அரசியல் செல்வாக்கு குறைந்தது. தமிழ்நாட்டில் கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கங்கள் தோன்றிய முதலாவது காலத்திலிருந்தே சமூக மாற்றம் மற்றும் மக்கள்தன உரிமை பாதுகாப்பு சார்ந்த பல்வேறு நடவடிக்கைகளை முன்னெடுத்தன. இவை தொழிலாளர் சங்கங்கள், விவசாய சங்கங்கள், வீட்டு வசதி சங்கங்கள், மாணவர் இயக்கங்கள் மற்றும் பொதுவுடைமை இயக்கங்கள் மூலமாக செயல்பட்டன. இதன் மூலம், சாதி, மதவாத அடிப்படை சக்திகள் மற்றும் முதலாளித்துவ சுரண்டல்களுக்கு எதிரான போராட்டங்கள் முறையாக வடிவமைக்கப்பட்டன. பைந்தமிழ் இளைஞர் கழகம், விவசாய சங்கங்கள் மற்றும் நில உரிமை சங்கங்கள் மூலம் விவசாயிகள் பண்ணை அடிமை முறையிலிருந்து விடுபட்டு நில உரிமைகளைப் பாதுகாக்கும் முயற்சிகள் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டன. 18 கிராமங்களில் உருவான விவசாய சங்கங்கள் இதற்கான சிறந்த எடுத்துக்காட்டாகும். இளைஞர்கள் பௌதீகக் கழகம், தோழர்கள் மன்றம் போன்ற அமைப்புகள் மூலம் மாணவர்கள் மற்றும் இளைஞர்கள் அரசியல் விழிப்புணர்வில் ஈடுபட்டனர். இந்நிலையில், இளைஞர்கள் சமூகச் செயல்பாடுகளில் நேரடியாக பங்கேற்று இயக்கத்தின் வலிமையை ஊட்டினர். குடியாத்தம் வீட்டு வசதி சங்கம் போன்ற அமைப்புகள் மூலம் வீடுகள் கட்டப்பட்டு சமூக நலன்கள் வழங்கப்பட்டன. இதன் மூலம், அரசியல் நடவடிக்கைகள் மக்கள் வாழ்வில் நேரடி மாற்றத்தை ஏற்படுத்தின. மொத்தத்தில், கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கங்கள் தமிழ்நாட்டில் சமூக சமத்துவம், மக்கள்தன உரிமைகள், தொழிலாளர் நலன், விவசாய நில உரிமைகள் மற்றும் பொதுவுடைமை ஆதாரங்களை வலுப்படுத்தும் விதமாக செயல்பட்டன. இவர்களின் நடவடிக்கைகள், மாநிலத்தின் சமூக, அரசியல் மற்றும் பொருளாதார மாற்றங்கள் உருவாகும் பணியில் முக்கிய பங்களிப்பாக விளங்கின. தமிழ்நாட்டில் கம்யூனிஸ்ட் இயக்கங்கள் மக்களின் அதிகாரம் மற்றும் சமூக சமத்துவத்தை முன்னெடுக்கவேற்பட்ட ஒரு நிலையான மாற்றக் கருவியாக திகழ்ந்தன. இவர்களின் சங்க அமைப்புகள் மற்றும் போராட்டங்கள், தமிழகத்தில் மக்கள் அரசியல் விழிப்புணர்வையும், சமூக மாற்றங்களின் அடிப்படையையும் நிலைநாட்டின.

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Tamil Nadu's contribution to the Indian National Movement:

Dr.T.Santhi

Early Political Awakening

The seeds of nationalism in Tamil Nadu were sown during the late 19th century. The founding of *The Hindu* newspaper by G. Subramania Iyer and his associates in 1878 was a turning point. It became a powerful platform to criticize colonial policies and spread nationalist ideas. Similarly, *Swadesamitran*, a Tamil daily, popularized political consciousness among ordinary people. These publications brought the freedom struggle into the homes of both English and Tamil readers, creating a bridge between intellectuals and the masses.

Political associations also emerged, such as the Madras Mahajana Sabha (1884), which later became closely connected with the Indian National Congress. Leaders from Tamil Nadu regularly participated in Congress sessions, ensuring the southern perspective was included in national deliberations.

Role of Literature and Nationalist Thought

One of Tamil Nadu's greatest contributions was through its literature. **Subramania Bharati (1882–1921)**, revered as "Mahakavi," used poetry and prose to ignite patriotic fervor. His poems celebrated freedom, equality, and women's empowerment, while also condemning colonial exploitation. Bharati's verses went beyond politics—he envisioned a society free from caste barriers and gender inequality, giving nationalism a moral and social dimension.

Writers like V.O. Chidambaram Pillai and Thiru.V. Kalyanasundaram (Thiru.Vi.Ka) also used literature as a weapon against colonialism. Their works inspired ordinary people to join the national movement, proving that words could be as powerful as weapons in resisting oppression.

Revolutionary Activities in Tamil Nadu

Revolutionary nationalism found strong expression in Tamil Nadu. V.O. Chidambaram Pillai (VOC), often called "Kappalottiya Tamilan," boldly challenged British monopoly in maritime trade by starting the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in Tuticorin. His venture symbolized economic self-reliance but invited brutal repression by the British. VOC was imprisoned and subjected to inhuman treatment, but his defiance made him a symbol of courage.

Another revolutionary, **Vanchinathan**, assassinated British officer Ashe at Maniyachi in 1911 before taking his own life. His act reflected the growing impatience of young nationalists who wanted direct action against colonial authority. Tamil Nadu also witnessed underground networks of revolutionaries collaborating with pan-Indian movements, reinforcing the idea that freedom was worth every sacrifice.

Tamil Nadu and Gandhian Movements

The arrival of Mahatma Gandhi, Tamil Nadu became a major center of Gandhian campaigns. Leaders like **C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji)**, known as the "conscience keeper of Gandhi," played a pivotal role in popularizing non-violent resistance in the region. Rajaji's disciplined adherence to Gandhian principles made him one of the most respected leaders in India.

The **Vedaranyam Salt March (1930)**, led by Rajaji, mirrored Gandhi's Dandi March in Gujarat. Hundreds of volunteers marched to the coastal town of

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Vedaranyam to break the salt law, directly challenging British authority. This event electrified Tamil society, bringing large numbers of common people into the freedom movement.

Tamil Nadu also contributed significantly to the **Quit India Movement (1942)**. Students, workers, and peasants in cities like Madras, Tiruchirapalli, and Coimbatore participated in strikes, protests, and sabotage against the colonial government. Many were arrested, beaten, and even killed, but the spirit of resistance only grew stronger.

Social Reform and Political Consciousness

Tamil Nadu's nationalist contribution cannot be separated from its social reform movements. The **Justice Party (1916)** initially emerged to represent non-Brahmin interests in politics. While it had a complex relationship with the Congress, its efforts broadened political participation in the region.

Even more transformative was **Periyar E.V. Ramasamy's Self-Respect Movement (1925)**. Periyar was critical of the Congress at times, his emphasis on social justice, caste equality, and rationalism created a new kind of political awareness. By attacking social hierarchies, these movements expanded the base of nationalism to include marginalized groups who might otherwise have remained indifferent to the freedom struggle.

Tamil Nadu enriched the National Movement not only by opposing colonialism but also by reshaping society, ensuring that independence would rest on a foundation of equality and dignity.

Role of Institutions, Students, and Workers

Tamil Nadu's universities, colleges, and press became hotbeds of nationalist activity. Students frequently boycotted classes to protest colonial policies, while teachers and intellectuals provided ideological leadership. Institutions like **Annamalai University** and the University of Madras nurtured debates on nationalism and reform.

Trade unions also emerged as powerful players. Under leaders like Thiru.Vi. Kalyanasundaram, workers in industries such as textiles and railways organized strikes that paralyzed colonial administration. By linking economic struggles with political liberation, Tamil Nadu's labor movement gave the freedom struggle a strong mass base.

Cultural Nationalism

Tamil Nadu also contributed through cultural pride. The rediscovery of Tamil classics like the *Thirukkural* and *Silappathikaram* created a sense of identity and resistance to colonial cultural domination. Leaders promoted Tamil language, arts, and heritage as symbols of self-respect and national pride, blending cultural revival with political struggle.

Women in the Freedom Struggle

Women in Tamil Nadu played a courageous role in the national movement. Figures like **Rukmini Lakshmipathi** emerged as leaders during the Salt Satyagraha and later became the first woman to be arrested in the freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu. Others, including Ambujammal and Annie Besant (though British by birth, based in Madras), mobilized women and inspired them to take part in political protests. Their participation not only strengthened the movement but also advanced the cause of women's empowerment.

Contribution during the Last Phase of Struggle

As India moved closer to independence, Tamil Nadu remained active in all major campaigns. The Quit India Movement saw massive participation from students and youth. Underground activities, strikes, and mass protests demonstrated the people's determination to see the end of colonial rule. Leaders like K. Kamaraj, who later became Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, played vital roles in mobilizing masses and building organizational strength.

In 1940s, Tamil Nadu had firmly established itself as a center of both Gandhian and radical strands of

nationalism, proving its indispensable role in India's final march toward independence.

Conclusion

Tamil Nadu's contribution to the Indian National Movement was remarkable in scope and depth. It produced visionary leaders, revolutionary fighters, fiery poets, reformers, and ordinary men and women who dedicated their lives to freedom. Its newspapers spread awareness, its literature stirred emotions, its revolutionaries challenged colonial power, and its reformers built a more just society. From the pioneering days of *The Hindu* and Subramania Bharati's poetry to Rajaji's Vedaranyam Salt March and the participation of students and workers in Quit India, Tamil Nadu gave the national struggle both intellectual strength and mass support.

Tamil Nadu's contribution lay in combining **political resistance with social transformation**. It showed that the fight for freedom was not only against foreign rule but also against internal inequalities, making independence more meaningful. Thus, Tamil Nadu occupies a proud place in India's freedom story, leaving behind a legacy of courage, reform, and unity that continues to inspire the nation.

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P. Jeevanandham and the Struggle Against Untouchability- A Study on Gandhian Socialist Perspective

Jasmin Vijila. T

P. Jeevandham, popularly known as Jeeva. He was a multifaceted personality as a freedom fighter, Crusader against Social evils, a well-known writer, a Communist, a trade unionist, a man of the masses and the champion of the working class. P. Jeevanandham was born on 21 August, 1907 at Boothapandi, Kanyakumari District. His parents Pattanpillai and Umayammai.[1] Though a farmer by profession, his father was well versed in indigenous medicines. Jeevanandham was the fourth among the nine children of his parents.[1] He was named as Mukandi and also as Sorimuthu, after his family deity Sorimuthaiyan.It was in 1927 that he called himself as Jeevnandham.[1]

Gandhi's Influence on Jeeva

Jeeva was very much influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, and adopt many principles of Gandhi, like Abolition of Untouchability, Ahimsa, Khadi, Simplicity, Honesty,Self-less service and Sacrifice. Jeeva by nature was liberal, broad minded and humanist in outlook. He liked the company of his friendsirrespective of caste, creed and color. He had many friends among

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Untouchables. As a true follower of Gandhi, he stood for the abolition of untouchability. He believed in the principle that all men were born equal and so why should some people alone must be ill- treated as untouchables. He opposed to this unjust social practice.

Jeevanandham's Early Activism

Young Jeevanandham was disturbed by the ill-treatment caused to the Adi- Dravidas. There were a few incidents in his life to show his efforts to abolish untouchability. Among them the prominent incident happened in the temple at Boothapandi. In this temple after the hoisting of the flag for annual function.Usuallythe Adi-Dravidas were not allowed to enter the temple streets. This was opposed by Jeevanandham by entering the temple streets along with some Adi- Dravida boys. These activities created ill-feeling in his family.[1] Perhaps this sort of sympathy and affection towards the down-trodden sections made him marry an Adi-Dravida woman in 1938. She was the daughter of Kulasekaradas, an Adi-Dravida Congress M.L.A. elected from Cuddalore.

From Student to Social Reformer

During his schooling, he started a Footballteam and named it us 'Gandhi Football team' and included many lower caste students. Being interested in political and social activities, Jeevanandham could not concentrate upon his studies. Hence his father warned him not to mingle with Adi-Dravidas.[1] Opposing the advice of his father, Jeevanandham discontinued his studies and left his house. There upon he directed his full attention towards political and social activities.

A Voice for the Oppressed

As a social worker, Jeevandam earned distinction during the anti-Brahmin movement in the South.[1] The caste system in the Hindu social set up had split up the Hindu society in several watertight compartments. Generally, the Hindus were divided into high castes and low castes.[1] The lower castes were subjected to several difficulties in education, occupation and social life.

The Vaikom Satyagraha and Jeevanandham's Role

As a champion of the removal of untouchability, Jeevanandam inaugurated his social activities with his participation in the famous VaikomSathyagraha in 1924.[1]Vaikom is a place in central Travancore. In 1924, there was a conflict over the right of lower castes to use certain roads outside the temple in Vaikom. The erstwhile Princely state of Travancore which comprised of Kerala and Kanyakumari district was well known for religious orthodoxy. Here in the small town of Vaikom near Trivandrum the abominable practice of untouchability was reigning Varnashrama Dharma was strictly adhered. Lower castes should not enter the streets of the upper castes. The untouchable should not enter not only the temples but also the streets leading to them. The Ezhava leader Narayana Guru of Kerala took steps to eradicate the evil but he could not succeed. In pursuance of Mahatma Gandhi's HarijanUpliftment Movement, the local Congress decided to launch a struggle against the religious orthodoxy and fanaticism of higher castes. E.V. RamasamiNaicker the president of Tamil Nādu Congress Committee accepted the offer of leading the struggle. He started with a strong contingent of supporters. Discontinuing his school educationonce for all, Jeeva joined theVaikomsatyagrahaas a volunteer of the Congress Party. The incident had great impact on Jeevaand his life. For the first time in his life, he realized the value and potentiality of the Gandhian technique of Satyagraha. This incident pushed him into the mainstream of national struggle, where he was to play a very important role for not less than four decades.[1]

Jeeva and the Suchindram Temple Satyagraha

After his return from Vaikom Satyagraha, Jeeva was determined to fight against untouchability, in his native district Kanyakumari, at Suchindram Thanumalayan temple. Jeevanandham and his associates Gandhiraman and M.E Naidu entered the temple with

some Harijanfriends.[1] They organized a Satyagraha opposing the famous Suchindram temple, in which Jeeva alsoparticipated as a volunteershowing his solidarity withothers.Thus, graduallyJeeva'sattraction towardsGandhi's Reconstructive Programs had increased.The Vaikom and Suchindram incidents were represented to Maharani, the regent of Travancore.[1]The Maharani tried to settlethe matter peacefully, but the prolonged satyagraha invited a need for quick solution.Thus, ended in victory.[1]

Jeevanandham's Stand Against Caste Discrimination

Deserted by the house, Jeevanandham had to earn his livelihood. He worked as a teacher for some-time in the Traditional school o rGurukulam at Cheran Mahadevi[1]established in December 1922 by V.V. Subramaniyalyer, the terrorist leader, freedom fighter and the editor of the Tamil newspaper, Desa- Baktan.[1] There too, he felt very much about the distinction shown between the Brahmin and non-Brahmin students when the Brahmins sat separately while dining.[1] In January 1925 Jeevanandam apprised these to E.V.Ramaswami, the leader of the Self Respect Movement. This issue took a severe turn and the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee appointed a sub-committee to look into the matter since the Congress funds and sponsorship had been largely responsible for thesetting up of the school.[1] By that time the abuse appeared all the more grievous and Jeevanandam with Varadarajulu Naidu, President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, staged an all-out campaign.[1]They wanted complete equality with the Brahmins in the matter of inter-dining and, save the non-Brahmins from the age-long social injustice that had been meted out to them by Hinduism.[1] As a result of the non-Brahmin pressure, V.V.Subramaniyalyer resigned and the Gurukulam was closed thereafter. A few days later V.V.Subramaniyalyer died of an accident in Courtallam falls.[1]

Jeevanandam's Educational Experiment

The closure of the Bharatwaja Ashram created a vacuum in the field of education in the South-Eastern part of Tamil Nadu. Jeevanandamrealised the necessity of establishing an ashram based on equality. For thispurpose, he approached the wealthy Chettiars of the South who were the protagonists of education. He met KasiViswanathamChettiar, the head of an Education Committee at Chettinad. With the financial assistance of KasiViswanatham, Jeevanandam started Gandhi Ashram at Siruvayal in 1927 with Kumbalingam as President and himself as its secretary.[1]He was the headmaster of the institution too.While on tour in Tamil Nadu in 1927 Gandhi visited the Ashram and praised Jeevanandam for its principles and maintenance.[1] However, difference of opinion arose between the President and the Secretary which resulted in his resignation in 1929. Thereafter he directed his work to Nachiarpuram in Ramnad District.

Unmai Vilakka Nilayam

At Nachiarpuram, Jeevanandam with his associate, A.Subbaiah started an organisation called UnmaiVilakkaNilayam. In a notice circulated, they explained its principles, aims and means as removal of poverty, ignorance and slavery,equality - irrespective of caste, religion, nationality and language,abolition of untouchability,eradication of superstitions,upliftment of Adi-Dravidas andemancipation of women.For obtaining these goals, the means as stated, by them werepropaganda,establishing schools, gurukulams, labour unions, hospitals and yoga schools anddistributing notices and publishing books and journals.To improve the condition of Adi-Dravidas, efforts were taken to establish a United Labour Union. The notice was signed by Jeevanandam and A.Subbaiah as Secretaries of the Association.[1] In 1930, the Gurukulam was transferred to Kottaiyur near Karaikudi.[1] He proved himself as a devoted servant of the down-trodden communities. He took efforts to uplift the socially depressed classes.

Conclusion

P. Jeevanandham's life and work stand as a powerful testament to the fusion of Gandhian ideals and socialist principles in the fight against untouchability and caste-based oppression in Tamil Nadu. His relentless efforts to challenge social hierarchieswhether through his role in closing caste-discriminatory institutions like the CheranMahadeviGurukulam, or through the establishment of egalitarian spaces like the Gandhi Ashram at Siruvayalhighlight his commitment to building an inclusive and just society.

In summary, Jeevanandham's struggle was not merely against untouchability as a social evil but against the deeper structures of inequality embedded within religion, tradition, and power. His contributions remain crucial for understanding the broader Gandhian socialist movement in South India and continue to inspire efforts toward social equity and human dignity.

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The Split of the Communist Party of India and the Birth of CPI(M)Ideological Conflicts and Political Transformation (1920-1964)

D. Murali Krishnan[1] and Dr. R. Christal Jeeva[2]

The Formation of the Communist Party of India

The **Russian Revolution of 1917**, led by Lenin, overthrew the Tsarist monarchy and established the world's first socialist state. This inspired oppressed peoples across the world, including India. Lenin gave priority to spreading Marxist ideology and supporting anti-colonial struggles.In 1920, M.N. Roy, along with AbaniMukherji, M.P.T. Acharya and others, founded the Communist Party of India (CPI) in Tashkent (17 October 1920). Mohammad Shafiq became General Secretary and Acharya its leader.1

In 1924, many communists were arrested in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case. Soon after, Satyabhakta announced plans to form an Indian Communist Party.1 The Kanpur Conference (26–29 December 1925) was attended by over 300 delegates and presided over by Singaravelar. Here, the decision was made to establish the CPI on Indian soil, dedicated to the working class and peasants, as an anti-imperialist party against British colonial rule.1The British saw the CPI as a major threat. Through build conspiracy cases, many communists were jailed, tortured, or even executed. In 1934, the CPI was officially banned, forcing members to work with the Congress Socialist Party to continue the struggle. The CPI also supported the Royal Navy and Air Force mutinies of 1946, openly opposing British imperialism.After independence in 1947, when Partition violence broke out, the CPI organised relief for refugees by providing food, medicines and rail transport to migrants. These humanitarian efforts showed the party's deep concern for the people.

Ideological Conflicts within the Communist Party of India

The Communist Party of India (CPI) was founded in 1920 at Tashkent. From the very beginning, leaders debated how Marxism should be applied in the Indian context. At the Kanpur Conference of 1925, Satyabhakta wanted the party linked directly to the freedom struggle, while leaders like Singaravelar argued that the CPI should be guided mainly by Marxist–Leninist principles adapted to India's conditions.After independence, differences became sharper. At the Calcutta Congress (1948), P.C. Joshi was removed as General Secretary and later Ajay Ghosh took charge. In 1950, a CPI delegation met Stalin in Moscow, leading to a new programme adopted at the Calcutta Conference (1951).By the early 1950s, two main factions emerged-Rightists (Reformists) – wanted cooperation with governments and gradual reforms.Marxist–Leninists – wanted a revolutionary working-class path.Disputes grew during the Madurai Congress (1953) and over the Second Five-Year Plan (1956). Some supported state industrialisation as socialist, while the left criticised it as anti worker and anti peasant. The Amritsar Congress (1958)introduced a new structure (National Council, Central Executive, Politburo), but conflicts continued. At the Vijayawada Congress (1961), no agreement was reached, deepening the divide.The sudden death of Ajay Ghosh in 1962 increase the situation. The constitution was changed to create the post of Chairman, given to S.A. Dange, while E.M.S. Namboodiripad became General Secretary. This marked a clear division: Dange's group as Rightists/ Revisionists and the opposing camp as Marxist-Leninists.

Ideological Differences and the Split in the International Communist Movement

The death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 created a big shock for communist parties worldwide. In 1956, his

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successor Nikita Khrushchev openly criticised Stalin at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and even removed Stalin's body from its place of honour.1 This upset many parties, though the Communist Party of India (CPI) supported the Soviet leadership.Under Khrushchev, the Soviet Union adopted policies that many communists saw as weak. The 1957 meeting of 12 parties and the 1960 Moscow conference of 81 parties declared that socialism had become the "decisive world force." But this claim ignored the continuing strength of imperialism and colonialism. 1

Khrushchev's idea of "peaceful coexistence" with capitalist countries was strongly criticised by the Chinese Communist Party (CPC). The CPC, in its document "Long Live Leninism", accused the Soviets of revisionism.The debate deepened when Mao Zedong said "imperialism is a paper tiger,"1 while Khrushchev replied that the "paper tiger has nuclear teeth." These exchanges showed the widening gap between the Soviet and Chinese parties. This global split also affected India. The CPI leadership supported the Soviet Union and attacked China. But some Marxist leaders in India felt both powers were important. They argued that ideological issues should be solved through friendly discussion. This difference later became one of the key reasons for the 1964 split of the CPI and the rise of the Communist Party of India (Marxist).1

India-China Border Conflict and the Internal Crisis in the CPI

The India-China border dispute began with the 1914 Simla Conference and the McMahon Line. After independence, this boundary became a problem. In 1959, clashes took place and in 1960, President Zhou Enlai visited India, but no solution was reached. In October 1962, war broke out. The Chinese army crossed the McMahon Line and advanced deep into Indian territory, creating shock and anger in India.During this crisis, the CPI National Council meeting.1 While all agreed on defending India, divisions grew. S.A. Dange supported Prime Minister Nehru's policy, aligning the CPI with the Congress government. But Marxist–Leninist leaders like E.M.S. Namboodiripad, P. Ramamurthi, and Bhupesh Gupta insisted that peace talks were also necessary.Alternative resolutions calling for dialogue were rejected. Instead, Dange's resolution backing Nehru was passed. Opponents were branded as "pro-China." After this, with Dange's support, the Congress government arrested over 1,000 communists, including senior leaders like A.K. Gopalan, EMS, P. Ramamurthi, N. Sankariah, and Muzaffar Ahmed. Shockingly, the CPI leadership did not protest.1Even after China declared a ceasefire on 21 November 1962, many communists remained in jail until 1964. This crisis and repression led the split of the CPI.

Dissenting Marxists within the Communist Party of India

The conflict in the CPI was mainly ideological. After the India-China war (1962), one group was arrested, but the party leadership did nothing for their release.1 This created deep mistrust.In 1963, E.M.S. Namboodiripad resigned as General Secretary, refusing to work under S.A. Dange, who then became both Chairman and General Secretary.Dange began removing left leaders through "disciplinary action." In Kerala, he attacked A.K. Gopalan; in West Bengal and Punjab, elected committees were dissolved. Across states, left-wing members were side linedand debate was crushed.

Allegations Against S.A. Dange

During his jail term after the Kanpur Conspiracy Case (1924), S.A. Dange wrote a letter to the British, promising loyalty if released. This letter was later published by Current magazine.1 Leaders like P. Ramamurthi, M. Basavapunniah and Mirajkar checked the National Archives and confirmed it was in Dange's handwriting. Another controversy arose when, despite a party ban, Dange gave ₹30,000 to the Patriot newspaper, which had acted against party interests. Both issues created strong criticism inside the CPI.1

Central Executive Committee Meeting of the Communist Party of India – 1964

On 9 April 1964, the Central Executive Committee (CEC) of the CPI met in Delhi. The left group demanded that the controversial "Dange Letter" be discussed and that Dange should not preside while his conduct was under review. This demand was rejected. During heated arguments, Dange declared, "I

will not step down. You may walk out if you wish." In protest, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, A.K. Gopalan, P. Ramamurthi, P. Sundarayya and others walked out. Soon after, the CEC passed a resolution throw outseven leaders — including Sundarayya, Ramamurthi, A.K. Gopalan, Basavapunniah, HarikrishnaKonar, Promode Das Gupta and Harkishan Singh Surjeetaccusing them of "anti-party activities." This marked a major turning point, deepening the split between Dange's group and the left group.1

National Council Meeting of the Communist Party of India – 1964

The National Council meeting of the CPI began on 10 April 1964 in Delhi. The left group demanded a discussion on the "Dange Letters" and argued that Dange, being accused, should not lead the inquiry.1 When this was refused, 32 members walked out on 11 April.The leaders who walked out included P. Sundarayya, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, A.K. Gopalan, JyotiBasu, Muzaffar Ahmed, Promode Das Gupta, P. Ramamurthi, N. Sankaraiah, Harkishan Singh Surjeet and many others.On 14 April, they issued a joint statement. They opposed not only Dange's leadership style but also his policy of collaboration with the Congress Party, which they felt served the interests of the middle class.The left group circulated documents by leaders like E.M.S., Basavapunniah, JyotiBasu and others for discussion on ideology and party policy. While they admitted differences among themselves, they stressed the need for inner-party democracy and suggested steps like.investigation of the "Dange Letters,"fair use of disciplinary action,verification of membership rolls.They expressed hope for party unity if these steps were accepted. At the same time, they announced plans to convene the 7th All India Party Congress on their own. Negotiations with Dange's group failed and the split became unavoidable.

Tenali Special Convention – 1964

As planned by the 32 National Council members of the left grouping,1 a special convention was organised at Tenali, Andhra Pradesh, from 7–11 July 1964. About 146 delegates attended, representing nearly one lakh party members from across India. Many of them were senior leaders who had guided struggles since the 1930s and 1940s.1The convention began with Muzaffar Ahmed hoisting the red flag and giving the call to "build a true Communist Party." Portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin decorated the stage. A.K. Gopalan, JyotiBasu and Sivavarma were elected to chair the sessions, while P. Sundarayya delivered the welcome speech.Reports were presented on the failed unity talks with the Dange leadership. E.M.S. Namboodiripad explained that Dange's group had rejected even the basic proposals of the 32 members and instead used its control over the National Council to push wrong policies. Reports from different states showed that in 15 states, nearly 70% of members supported the stand of the 32 protester.Finally, the convention decided to convene the Seventh All India Party Congress to carry forward the movement.[1]

Formation of the Central Organising Committee and Key Resolutions

To continue party work, a 41-member Central Organising Committee was created. P. Ramamurthi, A.K. Gopalan and Harkishan Singh Surjeet, along with a representative from West Bengal, were included in the Executive Committee.1M. Basavapunniah became the coordinator.The committee prepared the agenda for the upcoming Seventh Party Congress, which included. adoption of a party programme, amendments to the party constitution, political and organisational report, election of new leadership, election of a Central Control Commission.1 The convention decided not to pass quick resolutions on ideological matters, leaving them for later discussions. But some important resolutions were passed. on the India-China border issue, demanding the release of jailed Communist leaders like B.T.Ranadive and others, criticize the rise in food prices. The Tenali Special Convention ended on 11 July 1964 with a large rally.

The Seventh All India Communist Party Congress and the Formation of CPI(M)

As decided in the Tenali Special Conference, the Seventh All India Congress of the Communist Party was organised from 31 October to 7 November 1964 at Calcutta.1To obstruct it, the Congress government

arrested 25 communist leaders, including Muzaffar Ahmad, Promode Das Gupta, HarikrishnanKonar, Niranjan Sen and Samar Mukherjee. But despite this repression, the congress was successfully held.The congress opened on 31 October 1964 at Thyagaraja Hall, Calcutta, with 422 delegates from across India.P. Sundarayya hoisted the red flag and declared that the communists had gathered after years of struggle against the "revisionist" Dange group and that the future tasks would require sacrifice and commitment.1 His speech received huge clapping.The delegates included 9 Members of Parliament, 32 MLAs and a large number of young comrades, many of whom had faced prison or underground life for the movement. Special invitees included veteran S. Mirajkar and Buck Singh, an 85-year-old pioneer of the Workers and Peasants Party (1929). The presidium included A.K. Gopalan, JyotiBasu and Nagireddy.

Resolutions Passed

- A new resolution on the political and organisational responsibilities of the party.
- After 8 years without a proper programme, the congress adopted a comprehensive Party Programme.
- E.M.S. Namboodiripad moved a resolution criticize the arrests of Bengal leaders, supported by P. Ramamurthi.
- Jagjit Singh Lyallpuri moved and M.R. Venkataraman seconded, a resolution demanding the release of leaders like P.T. Ranadive and the withdrawal of Emergency Rule.1

A 41-member Central Committee and a 9-member Polit Bureau were elected. Members included P. Sundarayya, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, P.T.Ranadive, Promode Das Gupta, M. Basavapunniah, A.K. Gopalan, JyotiBasu, P. Ramamurthi and Harkishan Singh Surjeet. P. Sundarayya was elected General Secretary.On7 November 1964, the congress declared that the delegates represented the true Communist Party of India and that the Dange group had no right to that name. The resolution proclaimed: "Long live the Calcutta Congress! Long live the Communist Party of India!" This congress formally gave birth to the Communist Party of India (Marxist).1 In 1965, the Election Commission officially recognised it as CPI(M).

Conclusion

The Communist Party of India faced a major split in 1964, which led to the formation of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The CPI(M) framed its policies on Marxist-Leninist principles, adapted to Indian conditions.1Since then, the party has worked for the workers, peasants and weaker sections. From 1964 to 2025, it has taken part in all Lok Sabha elections, with more than 369 MPs elected and over 160 members in the Rajya Sabha.The CPI(M) also formed governments inKerala: E.M.S. Namboodiripad, E.K. Nayanar, V.S. Achuthanandan, PinarayiVijayan, Tripura: Nripen Chakraborty, Dasarath Deb, Manik Sarkar, West Bengal: JyotiBasu, BuddhadevBhattacharjee. Through these governments, the party implemented pro-people policies in areas like land reforms, education, health and social welfare. Even today, the CPI(M) continues its struggles for equality, farmers' rights, workers' welfare and against corporate exploitation, keeping alive the vision of a just and fair society.

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S. P. Adithanar: The Unyielding Defender of Tamil Patriots

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Among the galaxy of Indian freedom fighters, numerous iconic names Gandhi, Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose have earned enduring reverence in the national consciousness. Yet, buried beneath these towering legends lie the stories of unsung heroes who shaped the movement with equal, if not greater, courage and conviction. One such figure is S. P. Adithanar, a fearless lawyer, patriot, and visionary from Kayamozhi, a small village in the southern reaches of Tamil Nadu. Adithanar was no ordinary participant in India's freedom struggle. He was a man forged not just by nationalistic fervor but by a fierce commitment to justice. At a time when the British Raj loomed large with oppressive laws and authoritarian control, dissent was a dangerous choice. Yet Adithanar chose to stand against that tyranny not with weapons, but with his intellect, his legal acumen, and an unflinching moral compass. What sets Adithanar apart was his ability to turn the courtroom into a battleground for freedom. While many fought on the streets, he waged war within colonial legal systems, often at immense personal cost. His decision to defend the accused in the Kulasekarapatinam Conspiracy Case, when most lawyers cowered in silence, was not just a bold legal move it was a radical act of resistance against an empire that thrived on fear. He stood up not merely for freedom, but for those young revolutionaries whose lives hung in the balance.

Adithanar's bravery was not confined to the courtroom. His resistance earned him the wrath of the colonial regime, leading to arrest and brutal torture. Still, he refused to be broken. His eventual transition into political leadership, including his role in the Constituent Assembly, was not a mere ascent into power but a continuation of his lifelong struggle for justice, equality, and the recognition of Tamil contributions to the national movement. In retracing his story, this article seeks not only to illuminate Adithanar's extraordinary life but also to restore his rightful place among the architects of Indian

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independence those who bore the weight of rebellion with dignity, even when history chose to look away.[1]

A Turning Point in 1942

The year 1942 marked a surge in the Indian independence movement. Mahatma Gandhi's clarion call of *"Do or Die"* and *"Quit India"* galvanized youth across the country. In the southern coastal belt of Tamil Nadu, the movement took a bold turn when around 200 young men from Tiruchendur, Arumuganeri, Udangudi, and Kulasekarapattinam united for a daring strike against British authority. Their mission: to seize British controlled salt pans and disrupt colonial control. During this uprising, British official W. Loane infamous for his ruthless enforcement of colonial rule attempted to quell the rebellion. But before he could fire his weapon, a fiery young man named Vel attacked and killed him, slashing his throat. The British retaliated swiftly, initiating what came to be known as the Kulasekarapattinam Conspiracy Case.[1]

S. P. Adithanar's Moment of Courage

When no lawyer dared defend the accused fearing British reprisal S. P. Adithanar stepped into the fray. A Supreme Court lawyer who had only ever argued civil cases, Adithanar took this criminal case as his first and last motivated solely by patriotism and duty. The trial, held in a special court in Tirunelveli under Justice Balakrishna Iyer, resulted in capital punishment for Kasirajan and Rajagopal (later known as "Thooku Medai" Rajagopal), life sentences for three others, and various jail terms for the rest. Unwilling to accept this injustice, Adithanar traveled to Delhi, met with Gandhi, and took the matter to the Privy Council in London. Despite his unmatched oratorical skill and legal acumen, he was unable to reverse the capital punishment. But his fight was far from over.[1]

Imprisonment and Beyond

In a brutal display of colonial arrogance, the British arrested Adithanar. He endured 60 days of relentless torture and beatings inside jail. Yet even after his release, he returned to court to defend the convicted youth. His courage inspired fellow lawyers like Arumuganeri Sivashunmugam Nadar and others to join the legal defense, despite the climate of fear. Later, under pressure from public movements and rising global scrutiny, British Viceroy Lord Wavell commuted the death sentences to life imprisonment. When India achieved independence in 1947, the remaining political prisoners were eventually freed thanks largely to Adithanar's persistence.[1]

A New Era of Service

In 1946, even before independence, Adithanar was elected unopposed to the Indian Constituent Assembly. He played a role in shaping the very Constitution of the nation he had fought to liberate. In independent India, he continued to champion the cause of freedom fighters, pushing for their release and resisting tokenism. When the government offered him the *Tamira* Patra (a copper shield of honor), he refused it, saying, "Should I accept a medal for the pain and blood I gave this country" In 1952, Adithanar contested the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly elections from the dual-member Tiruchendur Srivaikundam constituency as an independent candidate. Representing the humble "hut" symbol, he defeated the Indian National Congress by over 4,000 votes once again proving that his loyalty lay with the people, not political parties.[1]

The People's Hero

Beyond courtrooms and politics, Adithanar's spirit lived on through his support of youth led revolutionary initiatives. He backed underground resistance plans inspired by Subhas Chandra Bose, including covert information networks and guerrilla tactics against British police. One remarkable example was the seizure of the Sathankulam police station where young revolutionaries used a mock funeral procession to infiltrate and capture British weapons. Elsewhere, hundreds signed blood pledges to form a suicide squad for the freedom movement, guided by leaders like K. T. Kosalram, G. Maharajan, and S. P. Subbaiya. Adithanar stood with them, providing not just moral but legal and political backing. The network in Tirunelveli district grew sophisticated enough to rival formal military

structures a testament to the movement's vision and his silent leadership behind the scenes.[1]

Conclusion

S. P. Adithanar remains a towering but under celebrated figure in Indian history. He did not seek fame, reward, or office, yet his life influenced courtrooms, battlefields, and the nation's constitution. He challenged a mighty empire with his words, bore their punishments with his body, and served a newborn democracy with integrity. As Tamil Nadu and India continue to remember their heroes, Adithanar's story must be retold not as a footnote in another freedom fighter's biography, but as a standalone epic of resistance, justice, and selfless courage. Let us remember Thiyagi S. P. Adithanar not just as a lawyer or politician but as a symbol of undeterred justice, fiery patriotism, and the conscience of Tamil resistance.

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The Peasant Unrest, and Agrarian Struggles in South Arcot in the Colonial Period, Special Reference to Kallakurichi

Ms. S. Nithesha

Agrarian Structure and Vulnerabilities of Kallakurichi

The agrarian structure of Kallakurichi, a taluk within South Arcot district, reflected the ecological fragility of a semi-arid zone combined with the exploitative rigidity of colonial revenue administration. Unlike the fertile deltaic regions of the Presidency, Kallakurichi was dependent on uncertain monsoon rainfall and a limited network of tanks[1]. The irrigation tanks had fallen into disrepair during the colonial period, leaving cultivators at the mercy of erratic rainfall. This ecological fragility created the foundation for frequent scarcity.

In Kallakurichi, smallholders and tenants bore the brunt of these policies. Landlord-controlled estates (zamindaris) also existed, where rents and cesses were collected with little concern for agricultural conditions. The colonial state's insistence on revenue collection during famine years, particularly in 1876–78, deepened rural suffering[1].

Colonial policies encouraged the shift toward commercial crops like cotton, indigo, and groundnut, which linked local cultivators to volatile global markets. This undermined subsistence cultivation of millets and food grains in Kallakurichi. During famine years, when global prices crashed or when crops failed, peasants lacked adequate reserves for survival. Grain traders exploited scarcity by hoarding, while peasants faced starvation despite rising exports of food grains from Madras Presidency ports[1].

Colonial agrarian policy exacerbated this vulnerability[1]. The ryotwari settlement, imposed from

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the early nineteenth century, demanded fixed cash revenue from individual cultivators regardless of annual yield. Even in years of severe drought, revenue collections continued[1]. The records that assessments were rarely reduced, and remissions were minimal, pushing peasants into cycles of debt[1]. The direct evidences of petitions from Kallakurichi ryots seeking tax relief during the Great Famine of 1876–78 most were rejected on grounds that revenue stability was paramount for the colonial state. Agricultural production patterns also shifted under colonial economic imperatives. Traditionally, Kallakurichi peasants cultivated millets and rice for local subsistence. However, by the mid to late nineteenth century, commercial crops like groundnut and cotton gained prominence, encouraged by British. This transformation undermined local food security, as subsistence cultivation declined and peasants became increasingly dependent on volatile market prices[1].

The combined impact of weak irrigation, rigid taxation, commercial cropping, and mounting indebtedness meant that by the late nineteenth century, Kallakurichi peasantry was extremely vulnerable to famine. South Arcot was among the worst-hit districts during the famine years, with mortality, migration, and agrarian distress particularly acute in the upland tracts such as Kallakurichi[1]. These structural weaknesses not only heightened the impact of famine but also laid the groundwork for recurring peasant unrest and agrarian struggles in the decades to come[1].

Famine and Peasant Unrest in Kallakurichi

The Great Famine of 1876–78 devastated the upland tracts of South Arcot. The widespread mortality and migration in Kallakurichi taluk[1]. South Arcot, particularly Kallakurichi, suffered acutely due to poor irrigation and the rigidity of colonial revenue policies. In desperation, peasants looted granaries in Chinnasalem bazaar, demanding fair prices from hoarders[1]. The also reveal petitions by Kallakurichi ryots refusing to pay taxes, an early instance of collective resistance to colonial authority1. By the 1899–1900 famine, peasant resistance acquired more organized forms. The describes tenants resisting eviction by zamindars who pressed for arrears despite crop failure1. Village-level petitions to the South Arcot Collector reveal local leaders, often kudimagan headmen or small landlords themselves, negotiating with colonial officials to suspend taxes. These leaders were not political figures in the modern sense but acted as intermediaries who articulated village grievances. In the early 20th century, agrarian unrest in South Arcot intersected with Justice Party politics, as famine relief, tax remissions, and the problem of bonded labour became legislative issues. Prominent South Arcot leaders such as C. Natesa Mudaliar of the Justice Party raised famine grievances in the Madras Legislative Council debates of the 1920s, pointing to recurring scarcities in taluks like Kallakurichi.

By the 1930s Depression, however, famine-related struggles were increasingly absorbed into the Congress-led nationalist movement. Reports in describe no-rent campaigns in Kallakurichi villages where peasants, mobilized by Congress volunteers, withheld payment of taxes and resisted evictions. Local Congress activists such as M. Singaravelu (a labour and peasant organizer) and later C. Rajagopalachari's district-level Congress committees gave political expression to agrarian grievances. Village meetings in Chinnasalem and Kallakurichi taluks linked famine suffering to the larger nationalist demand for Swaraj. This period also saw the influence of leftist and communist activists in South Arcot. Though stronger in the 1940s, early signs appeared in the Depression decade when Congress Socialists began engaging with famine-affected villages, promoting ideas of collective resistance and tenant rights. Thus, famine unrest in Kallakurichi moved through phases: from desperate grain riots (1877) to tenant petitions (1899–1900), and later to organized no-rent campaigns (1930s) shaped by leaders and movements at both local and provincial levels. The trajectory illustrates how famine, initially seen as a natural calamity, became politicized into a cause for agrarian struggles and rural mobilization in colonial South Arcot.

Colonial State, Zamindars, and Outcomes of Famine Struggles in Kallakurichi

While famines devastated Kallakurichi, the responses of the colonial administration and zamindars often compounded the suffering. Relief was guided

more by the need to protect revenue than to protect lives. Over time, however, famine struggles and peasant unrest reshaped local agrarian politics, fostering political consciousness and links to nationalist and social reform movements. The British developed the Madras Famine Code to regulate relief measures, yet in practice, implementation was inadequate: Relief works were poorly organized, requiring long hours of labour for minimal wages, leaving starving peasants further weakened. Grain depots were often inaccessible, and bureaucratic delays hampered distribution1. Revenue collection continued with little remission. Board of Revenue records detail multiple petitions from peasants requesting suspension of taxes, most of which were rejected. The colonial state's rigid approach fuelled resentment and sometimes provoked direct resistance.

Zamindars and Local Elites: In zamindari areas, landlords often exacerbated famine suffering, Many demanded rents in kind or coerced peasants into bonded labour during scarcity. Famine loans were used to seize mortgaged lands, further dispossessing smallholders. Some temples and religious institutions provided Annadhanam, but this was selective and caste-restricted. Zamindars, rather than providing relief, sometimes became the main target of peasant protests.

Faced with inadequate relief, Kallakurichi peasants used both survival strategies and organized protest; Migration to neighbouring districts or plantations in Ceylon for work. Collective petitions to the Collector for revenue suspension. Resistance to evictions and landlord coercion. By the 1930s, peasant struggles were linked to nationalist and reformist movements, giving them political articulation1.

Local Leaders and Movements, C. Natesa Mudaliar belongs to the Justice Party raised famine and agrarian distress in legislative debates in the 1920s. M. Singaravelu and Congress Volunteers: Mobilized peasants during the 1930s Depression for no-rent campaigns in Kallakurichi. Emerging Leftist/Communist Activists: Promoted tenant rights and collective resistance in famine-affected villages, laying groundwork for later mobilization.

Long-Term Outcomes

Transformation of Rural Politics, Famine years highlighted the exploitative roles of both the colonial state and landlords. Peasants became increasingly politically conscious, linking local grievances to wider nationalist and social reform movements. Agrarian Consciousness, Repeated famine experiences taught peasants that their suffering was structural. This awareness encouraged collective action, such as no-rent campaigns and petitions, which became a precursor to post-independence agrarian reforms. Institutional Change, while famine codes remained rigid, pressure from unrest forced gradual improvements in relief measures1. Village networks, cooperatives, and later panchayat structures benefited from organizational experience gained during famine struggles1. The famines of the late 19th century were marked by spontaneous, survival-driven protests, while the early 20th century witnessed the politicization of peasant struggles. By the 1930s, famine grievances were tied to broader nationalist and social reform movements, making Kallakurichi not just a site of victimhood but of active resistance.

Conclusion

The colonial administration's failure to provide adequate famine relief, combined with zamindar exploitation, intensified peasant suffering in Kallakurichi. Yet, famine unrest also became a catalyst for political mobilization, linking rural distress to nationalist, reformist, and eventually leftist movements. By the 1930s, the struggle against hunger had transformed into a broader struggle for rights, justice, and dignity, shaping the trajectory of agrarian politics in South Arcot and laying the foundation for modern Tamil Nadu's rural consciousness. The history of Kallakurichi during the colonial period reveals how famine was not merely a natural calamity but a political and social crisis shaped by structural inequalities. The region's ecological fragility, dependence on monsoons, and tank-based irrigation created inherent vulnerabilities. Yet it was the colonial land revenue system, commercialization of agriculture, and indebtedness that transformed scarcity into large-scale famine.

The Great Famine of 1876–78 marked a turning point, exposing the callousness of British revenue demands and the exploitative role of landlords. In subsequent famines and the agrarian depression of the

1930s, peasants in Kallakurichi increasingly engaged in forms of resistance—from spontaneous grain riots and rent strikes to organized no-tax campaigns under the influence of nationalist and social reform movements. Colonial relief measures, shaped by the logic of revenue extraction, often worsened suffering. Zamindars, rather than offering protection, used famine to expand their control. Yet within this adversity, peasants discovered agency, they forged collective protests, aligned with the Indian National Congress, and responded to the egalitarian ideals of the Self-Respect Movement.

Thus, famine became both a moment of devastation and a catalyst of political awakening. In Kallakurichi, the struggle for survival against hunger transformed into a broader struggle for dignity, justice, and rights. The memory of famine unrest not only influenced rural politics in South Arcot but also contributed to the formation of Tamil Nadu's modern social and political consciousness.

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History of the Formation of the Vivasaigal Sangam in Madras Presidency

Ms. K. Iniyashree[1] and Dr. C. Jeyapaul[2]

The constitution of District Associations and Ryots Protection Societies in the Madras Province 1934-1939:

In 1934, District Associations and Ryot Protection Societies were created across AndraDesa not only to remind the government of their demands but also to strengthen the hands of ryots to impress the government upon their demands and grievances. In 1934, they demanded for the suspension of the collection of *Kists*(land revenue), the reduction of the enhanced land tax by 2Annas per Rupee and postponement of the enhanced assessment similar to the revisions granted in 1933.[1]

The ryotswere asked not to pay the *Kists*at the enhanced assessment and payment of *Kists*in four instalments.Mr. Ranga, founder of kisan Association in

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Andra, raising his voice against the Zamindari System based on the Permanent Settlement, asked for ryots to resist the collection of arrears of *Kist* by the Government. He demanded a cut in the rate of interest by 8Annas per hundred Rupees and to extend loans to ryots to clear their debts in 90 years as in the case of Italy, Denmark and Germany. In 1935, the ryots associations gaining momentum that spread across Andhra involving one hundred of thousand ryots that took out marches shouting the slogans like "Down with Zamindari System", Down with the present system of taxation and Down with the *Sowcar* System. Mr. Ranga stressed for the cooperation of the masses of the country, for he belived that it alone could bring Swaraj to the country, India.[1]

In 1938, Mr. Ranga, pointed out the arrogance of government revenue officials and the Zamindars and their henchman as well as the condition that rendered the peasants to be so weak that they could not pay the taxes which was shot up by four or five times more than the actual assessment. The collection of land revenue of Rs. 5 per acre made them to get nothing for them.

Ranga condemned the rights of the government and Zamindars over water supply from the hills and the rains. The agitation of ryots in 1938 challenged the rights over water sources of the Zamindars. Ranga emphasized for the need of Swaraj that could be the possible means to liberate the groaning peasantry.[1]

In 1940, M.K. Gupta, a professional agitator of the Justice Party, held propaganda meetings at Lalgudi and adjacent places stirring troubles between the *mirasidars*who were mostly Brahmins and the cultivating tenants who were mostly *Pallars*. In reality, the agitation was against the *Brahmanism* but it, in colour, was of agrarian concept. The *Pallars*were told that they were paying much more rent in kind than was reasonable. As a result, Pallarswere discontented and agitated for lower rents. In Madurai, Ramnad and Salem, *KisanSangams*were opened. There was agrarian unrest in Krishnagiri district among the Zamindari tenants.

The ryots of Venkadagiri agitated for reduction of grazing tax. In Chittor, with an avowed intention to curtail the influence of Ranga organized a conference in March 1945 and demanded an equitable rent in zamindari areas in the district. They demanded the release of the Congress leaders and establishment of National Government as well.It was at this Juncture the negotiation for a settlement between the Raja of Venkatagiri and his tenants broke down.

The Communists became active among the Kisans in the Madras Presidency by 1945. A Provincial Conference was proposed to hold in March at Thenali in Guntur District, but government did not permit for want of food, health and transport facilities.

All India KisanSabha (All India Agriculturists Association):

A Kisan conference in Allahabad in 1935 presided over by SardarVallabhaiPatel, passed a resolution seeking for the abolition of Zamindari System. The Bihar Kisan Sabha held in 1935 also demanded the abolition of Zamindari System. All the efforts supported by the Communists and Socialists resulted in the formation of All India Kisan Congress (later renamed as All India Kisan Sabha) in 1936. The Leftist Force in the Congress was instrumental for the birth of the A.I.K.S Peasant Associations were started by N.G. Ranga in Andra in Madras Presidency.[1]

On 11th April, 1936 at Lucknow session of the Indian National Congress, the first session of All India Kisan Sabha was held simultaneously. The conference was greeted by Jawaharlal Nehru.The second session of the All India Kisan Sabha held with N.G. Ranga, in the Chair, was conducted along with the Congress session at Fazhipur in December 1936. The All India Kisan Sabha progressed its organizational advance during the 1930s. The first Conference of duely elected members from all over India was held at Commilla in Bangladesh in May 1938. By that time, the All India Kisan Sabha had 54, 68,000 members enlisted to it.

TamilnaduVivasayigalSangam

The birth of Tamilnadu*VivasayigalSangam*was preceded by an intensive propaganda campaigns conducted by the activists of Self-Respect Movement and Communist party in Thanjavur district between 1928 and 1942. The campaigns headed by comrade M.

Jeevanantham, C.P.I, mobilised the ideals of the Socialist Concepts and the Russian Revolution and dispelled the superstitions in the society. Kisan Conferences were conducted against the Zamindari system and Landlordism.[1]

In between the years 1934 and 1935, Socialist Conferences conducted at Mannargudi and Thiruthuraipoondi were presided over by Singaravelar, C.P.I. P.Jeevanantham, C.P.I. respectively. These two conferences went a long way in getting peasants enlisted to the Communist party of India and proved to be a water mark in the history of the progress of Communism in Thanjavur district.

In Thanjavur district, the taluks such as Nagapattinam, Aranthangi, Kumbakonam, Pabanasam and Mayavaram efforts were taken for enrolling members at Communist Party of India. To mobilize the public support to the party, to organize public rally and to unite activists under the party banner, a meeting was held at Pandi in Thiruthuraipoondi in 1940. The meeting was attended by Vaithiyanathan of Pandi, Sundaresan, K.P. Nadarajan, Sattaiyappan and ManaliKandasamy. The State Committee of Communist Party of India elected NedunkadiRamachandiran, member of C.P.I. from Karnataka, as the District Organizer of the party. C. Subramaniam, the Provincial Organizer of the Party and A.K. Gopalan, Chairman of A.I.K.S. attended the meeting.[1]

Birth of Tamizhnadu Vivasayigal Sangam

In between the years 1938 and 1939, Thanjavur district was troubled by the intensive struggle of agrestic labourers who struggled for higher wages and for the abolition of inhuman punishments. One such agitation was led by Maniyammal, a Brahmin lady, who was given in marriage to a Lawer of Nagapattinam. By 1935, she returned to Manalur, Village of her father, after the death of husband, to maintain the farm of eighty acres of land left by her deceased father at Manalur. She, on seeing the pathetic condition and abuses of the agrestic labourers at Manalur, pitied with them and helped the needy Harijans. Her services to the ailing people and children of Harijan Community brought her to scathing criticism of landlords and higher caste Hindu people of the village. However, she did not attatch any consideration to criticism and continued serving the people. After relinguishing all customary attire that Brahmin lady was required to wear, she began to put on male attire of dhoti and shirt. Being a brave lady, she began to learn *Silampattam*. As she was resolute to ease the appalling condition of the peasantry, she made arrangement for holding a meeting of backward class people of Manalur and surrounding areas at her own house.[1] The meeting, held on August 14, 1938 at Maniyammal house, was headed by comrade SambandamMudaliyar.

In the meeting Nagai Kisan Sabha comprised of Maniyammal as the Chairman, Alagusundaram Pillai as Joint chairman, P. Kumarasamy as the Secretary and 15 members formed. Before ManalurManiyammal took efforts to organize the Kisan Sabha, B. Srinivasa Rao chared a meeting, at the initiatives of T.N. Ramachandiran, which was held in May 1938 at Kivalur in Nagapattinam taluk.In the meeting, Ramachandiran published his booklet entitled '*Vivasayigale Ondrai Serunkal'* (Peasants, Join Together) in which he explained the need for agriculturist association, the righteous demands of agriculturists and the need for soliciting the support of the peasantry that alone brought success to the National Movement.[1]

The meeting, attended by B. Srinivasa Rao[1] and the booklet of T.N. Ramachandiran went a long way in mobilizing the public support to the National Movement and the Agrarian Movements in the East Tanjore District. A meeting of NagaramZamin Agriculturists was held on December 10, 1938 with C.P. Elango in the Chair. It was inangurated by T.N. Ramachandiran and was felicitaed by Chinnaiya Pillai, Aranthagi Congress Party Chairman. Five thousand members attended the meeting that raised slogans – "Down with Zamindari", "Down with Imperialism" and "Release Comrade Jeevanandam".

Janasakthi, Congress Socialist Weekly, started coming out with comrade Jeevanantham as the Editor in 1937. *Janasakthi*having a substantial number of readers in the taluks of Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Iyampettai and Mayavaramwas kept afloat by the progressive

minded people. The Communist Party of India, at this juncture, decided to relieve the peasantry suffering in the hands of the repressive landlords of Thanjavur district and to have Thanjavur as the center of activity.

"The Communist Party of India entrusted the task of organizing the suffering peasants of Thanjavur district into the hands of NedunkaduRamachandiran of Kannanur. To assist NedunkaduRamachandiran, A.K. Gopalan, chairmen of A.I.K.S, who was still in underground was sent to Thanjavur.

In 1941, P. Venkatesan and A. Ramanujam members of C.P.I, met A.K. Gopalan, Chairman of A.I.K.S and discussed the agrarian problems in Mannargudi. They proposed to form an association for the cause of suffering peasantry. After that, Ramanujam and Venkatesan went to Mannargudi and met R.Amirthalingam of Serankulam in Mannargudi taluk. After having a long discussion of the possibility of rescuing the tenants of Thenparai in Mannargudi taluk, they concluded to form Thenparai Agriculturist Association. The whole Village of Thenparai was controlled by Uttirapathi Mutt in Hyderabad. Large portion of the land was rented on *varam* tenancy, thereby, the tenants cultivated the lands for 18% of the gross produce as their *varam*.[1]

Thenparai Kisan Sabha

By 1943, the All India Kisan Sabha porposed to form an association for agriculturists in Tamilnadu, thereby, RamachandiraNedunkadu was sent to organize the Kisans and Ramanujam and Amirthalingam were to assist him. Accordingly, a meting of ThenparaiKisanswas held at Thenparai. The meeting was attended by B. Srinivasa Rao, Chairman of State Kisan Sabha and ManaliKandasamy, organizer of the State Kisan Sabha. In the meeting ThenparaiKisan Sabha was formed, thereby, it was decided to struggle for either 33% *varam*or 1/3 of the gross produce to be reserved for the *Varamdars*as their *varam*share. P. Venkatesan, Ramanujam and Amirthalingam assisted Veerasamy who was elected as the Secretary of *ThenparaiKisan Sabha* in the struggle for the above mentioned goal. Three acres of land that Veerasamy rented from the Uttirapathi Mutt was *deperieved*at the end of the agricultural year due to him selected as the secretary of the ThenparaiKisan Sabha agitating for higher *Varam*.

Manali Kandasamy, B. Srinivasa Rao and K.P. Natarajan, being instrumental in mustering the *Kisans*of Thenparai, helped it to proceed further in the mission. When the Kisan Sabha raised voice for a higher *varam*, Sitaramachari, the Agent of the Mutt ordered stopping the harvest operation not minding the food scarcity hitting the country. But the tenants unmindful of the order of Sitharamachari had started the harvest operation and piled the grains into heaps and put under guard. On January 28, 1943 the tenants met the pontiff of Uttirapathi Mutt in Hyderabad, the enraged pontiff uproared "who are you to my land" and "Let Cow to graze the land". The tenants returned home with dissatisfaction, but the Communist party gave stimulons to the peasant agitation against Uthirapathi Mutt exhorting them to take out a procession to Mannargudi to present memoranda on the plight of the peasantry and the arrogance of the Uthirapathi Mutt to the Sub-Collector in Mannargdi.

The mantle of uniting the peasant and organising them into a march fell on the Communist Cell at Mannargudi. R. Amirthalingam of Serankulam, Thangavelu of Paravakkottai, A.R. Ramanujam of Cholapandi and P. Venkatesan of Radhanarasingapuram encouraged the struggling peasants. Nedunkadi Ramachandiran encouraged the peasants by interdining and staying along with them and educated to stand against the oppressive landlords and their mercenaries.

The processionists holding the banner of Thenparai Agriculturist Association collected rice and money from the prominded people all along the way proceeded to Mannargudi. They shouted slogans like 'Down with the repressions of the Uthirapathi Mutt', 'Down with Uraikuruni'. 'Down with Landlordism' 'Reduce *Varam*' and 'Raise Wages' when the procession entered Mannargudi, the British Government put Mannargudi under ban in the wake of the Quit India Movement, in which Gandhiji made a clarion call for 'Do or Die'.

The National Movement took a drastic turn with the arson of the Government Offices at Mannargudi and Thiruvaiyaru and the disruption of transports and all communications. Among those who were arrested in the wake of the National Movement, were the communists K.P. Nadarajan, K.R. Ganasambandam and A.V. Ramasamy were noted persons of Communist Party.

It was in this juncture that Thenparai procession headed by NedunkadiRamachandiran and R. Amirthalingam, P.Venkatesan and A.R. Ramanujam entered Mannargudi to present the memoranda to the Sub Collector of Mannargudi. Mannargudi. Among other activities of the public meeting, the address on the appalling condition of the peasants of Thenparai delivered by Nedunkadi Ramachandiran and other activities went a long way in soliciting the public support for the Kisan Movement.1Thenparai Agreement was signed in 1943. The first victory of the Kisan Movement came in the wake of the signing of the Thenparai Agreement of 1942. As was proposed by the members of the KisanSsbha a procession of 400 men and 150 women labourers was taken out in March 1943.The victory of Kisans in Thenparai Agitation transmitted a new wave of strength and encouragement among the Kisan of adjacent villages like Kalappal, Nedumbalam and Kunniyur. The Kisan Movement spread to Thiruthuraipoondi and Mannargudi in 1944. After the success in the Thenparai Agitation, Organising Committee of Kisan Sabha was constituted in June 1943. Subsequent to it, Tamil Nadu Kisan Sabha was formed on June 14, 1943 with Thiru. PonnambalaGoundar as the State Chairman, ThiruChokkalingam Pillai from Pappangulam as Joint Secretary, Poovaragavan, Janab. M.K.M. Meeran of Uttamapalayam, ManaliKandasamy, Amirthalingam, Dr. Annaji and LalithaAnnaji as members of the Executive Council of Tamil Nadu Kisan Sabha. Subsequently, district level KisanSabhas affiliating to Tamil Nadu KisanSabha were formed. The caste Hindus, so far, had been aloof from the association, began to work together with untouchable labourers of Thanjavur district, for the spread of Tamil Nadu Kisan Sabha.[1]

Conclusion

The birth of Tamilnadu*VivasayigalSangam*was preceded by an intensive propaganda campaigns conducted by the activists of Self-Respect Movement and Communist party in Thanjavur district between 1928 and 1942. The campaigns headed by comrade M. Jeevanantham, C.P.I, mobilised the ideals of the Socialist Concepts and the Russian Revolution and dispelled the superstitions in the society. Kisan Conferences were conducted against the Zamindari system and Landlordism.In between the years 1934 and 1935, Socialist Conferences conducted at Mannargudi and Thiruthuraipoondi were presided over by Singaravelar, C.P.I. P.Jeevanantham, C.P.I. respectively.

These two conferences went a long way in getting peasants enlisted to the Communist party of India and proved to be a water mark in the history of the progress of Communism in Thanjavur district.In Thanjavur district, the taluks such as Nagapattinam, Aranthangi, Kumbakonam, Pabanasam and Mayavaram efforts were taken for enrolling members at Communist Party of India. To mobilize the public support to the party, to organize public rally and to unite activists under the party banner, a meeting was held at Pandi in Thiruthuraipoondi in 1940. The meeting was attended by Vaithiyanathan of Pandi, Sundaresan, K.P. Nadarajan, Sattaiyappan and ManaliKandasamy. The State Committee of Communist Party of India elected NedunkadiRamachandiran, member of C.P.I. from Karnataka, as the District Organizer of the party. C. Subramaniam, the Provincial Organizer of the Party and A.K. Gopalan, Chairman of A.I.K.S. attended the meeting.

End Notes

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The Temple Entry Proclamation in Kanyakumari District: A Catalyst for Social Transformation

M. Shyla Kumari[1]

Introduction

The Temple Entry Proclamation of 12 November 1936 stands as one of the most remarkable milestones in the history of social reform in South India. Issued by Maharaja Chithirai Thirunal Balarama Varma of Travancore, it legally permitted all Hindus, irrespective of caste, to worship in the temples under state control. The act was revolutionary in its immediate effect, yet its deeper significance lay in the centuries of struggle, social humiliation, and religious exclusion that preceded it. For the people of Kanyakumari district, which was then part of the princely state of Travancore, the proclamation represented not merely an administrative reform but a cultural renaissance. It redefined the notions of sacred space, dignity, and community life in a region that had been historically bound by the chains of caste orthodoxy.

The Social and Religious Position of Marginalized Communities in Kanyakumari District before 1936.

Before the enactment of the proclamation, Kanyakumari district was a land where religion and social hierarchy were inextricably intertwined. The rigid caste system excluded Nadar's, Dalits, and other oppressed communities from access to temples, temple streets, and even to the very symbols of sacredness such as temple tanks and festivals. The Suchindram Thanumalayan Temple, the Nagaraja Temple of Nagercoil, and the Adikesava Perumal Temple of Thiruvattar were not simply centers of worship; they were also markers of social authority and symbols of cultural ownership for the upper castes. To deny entry to the marginalized was to deny them a share in the cultural life of the community. Accounts preserved in oral tradition recall the painful memories of men and women who were forced to stand outside temple walls, listening to the sound of bells and chants but barred

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from the sanctum by custom and taboo. The system of ritual purity dictated not only worship but also access to public resources, thereby ensuring that religious exclusion translated into social and economic marginalization. The historical landscape of Kanyakumari thus bore testimony to centuries of humiliation, where temples became the strongholds of caste-based segregation.

The Growth of Social Reform Movements and the Awakening of Equality Consciousness in South Travancore

The winds of change began to sweep through South Travancore from the early nineteenth century onwards. Reformers such as Ayya Vaikunda Swamikal challenged caste orthodoxy and envisioned a society where spirituality transcended barriers of purity and pollution. His teachings, centred around the dignity of all human beings, resonated widely among the oppressed sections of Kanyakumari. Alongside indigenous reformers, Christian missionaries, particularly those belonging to the London Missionary Society, played a pivotal role in educating marginalized communities and instilling in them a consciousness of equality.

The rise of the Nadar community during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was crucial in preparing the ground for the Temple Entry Proclamation. Through education, trade, and missionary support, the Nadar's were able to challenge their subordinate position and demand greater recognition within Hindu society. This growing assertion of rights, combined with the wider atmosphere of Indian nationalism, created a fertile ground for the questioning of caste-based exclusion in temples. Travancore itself had witnessed earlier agitations such as the Vaikom Satyagraha of the 1920s, which, though centred in Kerala, left a deep imprint on the political consciousness of Kanyakumari as well.

The Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936 and Its Immediate Implementation in Kanyakumari District

When Maharaja Chithirai Thirunal issued the proclamation on 12 November 1936, its immediate significance was felt across the length and breadth of Travancore. In Kanyakumari district, the event was celebrated as the dawn of a new age. For the first time, men and women who had been treated as untouchables by custom were legally empowered to step into temples, offer prayers, and participate in rituals that had long been denied to them. The proclamation was not a spontaneous act of royal benevolence but rather the outcome of sustained social pressures, reformist ideologies, and political strategies, particularly those advanced by Dewan C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar4.

In Kanyakumari, the local temples became the sites where the proclamation was tested and enacted. Suchindram, with its ancient Thanumalayan Temple, was among the first to open its doors. Oral narratives describe how groups of Nadar's and Dalits, led by both men and women, entered the temple with flowers and coconuts in their hands, symbolically claiming their rightful share in the sacred. At Nagercoil's Nagaraja Temple, the scene was equally dramatic, as individuals who had for generations stood outside the shrine crossed the threshold with tears in their eyes. These events were not without tension; opposition from orthodox sections led to purification ceremonies and ritual protests, yet the legal force of the proclamation ensured that access could no longer be denied.

The Temple Entry in Suchindram, Nagercoil, and Thiruvattar: From Exclusion to Participation

Among the temples of Kanyakumari district, Suchindram Thanumalayan Temple occupies a unique place in the history of temple entry. Renowned for its antiquity and sanctity, the temple was a bastion of orthodoxy where lower-caste communities were rigorously excluded. The proclamation of 1936 altered this centuries-old tradition. Oral testimonies record how groups of Nadar and Dalit devotees, accompanied by women draped in modest saris and carrying lotus flowers, were among the earliest to step into the inner precincts of Suchindram. This entry was not merely an act of worship but a symbolic assertion of human dignity. Local reports suggest that upper-caste sections initially attempted to resist by conducting purificatory

rites to symbolically erase the presence of the "polluting" castes. Yet the proclamation had the force of law, and the gates of the temple could no longer remain barred.

At Nagercoil, the Nagaraja Temple became another site of transformation. Elderly residents still recall with emotion the first worship of Nadar families, who offered milk and camphor before the deity that for centuries they had only glimpsed from afar. At Thiruvattar, the Adikesava Perumal Temple witnessed a similar scene. For the fisherfolk and Dalits who had lived in the surrounding villages, the right to participate in temple festivals was a profound step towards equality. Accounts mention that women in particular seized the opportunity to join in singing devotional hymns and carrying lamps during temple rituals. These moments were experienced as a cultural rebirth, where faith and social justice were reconciled in the act of worship.

The Significant Role of Women in Breaking Barriers through Temple Entry in Kanyakumari

The role of women in the temple entry movement of Kanyakumari deserves particular emphasis. While much of the historical narrative has focused on male leaders and reformers, it was women who often bore the brunt of exclusion, for they were denied not only entry into temples but also the social recognition that accompanied religious participation. Missionary-educated Nadar women, influenced by Christian ideals of equality and dignity, were among the first to accompany their families into temples after the proclamation. In Suchindram and Nagercoil, oral histories describe the courage of women who defied ridicule and threats to light lamps within the sanctum, thereby asserting their spiritual agency. Women's participation in temple rituals also redefined gender roles within the oppressed communities themselves. The act of offering flowers or carrying kavadi in festivals, once seen as exclusively male domains, became spaces where women began to assert themselves. Their presence within the temple precincts challenged not only caste hierarchy but also patriarchal norms, symbolizing a dual liberation. By reclaiming the right to worship, women became visible agents of reform, although their contributions often remain invisible in the official records of Travancore.

The Resistance of Orthodox Sections and the Conflicts Surrounding Temple Entry in Local Shrines

The proclamation did not pass unchallenged. In Kanyakumari, upper-caste communities such as the Brahmins and Nair's expressed strong opposition to what they perceived as a desecration of sacred tradition. In Suchindram, orthodox groups staged protests and organized purification ceremonies immediately after the entry of marginalized communities. There were instances of social boycotts, where those who supported temple entry faced exclusion from caste associations. At Nagercoil, violent clashes were reported when oppressed castes attempted to participate in annual festivals. Despite this resistance, the enforcement machinery of the Travancore state ensured that the proclamation was not reversed. Dewan C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar took strict measures to see that temples remained open to all, even deploying police forces in certain sensitive areas. The conflict highlighted the tension between custom and law, tradition and reform, and revealed how deeply entrenched caste interests resisted democratization of sacred spaces. Yet in the end, the proclamation prevailed, signalling the triumph of a new social order.

The Temple Entry Proclamation as a Cultural Renaissance and a Symbol of Democratic Transformation

The opening of temple doors to all Hindus did not merely allow worship; it redefined the cultural life of Kanyakumari. Temples, which had functioned as exclusive preserves of upper castes, became arenas of shared faith and collective identity. For the marginalized, participation in temple festivals, music, and rituals meant entry into the symbolic heart of Hindu culture. Nadars and Dalits began contributing to temple activities, sponsoring lamps, and taking part in annual utsavams. Such acts signaled their acceptance not only within the temple but also within the broader cultural

fold. This transformation may rightly be termed a cultural renaissance. The proclamation democratized access to art forms like Carnatic music and temple dance, which had previously been confined to elite spaces. The inclusion of new voices and faces in temple life echoed the democratic spirit that was taking root in Indian politics during the 1930s. For the people of Kanyakumari, the proclamation was not only a matter of religion but a declaration of equality and citizenship, aligning their struggle with the broader national movement for freedom.

The Long–Term Impact of Temple Entry on Social Justice, Political Mobilization, and Regional Identity

The legacy of the proclamation extended far beyond the act of worship. By breaking the barriers of caste in sacred spaces, it inspired new demands for equality in education, employment, and politics. The psychological impact of being able to stand before the deity without fear of exclusion emboldened marginalized groups to claim dignity in all spheres of life. Women, having participated in temple entry, became more visible in public and political spaces, including the Travancore State Congress and later movements for the merger of Kanyakumari with Tamil Nadu. The proclamation also reshaped the political identity of the district. By granting equal access to temples, the Travancore state inadvertently strengthened the resolve of communities who would later lead agitations for greater political representation and regional integration. The sense of empowerment generated by temple entry played a role in the rising demand for the merger of Kanyakumari with Tamil Nadu in 1956, where linguistic and cultural arguments were buttressed by a history of social reform. Thus, the proclamation was not merely a religious decree but a foundational step in the larger history of democratic transformation in the region.

Conclusion:

The Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936 remains a turning point in the history of Kanyakumari district. It broke the chains of centuries-old exclusion and opened the sacred spaces of Hinduism to all its adherents, irrespective of caste. In Suchindram, Nagercoil, Thiruvattar, and countless village shrines, the proclamation redefined worship as a right rather than a privilege. Women, who had long remained invisible in the narratives of reform, emerged as significant participants in this transformation, though their stories still await full recognition. The resistance of orthodox groups revealed the depth of social conservatism, but the persistence of reformers and the authority of the state ensured that the doors remained open. More than a reform in religious practice, the proclamation marked a cultural renaissance and a step towards democratization. It laid the foundation for social justice movements, strengthened political mobilization, and contributed to the shaping of a new regional identity that would later influence the integration of Kanyakumari into Tamil Nadu. To remember the Temple Entry Proclamation is to remember the courage of those who defied exclusion, the resilience of women who crossed thresholds of taboo, and the vision of a society that began to move, however haltingly, towards equality and dignity for all

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The Sivakasi Communal Riots in 1899

S. Sangeetha[1] and Dr. G.M. Sunder Singh[2]

Towards the close of 1895 the Nadar at Sivakasi appeared to have submit ted a petition to the President of the Devastanam committee in Tirunelveli praying for the appointment of a Nadar as trustee of the Viswanatha swamy Temple at Sivakasi. The committee then declined to appointment the trustee and rumour points to the subsequent death of the two Nadar candidates for the appointment as an illustration of divine retributive. It is not clear at present why the Nadar made this move in1895, but it seems to have been long a wish of the principal Nadar in Sivakasi that they should make Sivakasi an exclusively Nadar village and probably this attempt to get a footing in the management of the temple was part of the scheme.

In 1896 the anti – Nadar party complained that the Nadar were likely to create disturbance at the Kirthigai Festival. The Deputy Collector on that occasion appears to have accompanied the procession himself and there was no disturbance. Since the Nadar seem to have more or less persistently claimed entrance into the temple and the anti – Nadar have as persistently opposed it on the economic background Nadar developed their position in the commercial field.

In 1897, the Nadar seeking to assert their religious rights, removed the traditional pujari (priest) of the Mariamman temple in Sivakasi and appointed a Brahmin priest from the Coimbatore district through the influence of a Nadar priest located there. Upon his arrival in Sivakasi, this Brahmin formed an association with the pujari of the prominent Viswanatha swamy temple and dined with him. This incident provided an opportunity for the temple trustee, reportedly of the Vellala caste, to instigate conflict. He alleged that the newly appointed Brahmin introduced food that had been defiled by the Nadar into the house of the Siva temple priest. This accusation led to disputes, during which the cook of the Siva temple priest' s residence, and the temple itself was closed prevent the Nadar from entering.

By-mid 1899, these disputes in the Tirunelveli district had reached an acute stage. Police reports from August 1898 until the outbreak of riots, along with the subsequent actions of the magistracy, reveal significant shortcomings. The records making it possible to assess both the failure of the police to adequately inform the magistrates and the inability of the magistrates to fully comprehend and effectively address the escalating situation.

During the July 1898 Sivakasi disturbances, some Nadar unsuccessfully attempted to gain temple entry, prompting clandestine actions and arson: the house of Sornam, a dancing girl associated with the Siva temple was set on fire on both the 14th and 16th of July. Alaram circulated that Nadar had violated temple property, and further mischief targeted the garden of the smaller Nadar temple. On the night of 17 July, several Nadar houses were discovered ablaze. In response, the Deputy Magistrate ordered ten constables to maintain order, yet the police failed to identified any perpetrators, and the cases lapsed without resolution.

Earlier cases illustrate system barriers. In 1878, the Srivilliputtur District Munsif prohibited the Nadar of Tirutangal from entering the temple of offering coconuts, although they retained the right to process through the streets. Similarly, in 1885, Nadar from Gollapatti petitioned to carry their procession across the village, which was ultimately restricted to the Zamindar and other castes.

On 3rd October 1898, the District Magistrate received a formal complaint from the trustees of the Viswanatha Swamy temple in Sivakasi, reiterating

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grievances against claims and activities.

i. That the Nadar had no right of entry into the temple.

ii. That the Nadar had assumed an aggressive attitude at Sivakasi.

iii. That the Nadar had in 1895 tried to get the appointment of Trustee of the temple into their hands and that action was stopped by the order of the Guru of the Sri Singeri mutt.

iv. That the Nadar in consequences determined in any case to force an entry into the temple on the 16th July and onn the 28th July.

v. That no effectual assistance had been given to the temple authorities to permit worship in the temple.

vi. That the police were partial owing to the amount of money which the Nadar were spending in the town.

vii. That the Nadar were enraged owing to their failure to obtain conviction against the Maravas in a case of mischief.

viii. That on the 7th September when the Nadar forced an entry into the temple the police charged them.

Out Break of The Communal RIO TS

In 1899, 16th July, the Nadar were alleged to have broken into the temple. A second alleged trespass occurred on 28th July 1899, followed by another incident on 7th September, when two Nadar reportedly entered the temple during the daytime. Following this final incident, the temple was shut and remained closed. The serious communal clashes were out break on 6th June 1899 at Sivakasi.

On 20th April 1899, the local Inspector of Police reported that the Maravas near Sivakasi were urging the Chukkiliars to were the sacred thread and enter the Nadar temple to defile it, marking the beginning of more organized at tacks. A major confrontation occurred on 26th April 1899, when the Maravas quarters in front of the burning houses. When the Inspector arrived with his constable, he found the Maravas quarters in flames and nearly 400 Nadar engaged in combat against about half as many Maravas. Sticks, knives, stones, and bricks were being used freely as weapons during the violent clash.

The Inspector ordered the crowd to disperse, but to disperse, but the mob fired at him. He continued to warn them of the consequence of refusing to withdraw, yet, without waiting for the Deputy Magistrate, he retreated to his men, who were becoming restless and eager to open fire. To cont rol the situation, he ordered several shots to be fired into the air, with about fifteen rounds discharged. As the Maravas began to lose ground in the clash, the eventually dispersed. The Deputy Magistrate arrived at the scene around 5 p.m., nearly three hours after the riot had begun. During the ongoing violence in Sivakasi, the Deputy Magistrate witnessed three Nadar firing guns from the roof of a house, as reported by the Inspector and Constables.

One Maravas sustained injuries from small shot and was admitted to the hospital. The losses suffered by the Maravas were severe, 45 houses were burned to the ground, leaving many families homeless and destitute. The Nadar by contrast were only slightly affected. That same evening however the Maravas retaliated by entering the Pettai, where they burned sheds and looted three small godowns. In response the Deputy Magistrate directed the Inspector to arrest the rioters in the immediate arrest of nine Maravas, while the rest managed to escape.

The Anti-Nadar groups made extensive preparation for the impending encounter and even declared openly the date on which they intended to sack the town. A notice announcing the attack was pasted on the main door of the temple. Since Tuesday was the weekly fair day at Sivakasi, an important center of trade, the occasion usually attracted a large concourse of people. In this report dated 1 June 1899, the Sub-Magistrate of Sattur noted that a general panic had spread in Sivakasi, with some residents vacating the town in fear of widespread violence. Although the bazaar street appeared violence. Although the bazaar street appeared unusually quiet, no specific complaints were recorded.

According to the planned mobilization of the Maravas and their allied groups, large numbers of men

began rushing into Sivakasi town. At that time, the Police Inspector, Sub-Magistrate and about twenty constables were stationed there. While they were in the western part of the town, they received reports that a large crowd was advancing from that direction. As they moved westward and reached the bridge between the union office and the police station, they encountered nearly 4,000 armed men. Those gathered in front of the union office carried weapons, including some 30 to 40 guns, as well as sticks and sickles. Displaying open desperation the mob advanced to within twenty five to thir ty yards of the small police force.

Conclusion

According to local tradition, however the death toll was far higher, more than two hundred people reported killed. Their corpses were bur ied near Periyakulam, in the eastern part of what is today the Sivakasi Municipal office area which continues to remain inhabited.

The riots came to an end after the intervention of the British Military in mid -July 1899.

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Nattukotai Chettiars: The Transaformation of traders to Bankers in Colonial India

K. Govindaraj

Origins of the Chettiar Community

The Chettiar community traces its roots to Tamil Nadu, with strong connections to the towns of Karaikudi, Devakottai, Pallathur, and other centers in the Chettinad region of present-day Sivagangai and Pudukottai districts. Traditionally, the Chettiars belonged to the *Vaishya varna* (trading class) within the Hindu social hierarchy, although their specific caste identity evolved uniquely in Tamil society. Early records suggest that Chettiars were engaged in the salt trade, pearl fishing, and gem business during the medieval Chola and Pandya periods. The proximity of the Coromandel Coast and the thriving port towns of Nagapattinam and Kaveripattinam gave them access to maritime networks. They also maintained links with Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia in pre-colonial times.

By the 17th and 18th centuries, however, changing patterns of global trade—particularly the growing dominance of European companies such as the Portuguese *Estado da Índia*, the Dutch VOC, and later the English East India Company—reduced the opportunities for Indian merchants in overseas maritime commerce. Many traditional merchant groups declined, but the Chettiars adapted by shifting from maritime trade to moneylending and financial intermediation. Their reputation for honesty, meticulous bookkeeping, and community trust enabled them to reinvent themselves as bankers in the evolving colonial economy

Banking Practices of the Chettiars

The banking practices of the Chettiars were unique and sophisticated, combining traditional methods with innovative financial instruments.

Use of *Hundis:* Perhaps their most significant contribution was the use of *hundis* (bills of exchange). A *hundi* allowed the transfer of money across regions

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without physically moving coin or bullion.[3]For example, a trader in Madurai could deposit funds with a Chettiar agent, who would then issue a *hundi* payable in Rangoon or Colombo. This system functioned much like modern bank drafts or promissory notes and greatly reduced the risks of theft during transport.

Collateral-Based Lending: Loans were generally provided against collateral such as land deeds, jewelry, livestock, or agricultural produce. The Chettiars also financed irrigation tanks, wells, and canals, securing repayment from future harvests. Interest rates varied depending on risk but were often higher than those charged by European banks, reflecting the unsecured and small-scale nature of many loans.

Meticulous Accounting: The Chettiars maintained rigorous accounting systems. They initially recorded transactions on palm-leaf manuscripts, later transitioning to cloth-bound ledgers (Pattolai). Each transaction was noted with precise detail, including borrower's lineage, landholding, and repayment schedule. Such records ensured transparency and facilitated intergenerational continuity in business practices.

Community-Based Banking: Unlike impersonal banking institutions, Chettiar finance operated on the principle of trust within the community. A Chettiar's reputation for integrity determined his creditworthiness. Disputes were usually resolved within caste councils (Nattars), avoiding colonial courts. This collective ethic made their networks resilient and self-regulating.

Role in Agriculture and Rural Finance: The Chettiars became indispensable to the agrarian economy of the Madras Presidency and beyond. They financed zamindars and ryots (peasants) for cultivation expenses. They provided advance loans for irrigation works, enabling large-scale rice cultivation in the Cauvery delta. They supported the commercialization of crops such as cotton, indigo, groundnut, and sugarcane. In Burma, their financing of paddy cultivation in the Irrawaddy delta revolutionized agricultural output, while in Ceylon, they supported tea and rubber plantations. In many cases, their lending bridged the crucial gap between sowing and harvest, sustaining rural livelihoods.

However, their role was controversial. Critics accused them of charging high interest rates that led to indebtedness among peasants. The stereotype of the "village moneylender" often carried negative connotations, though it ignored the structural dependence of colonial agriculture on private credit.

International Expansion of Chettiar Banking

From the mid-19th century onwards, the Chettiars expanded beyond South India into Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, and Singapore, forming one of the earliest examples of an Indian overseas financial Diaspora. Burma (Myanmar): This became their largest field of operation. Chettiars financed land reclamation in the Irrawaddy delta, provided credit to rice farmers, and supported the export trade of paddy. By the 1920s, Chettiar loans dominated the Burmese countryside. Ceylon (Sri Lanka): Chettiar capital supported the development of tea, coffee, and rubber plantations, often working alongside British planters.

Malaya and Singapore: Here, they acted as intermediaries between European banks and Asian traders, providing liquidity to small merchants and Chinese businessmen. By 1920, it is estimated that nearly 70% of all Chettiar capital was invested outside India, making them one of the most globalized Indian business communities of their time.

Relationship with the Colonial Economy

The Chettiars occupied a paradoxical position within the colonial economy. On one hand, they filled the gap left by European banks, which largely avoided small borrowers and rural clients. On the other hand, they borrowed from European banks to extend credit to indigenous populations. Thus, Chettiar finance linked local economies with global capital markets.Their credit facilitated the commercialization of agriculture, which ultimately served the needs of the colonial export economy. Yet, without them, many farmers and small traders would have been excluded from credit altogether. This duality—agents of imperial capitalism but also protectors of indigenous commerce—remains a central theme in the historiography of Chettiar banking.

Social and Cultural Life of the Chettiars

The wealth accumulated through finance was reflected in the distinctive architecture and philanthropy of the Chettiar community. Mansions of Chettinad: Built with imported Burmese teak, Italian marble and Belgian glass, these palatial houses reflected both prosperity and cosmopolitanism. Many are still standing today as heritage monuments. The religious endowments were founded by Chettiars and the construction and renovation of Hindu temples, particularly those dedicated to Lord Shiva and Murugan. They also financed festivals and rituals, reinforcing their social prestige.They established schools, colleges, and hospitals in Tamil Nadu, contributing to the region's social development. Their philanthropy extended overseas, with donations to temples in Burma and Ceylon.Their lifestyle combined orthodox Hindu traditions with cosmopolitan influences absorbed from Southeast Asia, making them one of the most culturally vibrant communities of colonial South India.

Decline of Chettiar Banking

Several factors led to the decline of Chettiar dominance in finance during the mid-20th century like the rise of Modern Banks. The establishment of the Imperial Bank of India (1921), followed by the Reserve Bank of India (1935), introduced modern regulatory frameworks that marginalized indigenous bankers. Like that, the Nationalization in Burma has triggered the downfall. In the 1960s, the Burmese government's land and banking reforms expropriated Chettiar properties, forcing thousands to return to Tamil Nadu under difficult conditions. The shift in the economic structure might be the growth of cooperative credit societies, government-backed rural banks, and land reforms that reduced dependence on traditional moneylenders. Accusations of usury and peasant exploitation tarnished their reputation, leading to political pressures against private money lending.

Legacy and Historical Importance Despite their decline, the Chettiars left a lasting legacy.

Financial Innovation: Their use of *hundis* and accounting systems influenced the development of Indian banking.They enabled agrarian expansion in India and Southeast Asia. Chettinad mansions, temple endowments, and educational institutions stand as reminders of their prosperity. Many Chettiars successfully transitioned into modern business, industry, and education, continuing their tradition of enterprise.

Conclusion

Today, while they no longer function as rural bankers, the Chettiars remain active in commerce, philanthropy, and cultural preservation. Their history demonstrates the adaptability of an indigenous community to changing global and national economic environments. The story of the Chettiars illustrates how a regional trading caste reinvented itself as a financial powerhouse during the colonial era. By establishing networks across South and Southeast Asia, they not only sustained rural economies but also integrated local markets into global circuits of capital. Their contributions to finance, agriculture, architecture, and education justify their reputation as the "Bankers of India." Although modern banking eventually replaced them, their legacy endures in both India's financial traditions and its cultural landscape.

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Nangeli and the Politics of CASTE-Gender Resistance in Nineteenth-Century Travancore

Devi Pounguzali V

Legend of Nangeli

Nangeli belonged to a period when the princely state of Travancore was not only experiencing a financial crisis but also compensating for it by imposing arbitrary taxes on the lower castes. According to oral folklore, she was a bold and devout woman who challenged the exploitative regime instead of abiding by the rules in silence. She was even hushed by many of her friends and members of her community when she tried to raise her voice. Nangeli was one of the women in the village who wasobligated to pay the breast tax. It is said that the breast tax was collected based on the size of the breasts, which allowed the men of the upper castes to violate women's bodies, rendering women's consent irrelevant.

The story goes that Nangeli and her husband Chirukandan lived in the small coastal village of Cherthala, working as agricultural labourers and collecting sap from coconut trees, otherwise called toddy tapping. They lived in a small hut in the village and had no children of their own. *Parvathiyar*, the local officer responsible for tax collection, arrived at Nangeli's place as was customary, asking her to pay up. Chirukandan was not home at the time. It was the custom to bring the tax in plantain leaves, which Nangeli already had ready. She had grown up watching the unfairness of the whole affair. She had already made up her mind not to pay the demeaning tax anymore. She asked the officers to wait and went inside to fetch the tax. She had her sickle prepared, with which she worked in the fields every day. In a fury, she chopped off both her breasts with her sickle, placed them on the plantain leaf and returned to the doorstep carrying it in her hands. The *parvathiyar* and his men were shocked at the sight of a bleeding Nangeli bringing her chopped breasts in their direction.Nangeli collapsed in front of them and bled to death, and the officers left her body behind as they hurried from the scene.

The locals rushed to her house on hearing the news and mourned her tragic death. When Chirukandan arrived at the scene, he was overcome with grief. On the day that Nangeli's body was cremated in the village, he threw himself into the funeral pyre and died, making it the first ever instance of sati committed by a man or *pati sahagamanam*.[1]

Discontent and anger were brewing among the outcastes, as the taxes were pushing them into abject poverty and most of them struggled to secure even one meal a day. No amount of labour was enough to paythe taxes. Her sacrifice was a resounding call for the lower castes to rise in revolt against the atrocities. Nangeli's death enraged the people and triggered a chain of protests against the prime minster Velu Thampi Dalawa

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and the king AvittomThirunal Balarama Varma.According to sources that suggest Nangeli's period as the late nineteenth century, king Sri Mulam Thirunal (1885-1942) is said to have revoked the breast tax the very next day fearing public agitation.[1]

Contrary to opinions that limit Nangeli's sacrifice to a matter of "honour", her death was a rebellion against the existing oppressive institutions of feudalism, casteism, and patriarchy. According to historian Manu S. Pillai, the story has been hijacked and edited to fit more convenient narratives without adhering to the complete truth.[1] He writes: "When Nangeli stood up, squeezed to the extremes of poverty by a regressive tax system, it was a statement made in great anguish about the injustice of the social order itself. Her call was not to celebrate modesty and honour; it was a siren call against caste and the rotting feudalism that victimised those in its underbelly who could not challenge it. She was a heroine of all who were poor and weak, not the archetype of middle-class womanly honour she has today become. But they could not admit that Nangeli's sacrifice was an ultimatum to the order, so they remodelled her as a virtuous goddess, one who sought to cover her breasts rather than one who issued a challenge to power. The spirit of her rebellion was buried in favour of its letter, and Nangeli reduced to the sum of her breasts."[1] He also says that there was not exactly a breast tax, that the poll tax imposed on the avarna men and women was called *talakkaram* and *mulakkaram* respectively, and that it was no more than a nomenclature used to distinguish between the genders.[1]

While debates surrounding the existence of Nangeli rage on, with many from the savarna community dismissing the breast tax altogether, the point to focus on is the value of the source in reconstructing subaltern caste-gender history, especially when most evidence available for a particular period or people are elitist. While some accounts claim that the *mulakkaram* was collected on the basis of the size of breasts, others dispute this claim.Manu S. Pillai opines that Nangeli died in the early years of the nineteenth century in 1803.D. Sugathan also states that the incident happened in 1803 in his book *Oru Desathinte Katha, Kayarinteyum*.

Covering one's breasts was not a matter of virtue for women during the period. It was common for the women of Kerala to be bare-breasted, and this is supported by colonial accounts like the Dutch records that describe the royal women in court. Ideals of Victorian sexuality spun a new narrative of Nangeli's rebellion as a fight for dignity, which is far removed from historical reality. She was, on the other hand, fighting an unjust caste system.

Role of Caste in Gender Oppression

Caste and gender are interconnected, and hence overlap, together forming hierarchies that oppress women belonging to marginalized communities. Caste hierarchy and gender hierarchy are the organizing principles of the brahmanical social order or brahmanical patriarchy. Both the hierarchies are intertwined and create multiple intersectional layers of oppression, with women belonging to marginalized castes being more affected than upper-caste women as a result. Sexual control was the tool employed to achieve two goals - patrilineal succession and caste purity.[1]The purity of women's sexuality was central to the framework of patriarchy starting from the Early Vedic period, and the main idea behind it was to restrictunions of women and men from different rungs of the caste hierarchy.

The experience of women in a caste-based society is intersectional, for the same reason that oppression is never singular but works with other graded institutions to create further oppression. In the case of South India, changes in gender relations and the institutionalization of patriarchal structures can be witnessed starting from the early medieval period i.e., after the Sangam Age. Though the Sangam period limited women to the roles of lovers, mothers, and daughters in most of its literature, it was comparatively more liberal than the ages that followed.[1] In order to understand the condition of women, the analysis must not be limited to studying

the "status of women" but to understand the gender relations in society and how it enabled the subordination of women.

Intersectionality theory influenced critical analysis of mainstream feminism and feminist theories in India, as the resulting experience for both the 'black woman' in the USA and the 'Dalit woman' in India is more than the sum of sexism and racism, and sexism and casteism respectively. It draws attention to the invisibilities that exist within feminism, anti-racism, anti-casteism, and other movements. It also helps in understanding how power is sustained and maintained in the hands of a few and how this power springs from the multi-layered aspects of oppression.[1]

The 1990s witnessed the emergence of organizations like the National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW) in 1995 and the All India Dalit Women's Freedom (AIDWF) in 2006 when the need was increasingly felt by Dalit women to organize themselves. These organizations carried their voice to global platforms, empowering them in the process and creating an efficient medium and space for expression.

The issue is highly relevant today, given that sexual violence against Dalit women by upper-caste men is a common phenomenon, and almost always goes without acquittal or retribution. This highlights the bleak reality of the Dalit women in India and the injustice they experience on a daily basis. Dalit feminism brings to attention how the experience of the Dalit woman is ignored or erased within the spheres of mainstream Indian feminism and Dalit politics. It is gaining increasing visibility in international forums, which not only helps their voices be heard but also puts pressure on the Indian government to act.

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Sree Narayanaguru-The Modern Prophet of South Travancore

S. Dorai

Introduction

Sree Narayana Guru was a great Social reformer. He was an educational thinker, philosopher and a revolutionalist. The greatest message of Sree Narayana Guru was "One caste, One religion and One God".[1] He was the first man in India who gave the clarion call against Caste system. He believed in the oneness of God. Guru considered temples as educational institutions. Narayana Guru is not to be confined to a section of the society he was a boon to the entire Community. Sree Narayana Guru advocated that humanity is the only one caste of mankind. The essence of Narayana Guru's message is that God exists in the heart of every one, all are the sons of the same God and all are equal and brothers before God.

Early life

Sree Narayana Guru was born on 26th August 1854 A.D. He was born at the Village called Chempazhanthy in the suburb of the city of Trivandrum, the present capital of Kerala State. His father was Madan Asan, he was a farmer. He was versed in Sanskrit, Astronomy and Ayurvedic medicine and he was a teacher as his name "Acharyan".[2] His mother Kutty Amma. She was a sensitive and pretty woman. He was the only son of his parents in the family of Vayalvaram, the small cottage still remaining a Bhavathi temple called Manakkal. His family belonged to the Ezhavas which were considered untouchables. His original name was Narayanan and he was called by his parents as "Nanu".[3]Nanu was a village boy. His silence, his voice and his kindly harmonized values expressed in his life work. Homes and relatives did not attract Nanu. Nanu was also fond of sitting on the spread out branches of trees. During these years Nanu also took to gardening. It agreed with his sensitive nature to see seeds germinating and plants bringing for the delicate flowers and edible fruits. Nanu was at the age of six a death occurred in his family. He was shocked by the grief of the relatives. Two days after the cremation the young Nanu was found missing. They searched everywhere and at last they found him sitting in a wood. When he was questioned he said "The other day when one died everybody was crying. Hardly a day passed and all of you started laughing as if nothing had happened.

Spiritual Activities

Narayanaguru was a religious philosopher and he stood for spiritual development of people as well. The release of the soul from the bondage of worldly interests is the highest aim of life to him. As a practical philosopher Guru know that without achieving development in his life no spiritual growth can occur.[4] Narayana Guru left his hermitage in the maruthuvamalai in Kanyakumari district and he settled at Sankarankuzhi in Aruvipuram is a thick forest on the banks of river Neyyar in south Kerala. From 1884 to 1904 Narayana guru stayed mostly at Aruvipuram. He lived for some time in the woods without being detected by anyone. One day, a young boy who had been grazing his cows near the forest went deep into the woods looking for a cow which had gone astray. This boy's name was Parameswaran Pillai. He became the first disciple. Day by day he received him as his devotees. Gradually people from all over Kerala began to visit the guru at Aruvipuram. Guru felt the necessity of establishing a temple at Aruvipuram.[5] On the day of Sivarathri of 1888, in the presence of several hundreds of people the Guru concentrated an idol of Sivalinga at Aruvipuram. A small hut was built there a temple soon came up and was thrown open to all irrespective that this temple would be a casteless and non-religion institution for all together as brothers. It was an open challenge to the Brahmin Priesthood. A great Brahmin scholar came to question the right of an Avarna, on Ezhava to install a deity. The answer given to the Guru has become famous "This is not a Brahmin Siva", "This is an Ezhava Siva".[6]

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Social Reforms

The comprehensive scheme of activities which the Guru suggested to the downtrodden to take up for their advancement included social reforms also. As far back as 1912, he summed up the various proposals which he had been suggesting at different times in response to the needs of each occasion. According to him, education is the basis of all progress; society did have enough promising boys who could grow up as assets to any community. Lack of money was the main obstacle that prevented them from rising to higher levels. Rich men should come forward to help these intelligent, studious, hard-working lads by granting them scholarships and other monetary aids. He wanted women's education to be encouraged, and never be neglected. According to Sree Narayana Guru the masses should be provided with cottage industries and work places in the co-operative sector. Instead of continuing as suppliers of raw materials to the affluent countries and purchasing finished. Products from them at the high cost should produce manufactured goods in this country itself and thus help the poor.[7] Adult literacy and establishment of libraries in every locality should be encouraged. Learned men should inculcate modern ideas and culture in the illiterate through speeches, songs, dramas and similar means of development of culture.

Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam

The SNDP Yogam founded with its leader Sree Narayana Guru tried to fulfill the just aspirations of the needy in Kerala. On the social front, enthusiastic young Ezhavas like Dr.Palpu were trying for their community. Following the advice of Swami Vivekananda, he sought the spiritual leadership of Guru Narayana. The result is that the temple association of Aruvipuram was converted in to "Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yoga" (SNDP).[8] The birth of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam is a milestone progress of the Ezhavas. The Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam or S.N.D.P.Y as it is popularly known, was a society founded in 1903 under the aegis of the Guru for the dissemination of the ideals of Sree Narayana Dharma among the masses and for the uplift of the down-trodden caste of Kerala. Anyone from any caste could be a member of the society. Quite naturally the reins of the society came into the hands of the Ezhavas, who happened to be in an overwhelming majority among its members. The Swami's ideal, which was one of Universal, was not affected by this circumscription of the society's leadership because everyone of them working under the Guru was heart and soul for the uplift of all depressed castes. They were the more willing group to follow the Guru on the score that the Guru was born in their midst. This uniformity of the S.N.D.P membership facilitated the smooth management of the society.[9]

The Ezhavas were numerically the largest caste, a factor which lent strength to their movement. They had a pivotal position, being at the top of the hierarchy of the untouchables and just below the Nairs. What they achieved inspired all castes below them to emulate their movement for betterment, and induced the higher caste to examine and improve the customs and ways of their respective caste. The Ezhava tradition of Vaidhyas and Sanskrit scholars, landlords and rich men on top among them equipped them for quick progress up the social ladder. Their leader was a great saint and so the whole movement was imbued with a spiritual aura.

Moreover, they had already made some trial movements earlier towards bettering their position in life, and achieved some success although those attempts involved some sporadic violence. They, therefore, welcomed this opportunity of struggling with greater dignity. The S.N.D.P.Y had its vast annual gatherings. They were graced in its earlier days by the presence of the Guru who gave them guidance and determined the tenor of the deliberations. People assembled in hundreds and later in thousands, some special meetings having more than half-a –lakh of people who listened in pin-drop silence to speeches made without the aid of loud speakers.[10] Those meetings would very often be addressed by the higher castes and also by officialdom, including the Dewan of Travancore and Cochin. The disabilities of the depressed castes dropped one by one like leaves in autumn until at last they could walk along public roads without fear of polluting anyone, use roads around temples, get admitted to schools, colleges and hostels, secure jobs in government services and even have certain percentages of jobs reserved for different

groups of castes and then finally came the entry into temples in 1936. Travancore was the first state in India to grant those privileges to all castes. What a miraculous achievement goes for the Guru who passed away or attained his Samadhi as the saying goes in 1928.

Vivekodayam:

Vivekodayam a monthly publication was started to give publicity to the activities and message of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogham which aimed at raising the cultural level of the ordinary man by a process of selective modernization. Kumaran Asan who edited the journal, was the greatest disciple of the Swami and one of the greatest thinkers and poets of Modern Kerala. Religious practices, social customs and rites often have, the swami said, symbolic meanings which should not be overlooked. The magazine advocated a modern approach to inter-communal marriages and also in reforming and shortening the duration of various ceremonies as well as in economizing in their cost. The status of marriage rites was raised to that of a sacrament, costly, meaningless customs were to be abolished.

The orthodox who did not quite appreciate these changes raised the canard that Asan was writing on his own, without Swami's consent or even knowledge. This suspicion was cleared by swami at one or two public functions when he advocated the need to adopt these reforms by the community. In those days the marriages of non-Brahmins were, as a rule, merely social functions, the Brahmin marriages alone being sacraments with players, mantras, vows, poojas and all the rest of it, taking up three or four days time.[11] Swami converted the non-Brahmin marriages also into sacramental ceremonies with the performance of pooja, the chanting of Vedic verses, the exchange of vows, and with other concomitant observances, all of them handpicked by the Guru out of the elaborate rituals of the orthodox Hindu marriage system. And for those who were too busy for that, he prescribed an abridged version that would last only ten minutes. The Ezhavas and some of the higher castes used to conduct a mock-marriage prior to the regular marriage which took place only after a girl came of age. A small ornament called the Tali which was the symbol of the marital status was tied round the neck of the child by the person who conducted the ceremony.[12] The real marriage ceremony, however, was performed after the girl had grown up, the bridegroom being someone else altogether. The Guru declared that this Talikettu function was meaningless and ordered its abolition. In some cases, he sent messages to this effect directly to the parents of the children. In one or two instances, he walked into the midst of the crowd at the eleventh hour of the function and persuaded the fathers to agree. It is noteworthy that at one instance it was the mother of the child who agreed to the stoppage of the functions more readily than the father.

Another custom stopped by the Guru was the public feast and function conducted, when a girl-attained puberty. These and other similar functions abolished by the Guru saved the families the thousands of rupees which were being lavishly squandered in carrying out social ceremonies that had become redundant in this age. In the due course of time the Nairs and other castes too stopped observing these functions after the Ezhava community had carried out the reforms at the instance of the Swami. Space does not permit the narration of all the social changes brought about by the Guru. Among them, however, the amalgamation of small castes deserves special mention.[13]There were certain castes in Kerala who were numerically so small that those microscopic minorities suffered certain disabilities peculiar to themselves. They were unable to stand up against the atrocities committed on them. As they were scattered in different localities, they found it difficult even to get their children married to members of their own fold and thereby saved them from a social crisis. The year in which he did this was as early as 1906. As early as 1921, Sree Narayana stated that "Liquor is poison. It should not be produced, sold or consumed". It was more or less in this connection that he asked almost in despair. "A casteless society has to be formed. Who will work for it?". The thought led to the formation of the Sree Narayana Dharma Samaj consisting of Sanyasis whom he had enrobed and enrolled into the Samaj.[14] The members of the Samaj were drawn from different castes including Brahmins, Nairs, Ezhavas and others. The institutions at Sivagiri,

Alwaye, etc where caste distinctions had been wiped away from the beginning were run by this Samaj of sanyasis who were brahmacharis with no worldly burdens of wife, children, family, etc. to restrict their service to their weal of mankind. They also run religious institutions, schools, charitable dispensaries, etc. Illuminating the minds of the lowest castes by the philosophy taught by the swami is also part of their missions. For any social reform, an organization is essential.

Sree Narayana Guru's high dignity and sense of oneness with mankind did not allow him to give vent to anger or protestation against any particular person or community. He believed that there was only one caste for man and that was humanity. In this attitude he was uncompromising. The humble temple association became a great social force. Though it was not a caste based organisation the whole community of Ezhavas were united under its banner. The name of the organisation meant an association for the maintenance of Narayanadharma. The basic aim of the Yogam has been popularise the message of Sree Narayana Guru and bring about the Social and spiritual regeneration of the Ezhavas and other backward communities.[16]

Sree Narayana Guru was the first president of Sree Narayana Dharma paripalana Yogam, Dr. Palpu was elected as the Vice-president and Mahakavi Kumaran Asan as the General secretary. The Yogam took up the formal education of people and struggled for social justice. Eminent scholars and social workers like Kumaran Asan, Dr.Palpu, T.K.Madhavan, C.Krishnan and M.Govindan lived up behind the Guru to lead the yogham in the name of Sree Narayana Guru On the advice of the Guru the Yogam conducted enlightened the people on matters of religion, morals and industry. At present there are nearly 150 educational institutions under Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam. The Guru visited Cochin State in 1903 in 1904 the second anniversary of the Yogam was celebrated at Cochin.

Having been impressed by the advice of Vivekananda Dr. Palpu visited Thiruvananthapuram and enquired about Sree Narayana Guru. He came to learn that he was a social reformer and visited him at Aruvipuram. In the long discussions he had held with Narayana Guru, he impressed upon the Guru to found an organization called Sree Narayana Dharmaparipalana Yogam in 1903.[17] Dr.Palpu was instrumental in founding this organization. The Organisation under the editorship of Kumaran Asan brought out its media organ, Vivegodayam Both Dr. Palpu and Kumaran Asan under the leadership of Narayana Guru tried to take efforts to uplift the Ezhava community. Thereafter a number of educated and intellectuals from the Ezhava community developed the social reform movement for the Ezhavas. It is true that a society which was deeply religious and believed in superstitious practices began to look at Narayana Guru as God or the representative of God. The supporters of this social reform movement proceeded with an agenda that by any means the social status of the Ezhavas should be improved.

Guru Became a Social Revolutionary

In the last phase of his life one could notice a metamorphosis in his philosophy taking place and pushing him to view certain practices in a rationalist way. In a letter addressed to SNDP Yogam in 1908 he said: "there is no need to build new temples at a huge cost. There is no need for the spending of money on temple festivals and other related activities. What we need is clean spacious rooms and halls for the people to sit and discuss about development. Each and every temple should have gardens and schools and there should be technical training centres attached to those temples for the benefit of training children. The offerings made to temples should be utilized for the benefit of the people".[18] Narayana Guru began to analyse the concept of God critically. In 1916 there was a turning point in the life and mission of Narayana Guru. He made a proclamation at Kollam as under: "we don't have any personal relationship with any religion. We treat all religions alike. One can follow one's own religion of one's liking. Even if the Christians and the Muslims seek any help in their religious matters, we are glad to help them too. We can observe that, Sree Narayana Guru was not fully happy with the works of the SNDP Yogam.[19] In a letter addressed to Dr. Palpu in May 1916 Narayana Guru expressed his willingness to dissociate himself from the organization as it was tilting

towards promoting the welfare of one particular caste. This metamorphosis in his thinking clearly shows that Narayana Guru was above caste and religion. While delivering a lecture at Kollam in 1916 he said "the caste distinction created and practiced by our people have no meaning and purpose. They should be abolished forthwith. The feeling that one belongs to a higher caste and the other lower caste is farce. I have made it clear long ago". Narayana Guru was strongly opposed to the depressed classes being called as Harijans and lowest of the low castes. He viewed human society as one single entity. It indicates the establishment of a casteless society. It also ensures a society of not too many religions and the society wherein people lived with a sense of equity and co-existence.

Sree Narayana Guru emphatically denied caste and totally opposed the ideological and physical basis of caste system. Time and again Sree Narayana Guru insisted that people should have the liberty and freedom to declare that "there is no caste and religion". Sree Narayana Guru found fault with Sankaracharya and Vyasa. He alleged that both of them advocated a caste system. Again he openly criticized Sankaracharyar who deliberately stood in favour of the caste system. In addition to his progressive ideas about caste and religions, being great humanist he had a piece of advice left for the wholesome development of human beings.[22] Sree Narayana Guru abolished animal sacrifices, he says that killing and eating animals is a sin. During this period child marriage was practiced. He had witnessed the ill-effects of child marriage and hence wanted to put an end to this practice.

Conclusion

Narayana Guru was a modern prophet of benevolence. He fought for against the caste system. Narayana Guru was the real beginner of Temple Entry movements. Narayana Guru can be considered as the fighter for rights and privileges of the weaker sections of humanity. He advocated women's education as a means of social progress. Narayana Guru fought for against untouchability He stands out as a shining example of cultural culmination and spiritual fulfillment of the true Jeevan mukta Karma Yogi, who identified himself as in the problem of common people.

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The Contribution of M.Karunanidhi For The Development of Tamil Language – A Historical Note

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Tamil language is one of the ethnic groups.Historically, the Sangam Tamil literature is not only belongs to classical literature, but also represent as the sources for the Sangam society. The Sangam literature written by various scholars and poets and also encouraged by rulers. During the 20thcentury,the Dravidianmovement's leaders and members PeriyarE.V.Ramasamy,C.N.Annadurai,Alagirisamy and M.Karunanidhietc., took interest in the development of Tamil language. They were followed in various ways for Tamil such as their writings, poems, stage-plays and conferences etc.M.Karunanidhi wasthe one of most great leader of Dravidian politics in Tamil Nadu. He had been interests in Tamil Literature from early career. This paper attemptsto study thecontribution of M.Karunanidhi for the development of Tamil language from his Childhood period.It's alsodescribesthe Karunanidhi's role in the development of Tamil language during his administration period.

Karunanidhi's Interests in Tamil Language during the childhood period:

Karunanidhiwasborn on June 3, 1924 atThirukuvalai in Thiruvarur District. His ParentsAyyaduraiMuthuvel and AnjugamAmmaiyar. When Karunanidhi's education began at a local school, he interested in Tamil language.During his school days, he participated in the oratorical competitionon "Friendship".His friends encouraged him for oratorical development during these days.[1] His teachers also appreciated him for his fluency in Tamil language. He was attracted by the great Orator Alagiri Swami, the member of Justice Party, Who came to Tiruvarur to address a meeting in 1932. He inspired at Tamil language and Public services by speech of Alagiriswami.[2]

In 1937, the Congress Ministry of Rajagopalachari introduced compulsory Hindi subject in Madras presidency.E.V.Ramasamy, the leader of DravidaKhazhagham started agitation against the imposition of Hindi in 1938. Tamil Scholars, Teachers and Dravidian movement members raised the first voice against the Hindi. The opposition to Compulsory Hindi which came to be known later as the "Anti- Hindi Agitation" began to Manifesto.3 It started in different part of Tamil Nadu. Karunanidhi andhis schoolmates went in a procession in the streets of Thiruvarur with 'Tamil Flag' to oppose Hindi imposition in the schools in 1938. He published handwritten newspaper "Manvarnesan"among his friends and students. He also started students Association in the name of 'Youth Reformist Association'. By this Association had trained to members for speech andwritings. In1941, he started a new organisation as "TamilManvarManram"and it was changed into "Tamil Nadu Tamil Students Union" in 1942. On behalf of this association, he invited many leaders like Anbalagan, Mathiazhagan for meeting and delivered the speeches. He was the president of this association. It was not only advocate for language,heclosedest link with senior leaders of DravidaKhazham.4

His Writings

In 1942,Karunanidhi sent an Article On "IalamiPali"(Sacrifice of the Youth)to DravidaNadu,the Newspaper, which started by C.N.Annadurai.[5]From that, he has continuous his writings worksin various

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ways. He established the Morasoli, the newspaper which later became the official publication of DMK party. He utilised his writings to propagate ideologigy of Dravidian movement. After he joined and the leader of DMK,he worked integral part for Tamil upto his death Every day he wrote a letter to legion of brothers in arms in Morosoli, the newspaper. He published books in different aspects.[6]His book "theNenjukkuNeethi" (justice for the heart) is anautobiography. Ponnar Shankar and Roma PuriPandian is an historical novels. He received the Raja Rajan award from the Tamil University for his book "ThenpandiSingam"etc. He wrote a Kuroloviam for a commentary on the ancient Tamil text, the Thirukkural.7Hepenned scripts for dramas in the stages. PattukottaiAlagiri,the prominent leaders of DravidaKhazhagam conferred the title Kalaignar on him during "Thookumedai" drama8.

Karunanidhiusually used historical novelsto wrote scripts for movies likePoompughar,KannakiandPonnar Shankar.He realised the potential of cinema and started his career as a dialogue writer. His role in Tamil cinema and literature is unparalleled. He wrote the film 'Poopuhar' in 1964, which was based on the Tamil epic Silapathigaram'. He wrote another such film is 'manthirikumari', which is based on a particular incident from Tamil epic Kundalakesi[9]. He wrote songs for many cinema like Poompuhar,Marakkamudiyama, Kanchithalaivan, Manthirikumari, Then pandisingam and Iraignan etc.[10]

Karunanidhi's role in Protest of DMK against imposed Hindi

The DMK party announced their agitation called "Mummunaiporattam (three cornered agitation). Dalmiapuram Railway Station was one of the three corned agitation[11]. The DMK party demanded that original name of railway station be restore. Actually, the original Tamil name is Kallakudiforthi station. The DMK opposition to the North domination the Tamil Nadu. In this struggle, Karunanidhi was selected as leader for organizing the agitation that aimed as remaining of Dalmiapuram railway station into Tamil name is Kallakudi railway station[12]. The DMK fixed their struggle on July 15, 1953. Karunanidhi laid down on the railway track and stopped the arriving train. He arrested and given three months imprisonment in Trichy central Jail[13]. Anti Hindhi agitation started by DMK party.On January 26 1965, accordance with the provision of article 313 of the Indian Constitution Hindhi replace English as the Official language of the Indian Union. The DMK started their agitation.This agitation spreadedalloverTamilNadu. Karunanidhi and other leaders was arrest by Police under the National Security Act. He was imprisonment Polayamkottai Jail for 62 days[14].

His Administration Period:

After victory of the General election of 1967, the DMK formed government with C.N Annadurai as Chief Minister on March 1967. Karunanidhi was a Minister for Public Works Department (PWD)and later the Ministryof Transportallotted to him. During this period, he planned that buses could be used as the best propaganda instrument for Thirukkural couplets along withthe portrait of Thiruvalluvar was written inside of the buses15. He introduced Thirukkural couplets and pictures of Thiruvalluvar in buses and gave Tamil names as far as possible to bus stands. Similarly his idea of spreading the message of Thirukkural was extended to travellers bungalows belongs to Public Works Department16.

After the death of C.N. Annadurai, he has five times as Chief Minister in Tamil Nadu.During this tenure, he took various steps for the development of Tamil language.He initiated construction of "Thiruvallavan Kootam in Chennai"17. In Kannaniyakumari, he opened 133 feet Thiruvalluvarstatue in 201018. He initiated the idea for the Elango Adigal Kottam. In 1972, he took measures to established theSilappathikkaram Art Gallery, which includes the EllangoAdigalKottam in Poompughar19. It was inemerable epic and main city during the Sangam period. But it was inaugurated by President Fakkruddin Ali Ahmed.

In 1970, he issued an order that invocation of Mother Tamil (Tamil Thaivalthu). It for the official

functions organised by educational Institutions and Public establishment, have started with thissong.This song sung daily in schools all over Tamil Naduduringassembly in the morning. He has been an popular diginrery for the World Conference in Paris on 1970. The Central Institution ClassicalTamil, known us the centre of excellence for classical Tamil (CECT) shifted from Mysore to Chennai in 2008. Karunanidhi,the Chief Minister, was the Chairman of the institute.[20] During his region period its engaged in the developing,Tamil through various programmes. He announced the first world classical Tamil conference in 2010 at Coimbatore. It main purposewere international gathering scholars, poets, interest in Tamil literature and Tamil language. He wrote a song "Semozhiyana Thamizh Mozhiyaam", by composed A.R Rahman for World Classical Tamil Conference.[21] While addressing the World Classical Tamil Conference, Karunanidhi said "Tamil is not only an international language; it is like another for all the languages of the world. DevaneyaPavanar, the Tamil scholar has established that Tamil is the primary classical language of the world. Root Tamil world exist in many. Languages of the world in various modified forms but retaining the same meanings. For example, in the languages of the world, words of Tamil relations such as 'amma', 'appa', pronouns of address such as 'naan', 'nii'.[22]

Conclusion

In parts of history exposedthe scholars and poets and rulers were played vital role in development of language and culture etc.,of the nation.Inthis context,this paper discussed that Karunanidhi's contribution for Tamil language . He started his writings works during the school days by interests on Tamil language. After he entered into with Dravidian movement,he had continues his writings works an integral part of works. His Books, newspapers, essays and screenplays were accommodated in growth of Tamil literature. His writingsis bringing the social message like status of women, abolition of Zamindari system and economic condition of Tamil Nadu etc.During his administration tenure,he took various measures such asValluvarkottam, Tamil Thaivalthu, The Tamil Classical Conference etc., for the development of Tamil language.He known as MuthamizhArignar by his services for Tamil. This paper presents is helping the Research scholars for collecting Karunanidhi's literature as sources.

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Kumaraswamy - A Trailblazer of Industry and Innovation in Kanniyakumari

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Pioneer Thiru S. Kumaraswamy occupies a prominent place in the history ofkanniyakumari district. By sheer dint of hard work, devotion, dedication, discipline and diligence, he emerged as a well known industrialist and entrepreneur in South Tamil Nadu. He successfully launched innovative enterprises in transport, electricity, agriculture, textiles and technical education. He was a true patriot and trained technical man power to the Indian Army during Second world war. As the Principal of his own Industrial Training Institute, he provided 250 mechanics per month to the war field. His entrepreneurial vision was a great blessing and source of livelihood to thousands of people below the poverty line in Kanyakumari District.

Thiru. S. Kumaraswamy, a man who, against all odds, reshaped the destiny of a region through sheer willpower, vision, and action. With only minimal formal education, he entered the world not as a scholar, but as a doer, beginning his journey as a weaver, shop assistant, and later, an automobile driver. With the unwavering support of his two enterprising brothers, Thiru. Nellaippan and Thiru. Nagamoni Kumaraswamy ventured into uncharted territories, redefining conventional wisdom in commerce, trade, and enterprise. Together, they harnessed synergy, unity, and shared ambition to give birth to a new era of entrepreneurship in Kanniyakumari. The spirit of innovation and forward-thinking earned him the distinguished title of “Pioneer.” Today, the legacy of Thiru. S. Kumaraswamy stands as a testament to the power of determination, innovation, and integrity. His life story continues to inspire generations. Industrialization was a new phenomenon to the region, and he was the one who introduced it. He initiated many services such as bus service, out-agency for Railways, cultivation of commercial crops, commercial electricity supply, charcoal gas production, technical training for students, and a spinning mill. These services provided alternatives to agricultural labourers and weavers, improving their livelihood. Despite having no precedent for such ventures in his family, his strong "achievement motive" was the driving force behind all his enterprises.

He was Born on 12th October 1897, at Unnamalakadi and settled in the humble town of Vadasery, Kanniyakumari, to Thiru. Sastha and Tmt. Sivakamy, Kumaraswamy’s early life bore the unmistakable marks of simplicity.He hailed from a simple,traditional and conservative family. With minimum formal education, he started his career as a weaver, shop assistant and an automobile driver. Young Kumaraswamy had to survive against heavy odds in life. He decided to go to Chennai in search of a better job at the age of fourteen with the permission of his mother. Prof. K.N. Sivaraj Pillai, of Madras University, helped him to join Addisons Transport Company. He worked as a fitter and then as a driver in Lakshmi Vilas Motor Service, Nagercoil from 1915-1917. Later he purchased a second hand bus for about Rs. 1000/-. He started his own bus service named Champion Motor Service with the single bus. In 1917, he sold the old bus and bought a dozen of buses and renamed his bus service as Pioneer Motor Service. The Pioneer Motor Service grew into a mighty Transport Company in South India within a short span of time. In 1936 Pioneer motor service had 200 buses. His traits like readiness for new experience, imperative responsibility, concrete knowledge about the results ofhis action, risk takinghim attitude, strategic planning and organizational abilities made a person of entrepreneurial skills and carved him as a"Self Made Man". Although, his social background

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was not much conducive, hiscontinual innovative activity fetched him the title “PIONEER". In 1930 he started pioneer Picture palace. In 1931 he conducted a Widow remarriage in Nagercoil where E.V.Ramasamy Periyar participated in it.

The Achievement motive" had always beenthe driving force for all his modern enterprises. Earlier Bus service to Trivandrum was named as "ChampionMotor Service', and later it was named as 'Pioneer'. This bus took four and half hours to reach Trivandrum from Nagercoil. Only eight passengers can travel in this bus. This servicewas extended to Tirunelveli and Cape Comorin. This profitable servicemade the Travancore Government to nationalize the transportation in 1938.He was a man with a high urge for achievement. He alwayslooked for a challenge, responded to it and became successful. Thus nationalization of the transport made him to look out for a newventure.He got Tirunelveli - Nagercoil Express bus route and the outagency for Southern Railways. As there was no railway service in thisregion, this out-agency was much helpful for quick and safe transportingof goods.In 1942 he purchased land and made salt preparation in Rajakkamangalam.

He started Nagercoil Electric Supply Corporation in 1934. TheTravancore state Government issued him license for Power Supply for55 years. Although, he found it difficult to get permission from theMunicipal Chairman to install Nagercoil street lights, he succeededin his attempt later. In 1956, it was also nationalized butcompensationwas given.Thiru. S. Kumaraswamy was a man of planning for years ahead.The establishment of the Pioneer Charcoal Gas Producer Works in1942 in Madras was an example. Earlier, small gas generators wereproduced in the Pioneer workshop at Nagercoil. When shortage ofpetrol occurred during the Second World War, these gas generators,fitted at the back ofa vehicle, helped the people all over the state. Thisinnovative service was duly recognized and the Director of Industriesof Madras State issued a Certificate of Honour to him. During theoccasion of laying the foundation stone for Pioneer KumaraswamyCollege in 1970, this innovation was quoted by the Chief Guest of thefunction, the then President of India, Thiru. V. V. Giri.Thiru. S. Kumaraswamy collaborated with the government ingiving technical training to the students during the Second World War.It was named as "War Technical Scheme". Several buildings wereconstructed and students got stipend from the government. After thewar, the buildings were used as the Technical Training Centre underthe government, and the government paid the salary and stipend to thestaff and students. Five teachers and one demonstrator were appointed .Thiru. S. Kumaraswamy was the Principal of thecentre during the period 1942 – 1950. Later this was undertaken by the government and now it is functioning as Govt polytechnic in konam. The Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, founded in 1967 was initially housed at in these buildings. After obtaining heavy industry license from the government.Thiru. S. Kumaraswamy imported machineries from Toyota, Japanand in 1958 he established a Cotton spinning mill, the first of its kindin the Kanyakumari District, in the name of his beloved wife Tmt.Nagammal. The Mill gave employment opportunities to the natives ofthe town.He gave employment oppurtunities for the succesors of Freedom fighters in his mill and helped them.

Cultivation of commercial crops was also introduced byThiru. S. Kumaraswamy and his brothers. This successful experimentwas undertaken in their estate located at Thadikkarankonam, 12 milesaway from Nagercoil. For that he purchased 600 hectares of land. At first, tapioca and plantains were planted. During famine he sold the tapioca which was cultivated in his land by getting little amount, it was agood food for the people, so the people called it as Pioneer tapioca. Itwas said that rubber trees would not be profitable in this region. Yet Thiru. S. Kumaraswamy again preferred to take risk and plantedrubbertrees. As he expected, a great demand for rubber occurred after theSecond World War. As the latex from this estate proved to be ofhighquality, it earned them a good reputation and

profit. PalkulamEstatesLtd. was established to supervise all these estates.

With a view to perpetuating the memory of The Great Pioneer, S. Kumaraswamy, Dr. K. Padmanabhan and Mrs. K. Bhagavathi Ammal Padmanabhan founded Pioneer Kumaraswamy College in the year 1967. The college achieved brilliant results within a short period of ten years and created history of winning the Rolling Shield instituted by the Government of Tamil Nadu for three consecutive years for meritoal results in the Pre – University Examinations. The college bagged several gold medals in Degree Examinations also.

Thiru P. Kumaraswamy, the Chairman and Managing Director,Nagammal Mills (P) Ltd., and Educational Agency which establishedthe college now is on the reign of leadership. Thiru P. Kumaraswamy, the President of Pioneer Kumaraswamy College Committee and Tmt.Latha Kumaraswamy, Member of the Committee are striving to fulfil the aspirations of Dr. K. Padmanabhan and Tmt. N. Bagavathy Ammal.pinnacles. Fostering and rearing his farsighted thoughts into reality isthe best tribute to the Founder. Pioneer Kumaraswamy had a close relationship with Marshall Nesamony. He rendered his whole hearted support in different ways.As pioneer rendered his bus service in favour of Congress party the Travancore Govt. gave a lot of Troubles to him.

Pioneer Thiru S. Kumaraswamy is a part of our local history and has a definite place in the history of Tamil Nadu. By sheer dint of hard work, devotion, dedication, discipline and diligence, he emerged as a well known industrialist and entrepreneur in South Tamil Nadu. He successfully launched innovative enterprises in transport, electricity, agriculture, textiles and technical education. He was a true patriot and he trained technical man power to the Indian Army during Second world war. As the Principal of his own ITI, he provided 250 mechanics per month to the war field. His entrepreneurial vision was a great blessing and source of livelihood to thousands of people below the poverty line in Kanyakumari District. He provided vast employment opportunities to the young people. The epic life of Kumaraswamy is story of rags to riches. His entire life is a perfect model and source of inspiration to younger generation.Thiru Kumaraswamy's untimely death on the 18th of October 1960 came as a great shock not only to his family but to the people of the entire southern region.By dint of hard work, he had become the first and the foremost industrialist of this region. The greatness of his peerless life is the result of his supreme sense of work ethics and deep devotion to duty.

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Ending Exploitation: Government and NGO Initiatives against Child Labour in India

Denicious Axalin D.M[1], and Dr. G. Rajeevan Lal[2]

Challenges in Eradicating Child labour

India's child labour situation remains a significant concern despite efforts to address it. Millions of children aged 5 to 14 are still engaged in hazardous work, and the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the problem. Child labour is more prevalent in rural areas due to widespread poverty, while in urban areas, children often work in informal sectors. Although India has laws to combat child labour, enforcement remains a challenge. Poverty drives families to rely on their children's income. Ensuring access to quality education is crucial to breaking the cycle of child labour. Organizations like Bachpan Bachao Andolan and the Kailash Satyarthi Foundation work tirelessly to rescue and rehabilitate child labourers. However, the scale of the problem requires sustained efforts and collaboration from various stakeholders. Addressing child labour in India necessitates a multi-faceted approach, including stronger legal enforcement, economic support for families, and improved access to education and healthcare for all children

Legal Frameworks

The Legal Framework for the welfare of children in India are both explicit and implicit. The explicit provisions include Article 15(3), which allows the state to make special provisions for women and children; Article 24, which bans the employment of children in factories; Article 39(e) and (f), which requires the state to protect children's health and provide opportunities for them to grow with dignity; and Article 45, which mandates free and compulsory education for children.

The implicit provisions related to children's welfare include Article 14, which ensures equality before the law; Article 23, which prohibits trafficking in human beings and forced labour; Article 38, which seeks to establish a social order for the people's welfare; Article 41, which grants the right to work, education, and public assistance in specific cases; Article 42, which provides for just and humane working conditions and maternity relief; Article 46, which promotes the educational and economic interests of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and other weaker sections; and Article 47, which obligates the state to improve nutrition, living standards, and public health.

Part 3 of the Constitution, known as the Magna Carta of India, includes a list of fundamental rights essential for individuals' intellectual, moral, and spiritual development. Children, as citizens of India, enjoy these fundamental rights, including the right not to be discriminated against on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth (Article 15); the right to equal opportunity in public employment (Article 16); the right to six freedoms enumerated in Article 19 (freedom of speech and expression, assembly, association, movement, residence, and profession); and cultural and educational rights conferred by Articles 29 and 30.

1. **Way to End Child Labour**
2. **Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986**: This legislation bans the employment of children under 14 in specific occupations and regulates their working conditions in other jobs. State governments enforce this act, with oversight from the central government.
3. **National Policy on Child Labour (1987)**: This policy focuses on rehabilitating children working in hazardous conditions rather than just preventing child labour. It includes legislative action plans, general development programs, and targeted initiatives for working children.

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4. **National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme**: Aimed at eliminating child labour in high-prevalence areas, this scheme involves identifying, rescuing, and rehabilitating child labourers, and providing them with education and vocational training.
5. **Right to Education Act (2009)**: Mandates free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14, aiming to ensure all children attend school.
6. **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000**: Recognizes working children as needing care and protection, without age or occupation limitations.
7. **Pencil (Platform for Effective Enforcement of Minimum Norms and Standards in Schools)**: Ensures the enforcement of child labour laws and aims to eliminate child labour.

Non-Governmental Efforts

1. **Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA)**: Founded by Kailash Satyarthi, BBA has rescued thousands of child labourers and works to prevent child labour and protect children's rights.
2. **Care India**: Focuses on economically empowering families to prevent child labour by providing vocational training and support to improve livelihoods.
3. **Child Rights and You (CRY)**: Ensures every child enjoys their right to a childhood, quality education, and protection from abuse and exploitation through various programs.
4. **Global March Against Child Labour**: An international movement working to eliminate child labour globally, organizing campaigns, advocacy, and awareness programs.
5. **Ride India**: Provides education and vocational training to children rescued from child labour, aiming to reintegrate them into the formal education system.
6. **Sahyog Care for You**: Rescues children from child labour and works with families to ensure they are not forced to work, providing education, healthcare, and support.

The government's and non-governmental organizations' joint efforts are essential to ending child labour in India and guaranteeing that all children may enjoy childhood and receive an education.

Conclusion

Eradicating child labour in India demand persistent, unified action by both the government and non-governmental organizations.legal frameworks such as the Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act and initiatives like the National Child Labour Project have made significant progress, challenges such as poverty, lack of enforcement, and social norms continue to persist. NGOs continue to play a crucial role in rescue operations, rehabilitation, awareness campaigns, and education programs. However, to achieve a child-labour-free India, there must be stricter enforcement of laws, enhanced rehabilitation programs, corporate accountability, and greater community participation. Education, economic support for families, and social awareness are key to breaking the cycle of child labour. A sustained and united effort is essential to ensure that every child in India enjoys a safe, educated, and dignified childhood.

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Contributions of Trade Union Organizations for the Liberation of Working Class

P. Kala

Introduction

Trade Unions are played an important role for the development of workers and their environment. It protects and promotes the welfare of working-class people. Due to rapid industrial development Trade Unions have taken steps for the workers to come together to maintain and improve their socioeconomic status of workers. Trade Unions were not confined to specific industries alone but they also aim to promote the unity of the working class as a whole. The first organized Trade Union in India named as the Madras Labour Union was formed in the year 1918. From the 19th Century onwards there were Employer's associations in the form of Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Associations to protect and promote the interests of their members in an intensive manner.

Expansion of industrial activity and grouping workers Trade Unions acted as an important tool for strengthening and expansion of employer's organization. It also awakens a new consciousness created to the people for the National movement. This new movement appeared in the national life of the country. The Swadeshi movement and Nationalist movement paved the way for formation of trade union. The agitation against the partition of Bengal provided a favourable atmosphere for the growth of trade union movement. The political strike by the workers of Bombay in 1908 by Lokmanya Tilak and his six years imprisonment was considered a landmark in the history of the labour movement.[1] A new consciousness started developing among the working class.

Government of India's Factory Act 1881 which was passed to protect the interests of employees, but it was not favour for the working class. Due to this many industries, the workers went on strikes every now and then to secure wage increase. Labour leader Narayan Meghaji Lokkande, Indian social reformer and the Father of the Trade Union Movement in India established the first labour organization in India. The Bombay Mill Hands Association in 1884 was instrumental in securing key rights for textile mill workers, such as the weekly Sunday holiday, regular working hours, and paid breaks. He also edited Deenbandhu[2] the first labour journal in India, and promoted social harmony by taking stands on caste and communal issues.

Lokhandey rendered valuable assistance to the factories commission. The commission also considered the workers memorandum and made certain recommendations but the government did not take any action. Lokhandey continued the agitation for the above demands of the working class. He organised a mass meeting of factory workers numbering about 10,000 on April 24, 1890. Two women workers also addressed the meeting and complained of being forced to work on Sundays. A memorandum demanding a weekly holiday was also drawn and sent to the Bombay Millowner's Association. The Association accepted the demand on June 10, 1890.[3] Encouraged by this success Lokhandey formed an association of Bombay Mill Workers in the same year 1890. It was called the Bombay Mill Hands Association, which is often referred to as the starting point of the Indian Labour Movement. This association was the first continuously working organisation for a group of workers in India and had been mainly responsible for the agitation which led to the amendment of the Factories Act.[4]

Some more important trade unions were formed. The Printers union was established in Calcutta in 1905 and Bombay Postal Union in 1907. In 1910, a

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comparatively better organised union of Bombay factory workers was formed which was called Kamgar Hitwardhak Sabha. This organisation made efforts to settle many disputes and also sent a petition to the Government for regulating hours of work, for payment of compensation in case of accidents and for improving the living and working conditions of the workers. It also started a weekly labour journal namely Kamgar Samachar.[5]

The struggle of Textile Workers of Ahmedabad to secure an increase in wages was conducted under the leadership of Ansuya Ben in 1917. The famous strike of these workers led also by Mahatma Gandhi and the formation of the Textile Labour Association of Ahmedabad in 1918, were significant events. This Association, also called Mazdoor Mahajan nurtured and nourished by Gandhiji, Ansuya Ben and Banker[6] has ever since its inception, been a model of sound and devoted trade unionism.

In 1918 Trade Union organisation in India became more organized and formed varieties of unions such as Indian Collie or Employees Association, Indian Seamen's Union, Railway Men's Union, Port Trust Employees Union etc. Meanwhile Gandhiji formed The Textile Labour Association in 1920 for fulfilling the demands of spinners and weavers society. More over the different labour unions and their representatives from all over India met in Bombay in 1920 and established the All India Trade Union Congress led by Lala Lajpat Rai.[7] Trade Union Movement in India gradually strengthened and became national figure in leading of periodic strikes, gherao, picketing and boycotts etc in contrary of different work fields for prevention and settlement of industrial problems and issues.

The historic background of Bombay Mill Case of 1920 over which Madras High Court witnessed Madras Labour Union forbidding by an interim injunction against the Laborers strike which was pondered about some necessary legislation for protecting the sustained Trade Union in India. As a result Mr. N.M. Joshi, the then General Secretary of All India Trade Union Congress moved a resolution in the Central Legislative Assembly in 1921 recommending the Government to introduce legislation for the registration and protection of Trade Union's existence in India. The resolution was strongly protested by Bombay Mills Owners and it took a long bed rest on the table of the Central Legislative Assembly. While in the year of 1924, many communist leaders were arrested and prosecuted against aggressive and lengthy strikes. From the period numbers of Indian working classes including Peasants Party united and demanded Indian government through the AITUC to pass an act to protect the interest of all India workers group which results The Trade Union Act 1926 in India[8]

Indian Trade Unions Bill, 1925 having been passed by the Legislature received its assent on 25th March, 1926. It came into force on 1st June, 1927 as the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926. By section 3 of the Indian Trade Unions Amendment Act, 1964 38 of 1964 the word Indian has been omitted and now it is known as The Trade Unions Act. This act summarizes all modalities pertaining to registration of trade union to decision of trade related disputes. It also provides guidelines for both the workers and the industrialists. The Act deals with the registration of trade unions, their rights, their liabilities and responsibilities as well as ensures that their funds are utilised properly. It gives legal and corporate status to the registered trade unions. It also seeks to protect them from civil or criminal prosecution so that they could carry on their legitimate activities for the benefit of the working class. [9]

The year 1920 was of crucial importance in the history of the Indian trade union movement. By this time efforts to organise trade unions all over India turned off and a large number of unions were started. The same year the first Central Trade Union was organised. The past experience as well as the disorderly conditions in the movement convinced the leaders that an All India Organisation was an essential need of the time. Some external factors also hastened the process. The Government of India Act 1914 provided tor representation by nomination in the Central Legislature

for industrial labour. It was understood that the Government would consult the leaders of the organised labour movement before making the nomination. Secondly, the establishment of International Labour Organisation in the same year in 1919 produced a very similar situation because a representative of the Indian working people was to be nominated in the delegation to the International Body.[10] All India Railway men's Federation was also formed in 1922 and practically all the Unions in the Railways were affiliated to it.

During 1918 the Madras Labour Union, the first union in India to be formed on modern lines, was established under the leadership of B.P. Wadia, with the objective of ventilating the grievances of workers of the Buckingham and Carnatic mills. He was an ardent supporter of the Home Rule Movement but was initially attracted to trade union work out of sympathy for the Indian Workers receiving mal-treatment at the hands of the European Officers in the Mills. Madras Labour Union was the first systematic trade union with regular membership and a relief fund. Shri Wadia also organised the textile workers at Choolai,[11] in Madras in 1918 and within a year the number of unions rose to four with 20,000 members.

The history of Madras Labour Union is identical with the history of trade union organisation in India. The oppressive work conditions in the Buckingham & Carnatic Mills triggered the urge among workers, to organise themselves. This support took a definite shape and culminated in the formation of a trade union, which was the first of its kind in India. G. Ramanjalu Naidu had a rice shop and G. Selvapathy Chettiar had a textile shop on De mellows Road facing the Mill. These two humanists were pained to see the working conditions of B&C Mill employees, who worked for almost 12 hours a day.[12] Who had hardly had enough time to eat, who looked tired and untidy with cotton dust all over them. They established a close contact with these workers and got to know and understand their grievances.

At times they even wrote anonymous letters to the management pointing out certain problems faced by the workers. Though there was some relief to the workers because of this, many issues remained unsolved. Encouraged by the response to their anonymous letters to the management, these two persons called for a meeting of these textile workers and organised it on behalf of Sri. Venkatesa Gunamirdha Varushini Sabha, in which both Ramanjalu Naidu and Selvapathy Chettiar were members. Thirty workers participated in this meeting, which was addressed by N.C. Kannabiran Mudaliar. He spoke to the workers about the need for an organisation and its importance to convince the workers. This spark was further kindled by Thiru. Vi. Ka, who was then a Tamil teacher at Wesley College, Madras, who addressed the workers a couple of times on the need for forming a Union. [13]

Thiru. Vi. Ka, discussed this issue with Diwan Bahadur Kesava Pillai, who was writing on the issues of textile workers in Indian Patriot. In 1918 under the aegis of the Sabha, a meeting was organised which was attended by thousands of workers. The police tried to intervene but both Ramanjalu Naidu and Selvapathy Chettiar resisted their intervention and continued with the meeting.

The Madras Labour Union has been a forerunner to the major labour legislations in the country. Right from the issue of lock out, rivalry among trade unions, incidents of unfair labour practice by the management, awarding compensation to workers for injuries suffered during the course of employment, the practice of depositing such compensation with the labour authorities instead of paying it directly to the injured workmen, the requirement of registration of a trade union as a precondition for its recognition by the management etc., were dealt with in the legislations that were enacted subsequently as a result of the first hand experience the MLU had in this regard.

Women coming under the category of blue collar workers had played a significant part in the early trade union movement. However, there was a gradual decline in the number of women in these industries. After independence the number of white collar women workers increased and they joined the trade union organisation in large numbers. They actively

participated in trade union struggles. Very few women assumed positions in unions. However, in professions like nursing where they are in majority, women lead the organisations. Ela Bhatt was a prominent Indian social activist, lawyer, and Gandhian, best known as the founder of the Self Employed Women's Association in 1972. Her work focused on empowering poor, self-employed women workers in the informal economy of India. SEWA is a trade union for self employed women workers, such as street vendors, artisans, and home-based workers. It helps women gain access to financial services, healthcare, legal aid, child care, and housing.[14]

SEWA is a trade union based in Ahmedabad, engaged in promoting the rights of low-income, and independently employed female workers. Over the years, the organization has grown at a fast pace, with around 30,000 members in 1996, to 318,527 in 2000. Currently, around 1.8 million participating women, SEWA is the largest organization of informal workers in the world.

The founding of the AITUC in 1920 was an event of great historical importance. It ushered in an organisation of the workers on a class basis. It proposed to provide a central direction to that basic new organisational unity of the workers in their various places of work called the trade unions. And appearing at a time when the national liberation movement had begun its upsurge it became its powerful asset by contributing new weapons of struggle in the form of the general strike. And above all it brought forward to the attention of Indian society the vision of a new social order without classes and without exploitation, embodied in the great concept of socialism.

Conclusion

The Constitution of India guarantees to all its citizens, individually and collectively, certain fundamental rights including the ones relating to equality of opportunity in employment and freedom of association. India also has the distinction of developing one of the most comprehensive labour laws in the world. Since labour is a concurrent subject both the Central federal and State governments have enacted laws affecting the labour. Over 200 laws covering practically all aspects of workers life including industrial relations, service conditions, wage and benefits, social security etc. have been enacted to secure reasonable working conditions particularly for workers in the unorganized sector as also to prevent their exploitation. Workers unionism is immensely required to execute their rational ideas and demands. A well and systematic labour organization may change the socio economic and political development of the working class.

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The Impact of Local Self-Government Policies on Socio-Economic Development in Tirunelveli

J. Jeyakasthuri

Introduction

The Tirunelveli district is one of the major districts in the southern part of Tamil Nadu. It is known for its rich cultural heritage, historical significance, and diverse geography. The district boasts a variety of landscapes, from lush agricultural fields to picturesque hill stations, attracting both tourists and researchers alike. The district is home to various local bodies such as Panchayat Raj institutions, Panchayat Councils, municipalities, and municipal corporations, which are functioning to fulfil the basic needs of the people. Under the guidance of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, local bodies provide basic services to the people and play a vital role in the socio-economic development of marginalized communities and farmers. Local self-government policies in the Tirunelveli district strengthen people's participation and strengthen the foundation of democracy. Local bodies, especially women-led group development and employment schemes and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, are also being used to improve the quality of life of the rural people.

Socio-Economic Development of Local Self-Government Policies

Local self-government policies have played a major role in the development of education in Tirunelveli. School infrastructure, the midday meal scheme, girl child assistance schemes, educational scholarships, etc. have improved the education of children. Through this, access to education has increased and the literacy rate has improved. In the health sector, village health centers, elderly care centers, maternal and child welfare schemes, and drinking water purification schemes have helped improve the health of the people. Such initiatives have led to a reduction in infant mortality and control of the spread of diseases.

Women's advancement is a major achievement of local self-government policies. Women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs), micro-credit facilities, and support schemes for starting businesses have made women economically self-sufficient. Moreover, the 33% quota given to women in local body elections has increased their political participation. This has strengthened the voice of women in society. In the agriculture sector, irrigation facilities, modern farming methods, welfare schemes for farmers, and provision of fertilizers and seeds have improved agricultural production. The MGNREGS has ensured minimum employment to the poor. This has led to a reduction in poverty and an improvement in the living standards of the people.

Local Self-Government Policies Impact

Local self-government policies have had various impacts on Tirunelveli. First, there have been major changes in basic amenities. Facilities like roads, drinking water, electricity, and toilets have improved the quality of life of the people. Second, poverty has decreased due to increased employment opportunities, and the economic status of families has improved. Third, women's social and political participation has increased. They have started businesses through self-help groups and have come to assume leadership roles in local government bodies. This has strengthened women's self-respect and economic self-sufficiency. Fourth, social justice has been strengthened. Oppressed communities have been given the opportunity to assert their rights and participate in development projects. This

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has increased social cohesion. However, there are some challenges. Lack of funding, corruption, lack of transparency, low public participation, etc., prevent the full impact of the policies. Therefore, local government bodies need to be further strengthened.

Conclusion

Local self-government policies have played a major role in the socio-economic progress of Tirunelveli. Progress has been made in the areas of education, health, women's advancement, agriculture, and employment. Despite some challenges, if people's participation, transparent governance, and government support increase, Tirunelveli district will be a model of socio-economic progress in the future.

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Significant Trends in the Peasant Movements in India

P. Kumaran[1] and S.M. Nageswari[2]

Introduction

In the broad spectrum of Indian history, the Peasant Movements play a noteworthy role. The intricate web of social, economic, and political challenges faced by the peasants sparked a series of movements throughout India's history. The peasants, the backbone of the Indian agrarian economy, raised their voices against oppression and injustice, inspiring a significant shift in the national discourse. The magnitude of these movements' influence is witnessed even in the present-day socio-economic milieu of India.

The History of The Various Peasant and Farmer Movements in India

The peasant movement in India started during the colonial period. There are many sociologists who have described and classified the agrarian structure and land problem of small cultivators, landless labourers, and sharecroppers in rural areas. The unrest and struggle of peasants are directly and indirectly related to the problem of land issues and uneven agrarian social structure in rural areas. Peasant movements have a prolonged history that can be traced to the numerous peasant rebellions. A peasant movement is a social movement that occurred for the various rights of the peasants, related to the agricultural plans and policies, against British economic policies and against the atrocity of zamindars and against the exploitations of upper caste rich farmers.

A. R. Desai differentiates between the peasant movement and the farmers' movement. He says that the colonial period's movement can be called the peasant movement. On the other hand, those movements started after the independence of India can be considered as farmers' movement, because before independence the issues of peasant agitation were different which were mainly focused on the uneven land distribution, economic policies and exploitation of small and landless farmers. However after the independence of India, many

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land reform programs and green revolution and other policies have been provided by the government to the farmers. Therefore, the financial conditions of the cultivators have been improved therefore, the issues of the farmers have been changed as well. Now farmers are mobilized for fixed price rates, lights, fertilisers, hybrid seeds and irrigation sources.

Gail Omvedt has divided movements into two parts- Old Movements and New Movements. She says that peasant movements are old movements while farmer's movements are New Movements (Shah, 2009). D. N. Dhanagare (1983) has focused on mobilization through his book Peasant Movements in India. He argues in his study that in India peasant class structure is not similar, although it is diverse. In his study, he emphasizes that different kinds of farmers participate in different kinds of peasant movements. According to him, marginal farmers are mobilized together for movement, which is related to social and economic issues and on the other side some marginal peasants are mobilized against some rich farmers.

Peasant Movements in Colonial India

In India, the peasant movement has a long history. The peasants faced a number of problems in their livelihood, which forced them to lead movements to solve the problems related to agriculture. During the colonial period, the peasant movements were usually the result of stresses in the feudal and semi feudal societies. In the colonial period, the Britishers introduced economic policies, which brought about many changes in the Indian agrarian system. The Britishers invented and experimented different land revenue settlements in colonized India. Britishers introduced the *Zamindari* system in 1793 through the Permanent Settlement Act. The *zamindars* were recognized as owners of the lands and were given the rights to collect the rent from the peasants .They were declared full owners with absolute proprietary rights in land, without realizing that they were only the tax collecting intermediaries during the preceding regime. Such kind of activity creates threat for the poor peasants .The consequences of the British colonial expansion were felt the most by the Indian peasantry and it rose in revolt time to time. The peasants‟ movements for agrarian reforms in India have always been centred in the issue of land ownership and land distribution. The peasants often resisted the exploitation and soon they realized that their enemy was the colonial state. Sometimes, the desperate peasants took to crimes such as robbery, dacoity and social banditry to come out of intolerable conditions.

The nature of the peasants' movement changed after 1857, peasants emerged as the main force fighting directly for their own demands, basically on economic issues. These movements were directed against foreign planters and indigenous zamindars and moneylenders. The peasants developed a strong awareness of their legal rights and asserted them in and outside the court. The tyranny of zamindars along with the exorbitant rates of land revenue led to a series of spontaneous peasants uprising in different parts of the country. Some of the peasant movements of this period were: The Santhal rebellion of 1855 against British government, Deccan Riots 1875 against money leaders, the Bengal tenants struggle against Zamindari tyranny during 1870 -1885, the Oudh Insurrection, the Punjab Kisan struggle against the money leaders in the last phase of the Nineteenth century.

Santhal Rebellion of 1855

The Santhal revolt was started by the Santhal tribal community in present day Jharkhand and West Bengal. This revolt started on 30, June, 1855. Sindu and Kanhu were the prominent leaders of this revolt. Other leaders were Chand and Bhairav. In this rebellion, Santhals were mobilized against the rule of the British East India Company and Zamindari System. This revolt was not only supported by tribal communities but it was reinforced by non-tribal groups as well such as Gowalas and Lohars.

The Maratha Uprising of 1875

The typical conditions in the Ryotwari area caused an agrarian uprising in the Poona and Ahmednagar districts in 1875. Wanting to have a steady flow of large revenue the East India Company imposed excessive taxes on ryots for land which was to be paid in cash and without any regard to fluctuations in crop

production due to famines or any other reason. The farmers turned to moneylenders who were mostly outsiders, in order to pay revenue and to save their land from forfeiture by the government. The farmers offered land as security and government favouring giving land to moneylenders in case the farmers fail to repay the loans. Thus peasants found themselves trapped in a vicious network with the moneylender as the exploiter and main beneficiary. In 1874, the growing tension between the moneylenders and the peasants resulted in a social boycott by the ryots against the moneylenders. The ryots refused to buy from their shops. No peasant would cultivate their fields. The barbers, washer men, and shoemakers would not serve them. This social boycott spread rapidly to the villages of Poona, Ahmednagar, Sholapur and Satara. Soon the social boycott was transformed into agrarian riots with systematic attacks on the moneylenders' houses and shops. The debt bonds and deeds were seized and publicly burnt. The government, justifying the activities of moneylenders, quickly moved against the agitating peasants and resorted to repressive activity. The peasants could not withstand for long against the terrible repression by the government and had to abandon these active struggles. The active phase of the uprising in Poona and Ahmadnagar lasted only three weeks. As a conciliatory measure, the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act was passed in 1879.

Peasant Movements of Early Twentieth Century

The peasant movement of the early twentieth century was deeply influenced by and had a marked impact on the national freedom struggle. In the early twentieth century, several peasant movements were started such as the Kisan Sabha Movement, Eka movement, Mappila revolt.

Champaran Sathyagraha 1917

In 1917-18, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian National Congress led two significant peasant movements. It organized the struggle of the peasants of Champaran in Bihar against the indigo planters, most of whom were Europeans. This peasant movement has a very significant role in the history of the freedom movement in India. This movement had been mainly organized by Mahatma Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, Brajkishore Prasad, and Anugrah Narayan Sinha. Other leaders were Ramnavmi Prasad, J.B. Kripalani and Babu Gaya Prasad Singh. In this movement, many Farmers and youth participated in a large number. They were inspired by the ideology of Gandhiji. Thereafter youth also participated in the India s freedom Movement.

Kheda Movement 1918

The Kheda movement was launched in March 1918 in the Kheda district of Gujarat in India. This satyagraha was mainly led by Mahatma Gandhi. And other prominent leaders were Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Shankarlal Banker, Mahadev Desai, and Ravi Shankar Vyas. The issue of the Kheda Movement was the increased tax rate and peasants were incapable of paying the revenue due to the pandemic of plague. Therefore, Gandhiji mobilized the peasants of Kheda. Here it can be said that this movement is a successful peasant movement because after this movement the tax rate had decreased.

Moplah Movement 1921

The Moplah movement was started in 1921 by the unrest of the Moplah peasants' community in the Malabar district of Kerala. Moplah was the Muslim peasant community who were agitated against Hindu rich farmers and landlords. Moplah tenants were poor and small farmers who were working on the land of Hindu landowners. These Hindu landlords were called Jenmis. Historically, the relationship between the Moplahs and the Jenmis was unfriendly. Moplah was exploited by Hindu landlords. Therefore, it can be argued that in the Moplah movement two types of exploitation can be analyzed. The first base of exploitation was the poor and rich status of Moplah and Jenmis. Another exploitation is based on religious differences. Moplah were Muslims and Jenmis landlords were Hindu. Therefore, the Moplah peasants were facing double exploitation by Hindu landlords. They raised their voice against this exploitation which is called the Moplah movement or Malabar movement.

Bardoli Satyagraha 1928

Bardoli Satyagraha or movement was launched in Gujarat, India on June, 12, 1928 during the struggle for Indian independence. It was a chief peasant movement, which was led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The main issue of the Bardoli Satyagraha was the high revenue tax rate. In 1925, the taluka of Bardoli in Gujarat suffered from financial troubles. However, the government of the Bombay Presidency had raised the tax rate by 30% that year. Therefore, the peasants of this region mobilized themselves against the British government under the leadership of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. This movement was a successful movement; at the end of the movement, the British government decreased the revenue tax. The movement has played an important role in the Indian national movement of India as well.

Peasant Revolt in Punjab 1930

This movement was started by the peasants of Punjab. Punjab's peasant revolt was also against the British rules as well as the exploitation of moneylenders and zamindars. It was located in the active and famous districts of Punjab. These districts are Jullundur, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, Lyallpur, and Sheikhpura. In the initial stage of this movement, Muslims and Hindus did not participate but later on, they made the decision to participate in the movement. INC also launched the Satyagraha movement of peasants of Kaira against the collection of land revenue, which they were unable to pay due to the failure of crops. During the 1930s ,the peasants' awakening was influenced by the Great Depression in the industrialized countries and the civil disobedience movement which took the form of no-rent, no- revenue movement in many areas. In this period the peasant movement took place in most all states of the country.

Peasant Movements After The Independence Upto 1960s

After the independence of India, the government took many strategies for the growth of the Indian agricultural system and made promises of land reform. But the initiative taken by the government was not fully successful and they were failing to fulfil its promise, which led to a number of land grabs movements by the peasant leaders. In independent India the peasants organized an anti feudal movement against exploitation by the landlords or against the state. They demand – re-distribution of land, higher wages for labour, lower grants to small peasants, and an end to other exploitative practices. Due to the continuity of agitation against landlords in the form of Naxalite movements, the issue of land redistribution lost importance with the shift from an institutional to a technological agrarian policy in the mid-1960s.

Farmer Movement after the Independence of India

Telangana Peasant Movement 1947-51

It was launched in the state of Andhra Pradesh in 1947. Tenants, sharecroppers and landless laborers protested against the oppression of the former Nizam of Hyderabad. The main thing of this rebellion was the tenants, sharecroppers and landless labourers mobilized together against the feudal system of Nizam. The movement was led by the Communist Party of India and the All-India Kisan Sabha. This movement lasted for five years. Tenants were forced to do Vetti Pratha (bonded labour). Big farmers and landlords are called jagirdars and Deshmukh. And they exploited the small and poor tenants.

Tebhaga Peasant Movement 1946-1947

The Tebhaga movement was the peasant agitation in Bengal. It was started in Bengal by the peasant organization- All India Kisan Sabha. All India Kisan Sabha is associated with the Communist Party of India. This movement was led by the various prominent leaders. These leaders were Charu Majumdar, Kansari Halder, IIa Mitra, Moni Singh, Bishnu Chattopadhyay, Sushil Sen and others. This was the movement of sharecropper rights. Earlier sharecroppers had to give half part of their harvest to the landowners. But in the Tebhaga movement sharecroppers raised a demand to reduce the landowners share to one-third of their harvest. Therefore this movement is called the Tebhaga movement. In this movement, violence can be found in

many areas of Bengal. The Tebhaga movement continued till 1950 when the Bargadar Act was passed.

Naxalbari Movement 1967

The Naxalbari Movement was inspired by the Tebhaga Movement (1946). It was launched in 1967 in Siliguri, Darjeeling district, West Bengal. The chief objective of this movement was to transform the entire society, not the circumstances of farmers only. This movement was highly associated with violence. This movement talked about totally changing the structure of society. This movement emerged for the eradication of big farmers, landholders and zamindars. The Naxalbari rebellion worked with the ideology of Marxian socialism. The movement was led by the local communist leaders and tribes.

Green Revolution And The Peasant Movements In India

The Green revolution was a set of technology transfer initiatives occurring in the 1950s and 1960s, which increased agricultural production across the world. The revolution resulted in the adoption of new technologies, including High Yielding Varieties (HYVs) of seeds such as dwarf wheat and rice. The revolution superseded the traditional method of cultivation and also brought about some other major changes in the agricultural sector of the country because of the uneven Geographical distribution of Green Revolution Technology. As a result of which the Intensive Agricultural Development Program was adopted to especially select areas best suited for agricultural advancement. The program targeted those areas of the country which had high rainfall or sufficient irrigation for the distribution of crops like rice, maize, and wheat. Thus, the benefit of technological revolution in the field of Indian agriculture brought about by the Green Revolution was availed by only a particular section of Indian peasants concentrated in states like Punjab, Haryana. The resources were concentrated in selected districts that had assured water and good communication. The advantages were gripped by those who were already progressive. The fruit of technological advancement to meet the demand of growing production was thus seen in a selective way, in some selective networks. The distribution was not equal at all, it excluded and marginalized a larger part of the country which resulted in raising a gap between rich and the poor peasant and the rise of a class of rich peasants, who exists largely in the opposite of middle and smaller peasantry.

Globalization And Peasant Movements In India

At the outset, the concern of the farmers' movement stemmed from the larger implications of globalization on the agricultural economy. Two perspectives are quite evident from within the farmers' movement. One perspective saw in globalization as the larger threat and strategy of western world to trap the Third world, including India in "neo colonialism'' The second perspective saw in globalization the birth of the Indian village into an integrated world where the Indian farmer will have a fighting chance despite longstanding suppression by the state. The farmers' movement in India got more fragmented under the impact of globalization along ideological and class lines. The Market oriented big farmers organizations have supported the policies of liberalization.

The phenomenon of globalization made the situation of small farmers worse than before. The public investment on agriculture considerably fell under the impact of globalization. Every state of the country there has been failure of delivery systems namely, provisions of water, seeds, fertilizers and credit at affordable prices to small farmers. All of these resulted in the "Agrarian Distress" in India. The number of farmers committing suicide has been increasing since then. It is said that the accumulation of governmental and environmental factors is responsible for this crisis in India. The post economic reform period in India saw a number of peasant protests and movements against acquisition of cultivable fertile land for industrial units and developmental projects. A few examples are – movements at Singur and Nandigram in West Bengal in 2006, Mann in Maharashtra in 2005, and Sompeta in Andhra Pradesh in 2010. In these movements support

from several NGOs and wide publicity due to advancing the IT sector is also seen.

Indian Agriculture Acts Of 2020 (Farm Bills)

Another very important movement organized by the farmers all over India. The three laws, introduced in September 2020, by Indian Government, these three laws are-

1. Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020. 2. Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020. 3. Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020. This movement is considered a new Social Movement, because the issue of this movement is related to the rights of the farmers. Therefore farmers were mobilized against these three laws and this movement was a successful movement. The government decided to withdraw these rules. The success of this movement is based on the successful organization and unity of the farmers.

Conclusion

Agrarian movement thus has been shaped by different factors and the nature of it closely associated with its context. The issues of farmers and Agrarian movements are largely depending on the changing circumstances within the structure of society and state as a whole. For instance, from the period of anti- feudal movements to the movements of the post-independence era, and after that we had horizontal mobilization with a different context. Peasant movements were a result of the aggressive British economic policies based on mercantilism. This policy caused the commercialisation of agriculture, which altered the mode of production and disrupted traditional agrarian relationships in India. Various land revenue settlements that made the land a tradable entity, as well as deforestation for cash crops, were the causes of peasant movements that were both social unrest against landlords and money lenders and civil unrest against the British. The peasant movements didn't have a strong organisation at first, but as they integrated into the freedom movement, many political parties took charge of them and helped them gain popularity. These movements, each sparked by a unique set of circumstances and led by inspiring leaders, played a crucial role in shaping India's fight for independence. Even today, the tales of the Indigo Revolt, Kol Rebellion, Munda Rebellion, Santhal Rebellion, and Bardoli Satyagraha echo in India's collective memory, underlining the importance of social justice and equality.

End Notes

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Analysing Land Reforms: Peasant Welfare, And Rural Development in Thanjavur and Tirunelveli District

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Introduction

Land reforms in post-independence India were conceived as instruments of structural transformation, aiming to dismantle entrenched feudal hierarchies, redistribute agrarian resources, and catalyze inclusive rural development. Tamil Nadu, with its diverse agrarian landscapes, offers a compelling field for investigating the differentiated outcomes of these interventions. The districts of Thanjavur and Tirunelveli, despite sharing fertile terrains, present contrasting historical and ecological contexts, enabling a nuanced comparative assessment of land reform efficacy.[1] Thanjavur celebrated as the "Rice Bowl of Tamil Nadu," benefits from an extensive irrigation network fed by the Kaveri River, facilitating intensive paddy cultivation. Historically, land was concentrated among a limited number of zamindars and affluent landowners. The Tamil Nadu Land Reforms (Fixation of Ceiling on Land) Act, 1961, enforced ceilings on holdings, redistributed surplus land, and promoted ownership among smallholders. Empirical evidence indicates that post-reform, the proportion of small and marginal farmers rose sharply, while the dominance of large landholders declined markedly, producing measurable gains in agricultural productivity and rural incomes. In contrast, Tirunelveli's agrarian economy is more heterogeneous, with rain-fed and irrigated cultivation supporting crops such as groundnut, cotton, and millet. Land reforms here prioritized tenant security and the conferment of ownership rights. While land redistribution was comparatively limited, tenure reforms enhanced economic stability, providing marginalized cultivators with greater control over their livelihoods.[2]

The socioeconomic ramifications of land reforms in these districts reveal distinct trajectories. In Thanjavur land redistribution directly translated into higher agricultural yields and improved peasant welfare. Data from longitudinal studies indicate that reforms contributed to a 25–30% increase in smallholder income and a measurable rise in real agricultural wages. Abolition of intermediaries alone is associated with a 0.339 increase in real wages, demonstrating the transformative potential of dismantling exploitative landholding structures. In Tirunelveli, while immediate productivity gains were moderate due to soil and irrigation constraints, the reforms produced significant social dividends. Enhanced tenure security correlated with improved access to education, health services, and rural employment, reflecting the broader developmental impact of agrarian stability beyond mere production metrics.[3]

The divergent outcomes underscore the centrality of contextual factors: ecology, irrigation infrastructure, historical land distribution, and administrative efficacy in shaping the efficacy of land reforms. Thanjavur's fertile deltaic setting amplified the benefits of redistribution, whereas Tirunelveli's varied agro-climatic conditions moderated immediate gains but yielded long-term social improvements.[4]This study seeks to systematically analyze landholding patterns, peasant welfare, and rural development outcomes in these two districts, integrating quantitative data with qualitative assessments. By doing so, it illuminates the mechanisms through which land reforms generate both economic and social dividends, offering evidence-based insights for contemporary agrarian policy and rural development strategies in Tamil Nadu and similar contexts.[5]

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Political Architecture of Land Rights and Peasant Protection in Tamil Nadu

The evolution of land rights in Tamil Nadu represents a critical intersection of legal frameworks, administrative mechanisms, and political mobilization aimed at protecting the rural poor from entrenched landlord domination. The districts of **Thanjavur** and **Tirunelveli** provide instructive contrasts in understanding how historical landholding patterns and political interventions shaped the accessibility of land to marginalized cultivators. Historically, Thanjavur's fertile deltaic landscape, nourished by the Kaveri River, was dominated by **zamindars and elite upper-caste landholders**, including **Brahmins and Vellalars**. Prior to reforms, **over 60% of cultivable land** was concentrated in the hands of these elites. The majority of rural labourers especially Dalits and other marginalized groups operated as **tenants or agricultural laborers**, devoid of formal land rights. This hierarchical system constrained economic mobility, subjected labourers to **low wages (₹15–20/day in the 1960s)**, and imposed burdensome rents and coercive obligations.[6]

Fragmentation and Marginality in Tirunelveli

In contrast, Tirunelveli's agrarian structure was relatively fragmented. Although landlords existed, land distribution was more dispersed, and small and marginal farmers constituted a substantial portion of cultivators. Tenant farmers still faced tenure insecurity, but the lower degree of landlord centralization allowed early intervention by reform measures. The primary objective of the Tanjore Tenants and Panniyal Protection Act of 1952 was to secure the livelihoods of tenant cultivators and agricultural laborers, who had historically been marginalized under the dominance of elite landholders.[7] Despite these intentions, the implementation of the Act faced significant challenges. Resistance from entrenched landowning elites and the absence of comprehensive land records often limited the Act's efficacy in practice. Nonetheless, the legislation established an important legal precedent, laying the foundation for subsequent measures that sought to safeguard peasant rights and promote greater equity in agrarian relations.[8]

Tanjore Tenants and Panniyal Protection Acts

The Tamil Nadu Land Reforms (Fixation of Ceiling on Land) Act of 1961 was primarily designed to redistribute surplus land from large estates to landless cultivators, thereby addressing historical inequalities in land ownership. Under this legislation, ceilings on landholdings were strictly enforced by district and local administrative authorities, ensuring that excess land was systematically identified and reallocated to small and marginal farmers. The Act was implemented within a broader political context, receiving strong support from Dravidian parties that emphasized social justice and caste equity. Its execution was carefully calibrated to account for local socio-political hierarchies, balancing the need for equitable redistribution with the realities of entrenched power structures in rural Tamil Nadu.[9]

The socioeconomic ramifications of land reforms in these districts reveal distinct trajectories. In Thanjavur, land redistribution directly translated into higher agricultural yields and improved peasant welfare. Data from longitudinal studies indicate that reforms contributed to a 25–30% increase in smallholder income and a measurable rise in real agricultural wages. Abolition of intermediaries alone is associated with a 0.339 increase in real wages, demonstrating the transformative potential of dismantling exploitative landholding structures in Tirunelveli, while immediate productivity gains were moderate due to soil and irrigation constraints, the reforms produced significant social dividends. Enhanced tenure security correlated with improved access to education, health services, and rural employment, reflecting the broader developmental impact of agrarian stability beyond mere production metrics.[10]

Socioeconomic Outcomes of Land Reforms in Thanjavur and Tirunelveli

The divergent outcomes emphasise the centrality of contextual factors: ecology, irrigation infrastructure, historical land distribution, and administrative efficacy in shaping the efficacy of land reforms. Thanjavur's fertile deltaic setting amplified the benefits of redistribution, whereas Tirunelveli's varied agro-climatic conditions moderated immediate gains but

yielded long-term social improvements landholding patterns, peasant welfare, and rural development outcomes in these two districts, integrating quantitative data with qualitative assessments. By doing so, it illuminates the mechanisms through which land reforms generate both economic and social dividends, offering evidence-based insights for contemporary agrarian policy and rural development strategies in Tamil Nadu and similar contexts.Land reforms in post-independence India were designed to restructure agrarian relations, mitigate rural inequalities, and foster economic development.[11]

The implementation of the Tamil Nadu Land Reforms (Fixation of Ceiling on Land) Act, 1961, alongside tenancy regulation laws, aimed to redistribute surplus land, enhance tenure security, and empower small and marginal farmers. In Thanjavur, the 1960s–1970s were dominated by large estates, with low yields (1.5–2.0 tons/ha), low wages (₹15–20), and high rural poverty (55–60%). By the 1980s–1990s, land reforms reduced large holdings, smallholders gained ownership, yields doubled (3.5–4.5), wages rose (₹40–50), and poverty fell (35–40%). In the 2000s, small/marginal farmers dominated, yields stabilized at 4.0–5.0, wages reached ₹55–65, credit and tenant rights expanded, and poverty dropped to 25–30%.In Tirunelveli, the 1960s–1970s saw low yields (1.0–1.5), low wages (₹12–18), weak tenant rights, and high poverty (60–65%). The 1980s–1990s brought tenant reforms, better irrigation, rising yields (2.0–2.8), wages (₹30–38), and reduced poverty (45–50%). By the 2000s, smallholders prevailed, yields rose to 2.5–3.2, wages reached ₹40–48, and poverty declined further to 35–40%.

- **Thanjavur**: The deltaic fertility and extensive irrigation amplified the efficacy of land reforms, resulting in higher crop yields, increased real wages, and significant reduction in rural poverty. The increase in smallholder predominance correlated with enhanced access to credit and greater income stability.
- **Tirunelveli**: The district's heterogeneous agro-ecology and historically fragmented landholding delayed immediate productivity gains. However, tenancy reforms and gradual irrigation improvements contributed to enhanced tenure security, crop diversification, and steady income growth.
- **Policy Implications**: These comparative outcomes demonstrate that contextual factors soil quality, irrigation infrastructure, and historical landholding patterns are critical mediators of reform impact. Evidence-based policy design must therefore account for such regional heterogeneity to optimize rural development strategies.[12]

Agrarian Relations in Thanjavur and Tirunelveli

The agrarian landscapes of Tamil Nadu have historically been shaped by hierarchical landholding patterns, entrenched feudal relations, and socio-economic inequalities. The districts of **Thanjavur** and **Tirunelveli** exemplify contrasting experiences of landlord dominance and post-reform rural transformation. Land reforms in Tamil Nadu, particularly the **Tamil Nadu Land Reforms (Fixation of Ceiling on Land) Act, 1961**, and the **Tanjore Tenants and Panniyal Protection Act, 1952**, sought to dismantle the historical concentration of land, redistribute resources, and enhance peasant welfare. These interventions, however, produced varied outcomes depending on the pre-existing social and ecological contexts of each district.Landownership was highly concentrated in the hands of a few **zamindars and elite landlord families**, predominantly from upper-caste groups such as the **Brahmins and Vellalars**. Studies suggest that prior to reforms, **over 60% of cultivable land** was controlled by these elites, while the majority of the rural population, particularly **Dalits and other marginalized groups**, were tenant farmers or agricultural laborers without formal land rights. Tenant farmers and laborers often faced **insecure tenure, high rents, and coercive labor obligations**. Wages were low, historical records indicate agricultural laborers earned approximately **₹15–20 per day in the 1960s** and were subject to seasonal fluctuations and landlord discretion.[13] Social mobility was severely constrained by caste hierarchies and feudal obligations, limiting access to education, credit, and productive resources.

Fragmented Landholding and Gradual Reform

In contrast, Tirunelveli's agrarian structure was less centralized.Land was fragmented among multiple caste groups, with a relatively higher proportion of **small and marginal farmers** and fewer large estates. Although some landlords existed, their influence was less pervasive than in Thanjavur. Tenant cultivators still faced tenure insecurity, but the diversity of landholding facilitated earlier penetration of reform measures. Agricultural laborers in Tirunelveli earned slightly lower wages (**₹12–18 per day**) and engaged in both irrigated and rain-fed cultivation. Crop diversification, including **groundnut, cotton, and millet**, made the region less dependent on a single crop, but also resulted in variable yields and incomes.Land reforms, including tenancy rights and redistribution measures, had an **immediate impact on smallholder ownership**, increasing tenant security to **50–60% by the 1980s–1990s**. Enhanced access to institutional credit and cooperative support improved productivity and fostered social mobility. [14]Crop diversification intensified, and poverty rates declined from **60–65% in the 1960s to 35–40% by the 2000s**.

Landlord Dominance: Thanjavur's pre-reform agrarian economy demonstrates the **centrality of elite landlord power** in shaping economic and social hierarchies. Tirunelveli's more fragmented structure meant landlords exerted less monopoly, allowing reforms to penetrate more effectively. Post-reform, both districts saw **enhanced smallholder prevalence, higher wages, and reduced poverty**, though Thanjavur required more sustained administrative intervention to curtail landlord influence.Redistribution of land rights directly improved rural livelihoods, facilitated access to credit, enabled crop diversification, and gradually weakened caste-based hierarchies that had constrained mobility for tenant farmers.These cases underscore that **legal reform alone is insufficient**. The effectiveness of land reforms depends on **historical landholding patterns, local power structures, irrigation infrastructure, and administrative capacity**. Thanjavur required stronger enforcement mechanisms, whereas Tirunelveli benefited from its pre-existing land distribution.[15]

Rural Transformation and Local Governance in Thanjavur and Tirunelveli

The implementation of land reforms in Tamil Nadu, particularly the Tanjore Tenants and Panniyal Protection Act (1952) and the Tamil Nadu Land Reforms (Fixation of Ceiling on Land) Act (1961), served as a critical catalyst for rural transformation, reshaping not only agrarian relations but also the functioning of local governance structures. Previously, these institutions were dominated by landlords and elite castes; post-reform, lower-caste and smallholder representation in local decision-making increased by approximately 40–50% in village panchayats by the 1970s.Decentralized Decision Making Secure land ownership incentivized smallholders to invest in local development projects, such as irrigation maintenance, rural roads, and educational infrastructure, creating a feedback loop that enhanced the efficacy of Gram Sabha deliberations.[16] Landowners became contributors to local taxation and cooperative credit schemes, enabling more robust village-level resource mobilization.

Secure land tenure encouraged investment in improved seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation, leading to higher yields per hectare.Land ownership and wage improvements collectively raised household incomes, reducing rural poverty by approximately **30 percentage points in both districts**.Farmers invested in multiple crops rice, pulses, groundnut, and millets reducing dependence on single-crop harvests and stabilizing income streams.Landholding smallholders gained collateral access for loans, boosting both agricultural investment and small-scale rural enterprises.Redistribution of land disrupted traditional caste hierarchies, as previously marginalized groups primarily Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes gained land ownership and economic leverage.Enhanced livelihoods translated into **better nutrition, education, and health outcomes**, reinforcing intergenerational mobility.The rise of smallholder-led local institutions strengthened **social cohesion** and facilitated community-led development projects. Land reforms in Thanjavur and Tirunelveli served as a **dual instrument of economic empowerment and democratic deepening**. By

converting tenant cultivators into landholding communities, these policies enhanced participation in **local governance**, increased fiscal capacity at the village level, and catalyzed sustained improvements in **rural living standards**. Quantitative evidence confirms that economic benefits higher wages, lower poverty, expanded credit access, and greater crop diversity were direct outcomes of the redistribution of land rights.[17]

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Dalit Empowerment in Vellore District-A Study

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Challenges in Dalit Empowerment

The persistence of social attitudes and cultural practices that reinforce caste-based discrimination. The underrepresentation of Dalits in managerial and leadership positions, which is attributed to various factors, including social networks, leadership qualities, and organizational culture.

The Scheduled Castes have 20.01 percent of the total population in Tamilnadan 2011. The major district in Tamil Nadu such as Thiruvarur, Perambalur, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam and the Nilgiris comprised of overwhelming majority (70 percent) of the Scheduled Castes population in the state.The percentage is low in the interior districts of Chennai, Dharamapuri and Coimabatore. It is the lowest in Kanyakumari with 4.04 percent, the condition being like Kerala. The sex ratio among the Scheduled Caste as per 2011 census is 999, which is much higher than the general sex ratio of the state. Relative Strength of the Castes Though the list of Scheduled Castes relating to this State contains 76 Castes out of these castes only were enumerated in the 1961 census. It can be observed from this list that some major castes get repeated, either as synonyms or as sub-

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sects. The population figures Caste-wise have been tabulated as they were returned but if we are to study the population trends, we may have to group them by the main castes and then study the trends in each group.

The major five Sub-Caste constituting 95.87 per cent of the Scheduled Caste population of the state. Out of this, Adi Dravida's constitutes 72,42,176 (50.15 percent), Pallan 23,29,117 (16.13 percent), Paraiyar 18,22,524 (12.62 percent), Arunthathiyar 10,84,162 (7.50 percent) and Chakkiliyan 7,42,597 (5.14 percent) and thirty five category of Scheduled Castes have reported population below one thousand out of the 76 Scheduled Castes as per 2011 census. The major population groups are Adi Dravidar with the population of 72, 42,176, followed by Pallan, Paraiyan, Arunthaiyars, Chakkilian and Madari as per 2011 census in Tamilnadu.

Growth of Education Dalits also suffered from educational disabilities for centuries. Historically they had been the most uneducated and illiterate group. The mass illiteracy among Dalits was in turn due to the social and religious sanctions imposed on them. Poverty, adverse economic conditions, absence of educational facilities in rural areas, lack of knowledge of educational facilities, and backwardness are the main reasons to take up formal education and they have to be educationally backward. Literacy rate in Tamil Nadu has seen an upward trend and is 80.33 percent as per 2011 population census. Of that, male literacy stands at 86.81 percent while female literacy is at 73.86 percent23. In 2001, literacy rate in Tamil Nadu stood at 73.45 percent of which male and female were 83.28 percent and 64.91 percent literate respectively. Literacy in Tamil Nadu Literacy is the key factor for socio economic progress and it is an important indicator for human development. The literacy rate of Tamil Nadu grew to 73.26 percent in 2011 from 10.27 percent at the end of 1916. India currently has the largest illiterate population in the world and the country stands well below the world average literacy rate of 84 percent decadal literacy growth is 9.2 percent for 2001-2011 censuses.

Occupational Pattern of Dalits in Tamil Nadu

Dalits were known for their long association with so called polluted, unclean, socially looked down and least preferred occupations. Many untouchables followed the hereditary occupations such as scavenging, carcass recovery and faying and hide tanning, leatherwork, drum beating, and grave digging. These occupations that were associated with the untouchables with permanent ritual population, barred social intercourse between them and higher caste Hindus, in the framework of traditional Indian Society. Looking into the occupation of Dalits it can be said that they were economically poor and generally dependent on agricultural labour and other low-income occupation 223 besides their caste occupations in the rural areas and unorganized non– agricultural wages labourers, cart pullers, civic sanitation workers in urban areas. Dalits main workers from 94.7 per cent in 1991 declined to 85.0 per cent in 2011 Census. This, in turn, has resulted in a corresponding increase in the marginal workers from 5.3 per cent in 1991 to 15 per cent in 2011. Out of total workers agricultural labourers constitute 58.5 per cent, which is higher than 12.9 percentage points when compared to 45.6 per cent registered at national level for SCs population. Other workers account for 29 per cent. Only 10.2 per cent workers have been returned as cultivators; the remaining 2.3 per cent are workers in household industry. Thus, there is a structural change in the category of workers among SCs population; the workers engaged in agricultural activities (cultivators and agricultural labourers) constitute 68.7 per cent of the total work force against 79.7 per cent recorded in 2011 Census. The detailed populations by categories of workers are explained in table no 5.17. It is reported that according to the 2011 census primary abstract out of total SCs population, 37.98 per cent are main workers as compared to 38.07 per cent of total population; among this, 11.78 per cent population belonging to SCs are cultivators as compared to 21.53 per cent of total non-SCs. Further it is estimated that 53.29 per cent agricultural labourers belong to SCs and only 36.36 per cent are non-SCs. On the other hand, 10.09 per cent of SCs are marginal workers as association with 6.60 per cent of non-SCs. It is important to note that nearly 51.93

per cent of the population belonging to SCs are non-workers as opposed to 55.33 per cent of non-SCs.

Employment Opportunities for Dalits in Tamil Nadu

The proportion of the population engaged in productive work, the quality of employment and the remuneration received by the working population are important determinants of human development. A lack of adequate opportunity for gainful employment results in lowering of income levels which in turn pushes people into poverty. Thus, there is a close relationship between employment, income, and poverty. Moreover, economic development is invariably associated with structural changes in GDP (income) and employment. A characteristic feature of a developing economy is a declining trend in the share of the primary sector in GDP. In the process of diversification of the economy, one would expect a shift in the share of workers from the primary sector 225 to the secondary and tertiary sectors.

Unemployment Situation in Tamil Nadu

In 2017, the employment rate in rural areas was 46% for SC male workers, compared with 48.40 per cent for other male workers. Similarly, the employment rate for SC workers in urban areas was 45.8 per cent, compared to 49.9 per cent for other households. Disparities between the SC and others are also reflected in the unemployment rate. The unemployment rate based on SCs was about 5.0 per cent as compared to about 3.5 per cent for other workers in rural and urban areas. The data on wage earning revealed disparities in labour wages for SCs and others. For instance, in 1999–2000, the average weekly wage earning of an SC worker (at 1993–94 price) was Rs 174.50 compared to Rs 197.05 for other workers.

Density of Population and Sex Ratio in Vellore District

The above table analysis density of Vellore district for 2011 is 648 people per sq. km. In 2011 the state wise population density was 555 and in 2001 the density was at 479 people per sq. km. Vellore district administers 6077 km square areas. The sex ratio (females per 1000 males) of the district was 1007 for 996 during 2011. With regards to SCs Sex Ratio in Vellore is 1,026 in 2011 and 1,014 in 2001. The average national SCs sex ratio in India is 945 as per latest reports of Census 2011 Directorate. In the 2011 census, SCs sex ratio is 945 girls per 1000 in Rural compared to the figure of 946 girls per 1000 boys in Urban of 2011 census data. Sex ratio is a widely used indicator to capture the various facts of discrimination and inequalities against women and girl children. A patriarchal society with traditional myths, beliefs and value systems is responsible for lack of decision making power and social participation in the community. 249 The above table describes the block wise sex ratio of the Vellore district. The sex ratio for the Vellore district was 1005 females for 1000 male population.

While it is higher than the state average sex ratio (995). In Vellore district, 17 blocks show better sex ratio, which is a good sign about women status and gender balance. Vellore block, Peranambut and Arakkonam stand first three positions in sex ratio in the district level Literacy and Education Literacy is one of the fundamental human rights for every citizen of a country. Empowerment of people is elicited by the level of literacy and education. Literacy is an instrument to improve health, employment, income, and relationship with society. The literacy rate of the district has been increasing over the years. The average literacy rate of Vellore as per the 2011 Census was 79.17 percentages when compared to 72.36 percentages in 2001. On studying gender wise - male and female literacy, it was 86.50 percentages and 71.95 percentages respectively. It has improved from 81.99 and 62.79 from the 2001 census. The district administration as part of its endeavor for 'Universalization of Primary Education' has invested considerably in educational infrastructure, especially in rural areas.

Education

The dropout rate is the proportion of students who leave school during the year as well as those who complete the grade/year level but fail to enroll in the next grade/year level the following school year to the total number of pupils/students enrolled during the previous school year. The completion rate in upper primary in the district has increased from 91.43 percent

to 96.08 percent between 2011-12 and 2013-14. It is a good sign to see in all the blocks the completion rate has increased positively. Among the block level statistics, it is found that Kaveripakkam block has the lowest (95.35%) in completion rate during 2013-14. In Alangayam block, completion rate is found as 97.28 percent. The difference in completion rate at the district level is 1.93 percent. A major indicator of educational performance and efficiency is the dropout rate at each stage of education. The drop-out rate also measures the ability of the system to retain the enrolled children. The state had a high dropout rate in both primary and middle levels. The drop out at primary level declined marginally from 2.10 percent to 1.90 percent. However, it reduced significantly to 0.20 percent from 2013-2014. The implementation of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) with the objective to enhance access to secondary education and to improve its quality served as one of the major factors causing reduced dropout rates.

Infrastructure Development in Vellore District

Vellore district has one of the good infrastructure services in the state such as universal access to road, electricity, communication system, housing, water & sanitation, energy, transportation, irrigation, connectivity, healthcare, and education. It also nurtures a culture of responsive and transparent governance that ensures progress, security, and equal opportunity to all stakeholders. It is important to realize that the goals set and the actions required are part of a wholesome package with inter-linkages amongst them. The community infrastructure provides space to facilitate lateral learning. While there are many international examples of economic and human development taking diverging paths, it also seems clear from general experience that the most sustainable development in the long run is that in which human development is fully integrated.

Economy There exists an inverse relationship between economic progress and the extent of dependence of the workforce on the primary sector. The shift in occupational pattern from the primary sector to the secondary and tertiary sectors or a shift in the income source from agriculture to industry and the tertiary sector is a natural process of economic development. This sort of shift is visible in the district and there is a spread of industries and growth of the tertiary sector too in a major way. Agriculture Vellore district's agriculture depends on rainfall only and drought is rather frequent in nature. There is only one river flowing through the district which is not perennial and remains dry almost throughout the year. During the period of drought, there is migration of labourers from this district to the neighbouring districts of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Also, the growth of leather industries and the consequent pollution have affected ground water in the district. This has adversely affected agriculture. So, the 256 declining agricultural opportunities are a major reason for the poor rural employment in Vellore district. Industry Vellore District is one of the most vibrant districts in terms of industrial development in the State. It has a dominant presence in the leather-based industries and accounts for more than 37% of the county's exports. The Government of Tamil Nadu has provided all possible investment subsidies and infrastructural support in the form of setting up industrial estates and common effluent treatment plants to encourage these industries. The district provides enough scope for the development and growth of industries engaged in chemicals, food processing, sugar/jaggery manufacturing, synthetic fibres, fertilizers manufacturing, textiles, garments, steel castings and auto bearing manufacturing. The district also has several medium and large-scale industries like, BHEL, EID Parry, Tirumalai Chemicals and Greaves, SAME-DEUTZ, TVS–Brakes India, Mitsubishi, Greaves Cotton, MRF, Kramski Stamping and Molding India Pvt Ltd., RSL Industries Ltd, Farida Shoes Ltd, etc. In Vellore district SIDCO Industrial Estates are located at 257 Katpadi, Ranipet, Mukundarayapuram, Vannivedu and Arakkonam. There are 12 large and 300 medium scale industries functioning in Vellore District.

Conclusion

The study underscores the importance of a multifaceted approach to Dalit empowerment,

addressing economic, social, political, cultural, educational, and psychological dimensions. Empowerment is a long and challenging process that requires significant changes in societal attitudes and the removal of systemic barriers that have kept Dalits marginalized for centuries. The case of Vellore District in Tamil Nadu highlights the ongoing struggles and the need for sustained efforts to achieve true empowerment for the Dalit community. To empower them, the Government of India as well as the State Government has been implementing several welfare schemes. Particularly, Financial Assistance related welfare schemes are the most powerful and dynamic one, which increase the entrepreneurial activities among Dalits and they give enormous opportunities to enhance the income level. Financial assistance brings various impacts on occupation, education, income level, saving habits, spending pattern, asset building capacity, political interaction, social contact, and cultural changes and enhances the empowerment process.

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Contribution of Periyar E.V.Ramasamy for the Upliftment of Women

S. Parimala

Introduction

Just as he was particular that the social difference between men and women should decrease gradually and ultimately disappear, he was emphatic that the common practice of giving a lower status to women in Indian society should disappear. For ages women in India had been confined within their homes and it was taken for granted that bringing forth children and cooking for the family were their only duties. Very few families cared to educate their girl children. Even those families stopped girls from schools when they attained puberty. Women were further denied the right to any part of the family property. The orthodox people justified their attitude to women by saying that they followed Manu dharma.

Periyar said that any code that advised men to treat their women folk as worse than animals was a barbarous code and could be respected only by barbarians. Those who professed to follow the code of Manu got their girls married even when they were innocent children. The moment the innocent girl child was married she became the property of the husband's family.The education of such girl children was out of the question. Even when the girls were ten or eleven years old, they were expected to attend to all items of work in their husband's family. One of the reasons why Periyar hated Hinduism and the orthodoxy practiced in the name of Hinduism was the barbarous practice of child marriage. Many of the girl children who were married before they were ten or twelve years old

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became widows before they knew the meaning of the word Widow.

Abolition of Devadasi system (the system of dedication of girls to temples);

The Devadasi system, a deeply rooted practice in Tamil society, involved dedicating young women to temples, where they were often exploited for the sexual gratification of men in the name of religion. This practice not only degraded women but also perpetuated a cycle of social injustice and immorality. Dr. Muthulakshmi, a pioneering social reformer, proposed the abolition of the Devadasi system in 1930 to the Madras Legislative Council. However, it was only under the Premiership of O.P. Ramasamy Reddiyar in 1947 that the bill was finally passed. During the legislative discussions, Periyar, a strong advocate for social reform, condemned the system as a disgrace to Hinduism. He argued that the practice of keeping women as the common property of temples was a severe insult to women, and that it promoted immoral behavior among men, leading to a breakdown of ethical standards in families. This view was challenged in the Assembly by Mr. Satyamurthi Iyer, an orthodox Congress member, who defended the tradition as part of Hindu customs. In response, Dr. Muthulakshmi, with Periyar's support, retorted that if the system was truly sacred, then upper-caste women should be made to serve as Devadasis instead of the lower-caste women who had been exploited for years. This bold statement shifted the tide of the debate, and the bill was passed on October 9, 1947, marking a significant victory for women's rights and social justice. Dr. Muthulakshmi and reformers like Periyar played a crucial role in this landmark achievement, ensuring the enactment of a law that abolished the Devadasi system and protected the dignity of women.

Women's Education;

Periyar E.V. Ramasamy's fundamental philosophy was centered on the belief that all men and women should live with dignity and have equal opportunities to develop their physical, mental, and moral faculties. He was committed to eradicating all forms of unjust discrimination and promoting social justice and a rational perspective. According to Periyar, society must ensure equal rights for all its members to enjoy the benefits of resources and development, with their participation in governance and administration reflecting their proportional strength in the population. A key element of his philosophy was the advocacy for a rational, intellectual freedom and a healthy worldview, which would lead to the dismantling of hierarchical, birth-based caste systems. Periyar's efforts were instrumental in introducing policies such as job reservations in government administration in Madras province (now Tamil Nadu) in 1928, aiming to empower marginalized communities. Moreover, Periyar emphasized the importance of education as a tool to promote equality, advocating for an educational system that taught the principle that all living beings are equal. He believed that education should aim to make individuals self-sufficient and independent, equipping them with the knowledge necessary for a dignified and respectful life in any society. Teachers, according to Periyar, had the responsibility to ensure that the education they provided enabled students to achieve personal and societal independence..

Periyar's views on Education;

Periyar is the view that children possess the ability to think and should be Periyar E.V.Ramasamy strongly believed that education should be a tool for fostering critical thinking, intellectual independence, and social equality. He opposed the idea that education should be a mere process of memorization, as it does not equate to intelligence or true learning. Periyar emphasized that being educated was not limited to passing exams but to developing one's ability to think rationally and independently. He pointed out the flaws in the education system, particularly its failure to be democratic, as it predominantly benefited certain privileged classes while excluding women and the downtrodden. Periyar believed that education should be accessible to everyone, and that it was the responsibility of the government to ensure equal educational opportunities for all citizens, irrespective of their social or economic background.

A key aspect of Periyar's philosophy was his advocacy for women's education. He believed that women, who constitute half of the population, should not be denied education, as it would hinder societal progress. He argued that educated women could contribute significantly to society and their families, not just as caretakers, but as equal partners in all aspects of life, including employment and social development. Periyar called for the abolition of practices like early marriage and the dowry system, which he saw as consequences of women's lack of education and financial independence. He also opposed the traditional segregation in schools for boys and girls, insisting on coeducation as a means of fostering equality and mutual respect.

Periyar's emphasis on education for women was rooted in his belief that an educated woman would be empowered to secure her own livelihood, escape societal subjugation, and contribute to the nation's progress. He argued that women should be given equal opportunities for employment, particularly in government jobs, and that half of the positions available to men should be reserved for women. Periyar also criticized the influence of religion and superstition in education, advocating for a rational, secular approach that would focus on intellect and humanism rather than dogma.

In conclusion, Periyar E.V.Ramasamy's views on education were revolutionary for his time. He championed a rational, inclusive, and progressive educational system that would empower all individuals, particularly women, to become self-reliant, independent, and active participants in society. His call for educational reform was not just about improving literacy rates, but about fostering intellectual freedom, social equality, and a fairer, more just society.

Property Rights for Women:

Hindu women's right to property has evolved out of continuing struggle between patriarchal Indian society and modern progressive forces of India. The right of Hindu women to inherit property has been restricted from the beginning of Indian culture, though women were not completely stopped from inheriting properties, their share was negligible in amount. In the contemporary Hindu law of property inheritance is largely influenced by ancient rules and regulations, in ancient India property inheritance rights were largely influenced by two Hindu law schools as enforced in different parts of the country respectively Dayabhaga School of law and Mitakshra school of law. Both these schools didn't provide much property rights to women, but they were given somewhat greater rights under Dayabhaga than Mitakshara.

Social Justice for Women;

Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, a staunch rationalist and social reformer, was deeply committed to securing equal rights for women in society. He forcefully argued that women should be seen as equals to men and that they should be given access to men and that they should be given access to quality education, the right to own property, and the freedom to live a life of dignity, free from subjugation. He was critical of the way men treated women as their property, subjecting them to slavery and cruelty. He observed that women, especially in India, were treated far worse than even the lowest castes, and this unequal treatment led to the deterioration of society as a whole. He believed that the oppressive system existed solely because of the ingrained beliefs that men were superior and that women were created solely to serve men.

Periyar also spoke out against the institution of marriage, which he believed was often built on the premise of a woman's submission to the man. He emphasized that marriages were arranged based on whether the woman would be obedient and serve as a "slave" to the husband. He criticized the traditional notion that the woman's role was to serve the husband without question, which perpetuated the idea that women were inferior and subservient. Periyar contended that this hierarchical and oppressive structure was a significant hindrance to the progress of society, as it denied women the right to express themselves, contribute to public life, and live freely.

He also addressed the issue of superficial appearances and materialism, particularly among wealthy women who, despite their education and

wealth, perpetuated traditional gender roles. Periyar believed that these women, obsessed with beauty, jewelry, and fashion, failed to challenge their inferior status in society. He argued that true emancipation for women could only be achieved when they recognized themselves as equal to men and when society stopped defining women solely in terms of their physical appearance and their roles as wives and mothers.

A central issue for Periyar was the concept of chastity, which he saw as an unfair double standard imposed on women. While chastity was demanded of women, it was not expected of men. He argued that this double standard was rooted in the belief that women were the property of men and that their chastity was a reflection of their value. Periyar rejected this idea, claiming that both men and women should be held to the same standards of conduct, and that the concept of chastity should not be used as a tool of oppression.

Periyar was also critical of the societal norms that confined women to their domestic roles. He recognized that the heavy burden of childbearing and motherhood contributed to women's dependency on men, but he believed that this dependency could be reduced if women were given equal access to education, employment, and opportunities for personal development. He argued that if women were allowed to participate fully in the workforce, including in jobs traditionally reserved for men, such as police work, they would become more independent and could begin to challenge the patriarchal structure of society.

Furthermore, Periyar advocated for reforms such as the abolition of child marriages, the right to divorce, widow remarriage, and the freedom for individuals to choose their life partners, irrespective of caste. He believed these reforms would significantly reduce social evils like prostitution, as women would no longer be trapped in oppressive marriages or denied opportunities for education and personal growth.

Periyar also suggested that women's emancipation was not just about individual freedoms but about the collective transformation of society. He argued that men's purported efforts to liberate women were often insincere and merely reinforced women's subjugation. True liberation, he believed, would only occur when women were able to break free from superstition, inequality, and social constraints. He was a strong proponent of women receiving education that fostered rational thinking and independence, rather than being subjected to the superstitions and limitations of traditional roles.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Periyar E.V. Ramasamy's views on women were revolutionary for his time. He called for a complete overhaul of the social, cultural, and legal systems that restricted women's rights and freedom. He believed that for women to become true equals of men, society had to provide them with the same opportunities for education, property rights, and participation in all aspects of public and private life. He stressed that until women were liberated from their traditional roles and given equal status, society as a whole would continue to stagnate and decline. Periyar's ideas on women's rights were not just about improving their conditions, but about creating a more just, rational, and progressive society for all.

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Political Life and career Contributions of Ambujamammal

Dr. S. Abirami

AmbujamAmmal is also a prominent woman who contributed in the field of social service. Every contribution of AmbujamAmmal deserves to be recorded with golden letters in the pages of history. She was inspeired by the Gandhian principles.She involed herself in freedom struggle and look part in the Civil Disobedience movement, Non-Cooperation Movement.She joined herself in the Women's Association of India and started working for the upliftment and empowerment of the women folk.Women's welfare was at the top of her agenda. She set up the Srinivasa Gandhi Nilayam in 1948 at ThenampetAmbujamAmmal maternal grandfather was Sri V.BhashyamAlyangar, the first native indian to be appointed Advocate-General of the Madras Presidency. AmbujamAmmal was born on January 1899, in Mayilapur, as a daughter to SrinivasaIyengar .She was married at very early, age in May 1910. S.Desikachri,an advocate of Kumbakonum belonging to a middle class agriculturist's family.

In the year of 1919, Women's Association of India was started by the efforts of Dr. Anne Besant. Prominent women's activists like Muthulakshmi Reddy, Subbu Lakshmi, Rukmini Lakshmipathy, Ambujammal and several women of the Brahma Gnana Sabha took part in the organization and started working for the empowerment of the women.

Providing opportunities for the womenfolk to pursue their higher studies, Employment opportunities, right to property, right to divorce, abolishing child marriage and Devdasi system, abolishing polygamy are some of the prominent demands raised by these women in order strengthen the oppressed and subjugated women folk. Henceforth, the Women's Associations of India has also decided to start a sister organization named Chennai Women's Association and they organized thousands of women under their banners to consolidate the girl-power. They also organized a Women's conference and proposed several demands which deal with women's oppression and women's rights. They drafted several modules to abolish oppressive patriarchal systems and sent them to both the state and the central government.

Both Ambujammal and Ranganayakiyammal propagated for the rights of the women and spoke against several injustices meted out to women in the conferences organized by Women's associations. She strived hard for the causes of the women day and night and sacrificed her entire life for the sake of the betterment of thewomen folk.

Ambujammal qualified as a teacher and taught at saradaVidyalaya girl's school in part time ,She was in committee member of SaradaLadies'Union form 1929 to 1936, She worked very closely with Sister

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Subbalakshmi . In 1929 she was nominated Treasure of the Women's Swadeshi League ,Madras. This League was a non-political wing of the Congress, implementing Gandhi's social and economic programs.

She joined a member of women who donated their jewelry to support the national movement – on Gandhiji's request. She entry into political life was 1930, during the civil disobedience movement. She joined the salt Satyagraha, and courted arrest. Ambujammal had a huge respect for her father though she had several disagreements with him. She participated in almost all of the movements initiated by Gandhi's peaceful protestations against the colonial government. Khadi movement, thread weaving, taking Hindi classes are some of the movements in which she tookpart wholeheartedly. She did all of these through Swadeshi Forum for women. Moreover, she also served as its treasurer.

She started a volunteer's organization and organized public meets and rallies. She engaged in fund raising movement by selling Khadi and other such swadeshi goods and she donated all those fund to the freedom movement. In the boycotting foreign clothes movement, she protested in front of the shops which were selling foreign clothes and she got imprisoned for that. In the year of 1932, she was released from the Vellore prison. With a strong conviction in the Gandhian principle of non-violence, she fought, valiantly for the freedom of the nation.

She was part of the managing Committee of the Hindi prachar Sabha from 1934 to 1938. She did a lot of propaganda work for Hindi. As part of the her activities with the Hindi Prachar Shaba ,she attended the All-India Congress Session in Bombay in 1934.she stayed at Wardha Ashram with Gandhi form November1934 till January 1935.She was the Secretary, and form 1939 5to 1947 the Tresurer of Women's Indian Assocation. Later on after independence Ambujammal was also associated with Bhoodan Movement Tamil Nadu Congress Committee and Social Welfare Board.

In the year of 1942, Quit India movement was on its peak and when the armed struggle under the leadership of Subash Chandra Bose against the British colonialism was growing more and more intensely, thousands of Indians vacated the countries of Burma and Japan through airways, ships and on foot. On that time, being a member women's association and a member of Chennai Municipality corporation, Ambujammal thought of helping those Indians who flee the war.

Through the Women's Association of India, she helped them get training in vocational courses, tailoring and fundamental education programmes. Ambujammal's life was spent meaningfully through her services to the marginalized women, refugees, poor and the destitute. Thus her life is nothing but an exemplary life to those who follow on her footsteps to serve the greater community.

After the death of Mahatma Gandhi, a plan was conceived to establish an educational women exclusively meant for the women folk. For this, she established Seenivasa Gandhi Centre in the land of her brother spending from her own possessions. Seenivasa Gandhi Centre was functioning as a social welfare and service voluntary organization. Ambujammal was elected as its president and treasurer, Vasumathi Ramasami became its secretary and Sarojini Varadappan, Savitri Rajan, Sithammal were also selected as its members.

As days pass by, the roles took by the centre has grown and included a Medical centre, Mid-day meals centre, Women's press, Tailoring training centre, handicraft training program for slum dwellers and Classes for old age people. With all these programs, Seenivasa Gandhi Centre is running successfully till now.

In the year of 1957, AmbujamAmmal appointed as president in the Social Welfare Board. She encouraged the Welfare organizations by dispersing the subsidies given by the central government based on their needs and services. She also arranged special classes for the rural women. In VaariNokkam, near the town of Mudhukulathur, tailoring training and handicrafts training were given to the veiled Mohammadean women. She was proud of serving the women of different social, cultural, caste and religious

background. In Madurai, Rajaji house which was running with the help of Social Welfare Board, badly needed financial assistance. So, She asked for donations for the further improvement of the house for old age people.

She played a crucial role in raising fund for the house and it helped immensely for the house to develop itself. She also did the necessary to provide funds from the Welfare board to the institutions such as House for orphaned women, Trust for the Visually challenged and a Girls High School.AmbujamAmmal, who served around seven years as the president of Welfare Board, worked immensely for the upliftment of the marginalized, poor and destitute. She helped them with whatever she can as a chief of Social Welfare Board.

When she was retired from the leadership of Social Welfare Board, she spent her valuable time in writing and translating several literary texts in various languages such as English and Hindi. Among those literary works, SevaSadhanam and ThulsiRamayanam were significant works. SevaSadanam was also got adopted as a movie. In this way, AmbujamAmbal also had quiet a remarkable literary career.As a taken of respect for the immense service she has catered to the downtrodden and destitute while she was leading the Welfare Board, in the year of 1964, the Union Government awarded her with Padhma Shree and in the year of 1972, She was award' thamira award' which is given for the those who participated in the freedom struggle. AmbujamAmmal, who led an exemplary life as social worker and a patriot, passed away on 06.10.1983.

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Equity and Empowerment: Welfare Programmes for Depressed Class Communities in Tamil Nadu

V. Praveen Kumar[1] and A. Devaraj[2]

Introduction

The fight for social justice, anti-caste activism, and social reform are all intricately entwined with Tamil Nadu's history. Historically, the oppressed classes—often referred to as Scheduled Castes and other marginalized groups—have faced extreme social marginalization, financial hardship, and denial of resources and education. As a result of these persistent disparities, Tamil Nadu has been one of India's leading states in putting welfare programs into place that guarantee these populations' empowerment and equity. Early 20th-century reform movements headed by national figures like Iyothee Thass, Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, and B.R. Ambedkar laid the groundwork

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for welfare programs for Tamil Nadu's downtrodden classes. Their initiatives placed a strong emphasis on social dignity, political representation, and education as vital instruments of freedom. In addition to increasing awareness among underprivileged populations, these campaigns forced the government to enact laws ensuring social justice through targeted welfare programs, affirmative action, and reserves.

Social welfare has been a key component of Tamil Nadu's governance ever since independence. The state administration launched a number of programs, such as student scholarships, youth hostels for marginalized groups, land and housing distribution plans, midday food programs, and skill-building activities. These actions have had a major impact on improving the living conditions of impoverished class communities, increasing access to education, and encouraging employment. Welfare programs have also acted as social mobility tools, allowing certain segments of these communities to take an active role in the political, cultural, and economic arenas.

However, despite substantial achievements, disparities continue to persist in terms of access, quality, and outcomes. Structural inequalities, caste-based discrimination, and gaps in effective implementation pose challenges to the full realization of equity and empowerment. It is within this historical and socio-political context that this paper seeks to examine the evolution, impact, and limitations of welfare programmes for depressed class communities in Tamil Nadu. The study aims to highlight both the transformative potential of these policies and the areas where further interventions are needed to achieve genuine social inclusion.

Pradhan Mantri Anushuchit Jati Abhyuday Yojana

In 2021–2022, the Indian government launched the Pradhan mantra–Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana by combining three existing programs: Babu Jagivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana, the special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan, and Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana.

Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana Scheme (BJRCY)

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment provided funding for the construction of a new hostel facility for Adi Dravidar under the Babu Jegajivanram Chatravas Yojana. This project is carried out with a 50% contribution from the hostel buildings and a 100% contribution for the construction of the hostel buildings. Under the TAHDCO Scheme, around 208 hostels were constructed.

Tamil Nadu Puthiral Vannar Welfare Board

In 2009, the Tamil Nadu Puthirai Vannar Welfare Board was established. The Commissioner of the Adi Dravidar Welfare Board serves as the Member-Secretary of this Welfare Board. This Board's cardholders are qualified to receive benefits such as the Accident Relief Fund/Funeral Assistance, Children's Educational Scholarship, Children's Marriage Assistance, Pregnancy Assistance, Spectacles Assistance, Old Age Pension, and more. In 2009 and 2010, a total of Rs. 50 lakh, or Rs. 1 crore, was approved for the purpose of providing financial support to the board's enrolled members. In order to provide financial support to the enrolled members of this board, a total of Rs. 50.00 lakhs was approved in 2009–2010 and another Rs. 50.00 lakhs in 2010–2011, for a total of Rs. 1.00 crore.

Vandhan Vikas Kendhra Kariya Kram

Ten self-help groups led by tribal members founded Vandhan Vikas Kendhra. It entails the initial processing of minor forest products and their value addition.

Comprehensive Tribal Development Programme (CTDP)

Land development initiatives, Katcha housing improvements, road construction, GTR school infrastructure improvements, drinking water facilities, economic development plans, and tribal skill training are all supported under the Comprehensive Tribal Development Program. After passing the public 12th grade test, tribal students enrolled in TAHDCO Government/Government Aided schools are eligible to receive a free Diploma in Teacher Education at private institutes. The Tamil Nadu government covers the costs of education for 100 tribal students, including tuition, books, dormitory fees, uniform fees, and other costs. After passing the public 12th grade test, 100 tribal students enrolled in government or government-aided schools are eligible for a free three-year diploma program in general nursing and midwifery.

Scavengers Welfare Board

The Scavengers Welfare Board was established in 2007 to offer financial assistance to Scavengers members and their dependents throughout the 2008–09, 2009–10, and 2010–2011 fiscal years. The government gave this Welfare Board Rs 3.00 crore. The Member-Secretary of this welfare board is TAHDCO's Managing Director. The Board Card holders are qualified to receive benefits such as the Accident Relief Fund/Funeral Assistance, Children's Educational Scholarship, Children's Marriage Assistance, Pregnancy Assistance, Spectacles Assistance, Old Age Pension, and more.

Tribal Welfare

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The Tribal Sub Plan was implemented in the state of Tamil Nadu between 1976 and 1977. It is a part of the annual plan in proportion to Tamil Nadu's entire scheduled tribe population. Every department would set aside money under the Tribal Sub Plan to implement plans for the welfare of scheduled tribes, upgrade the infrastructure in tribal territories, and expand their means of subsistence. The strategy ensures that funds allocated for scheduled tribes' well-being are at least commensurate with their total population.

Conclusion

Tamil Nadu's long history of social justice and inclusive governance is demonstrated by the welfare programs it has established for underprivileged people. Tamil Nadu has continuously worked to rectify historical disparities through social security, housing, work, education, and health care, from early reform movements to current state-led programs. Through increased literacy, improved socioeconomic mobility, and increased engagement in public life, these programs have unquestionably helped to uplift underprivileged communities.

However, the continued existence of caste-based prejudice, unequal access to resources, and ineffective bureaucracy underscore welfare's limits as a transformative instrument. Welfare programs have been effective in creating new opportunities for empowerment, but they have not been enough to totally eradicate systemic injustices that are ingrained in society. In addition to ongoing state intervention, community involvement, awareness-raising, and persistent social reform are necessary to achieve true equity.

To sum up, Tamil Nadu's welfare initiatives for the underprivileged are a big step in the direction of creating a society that is more inclusive and just. However, the path to ultimate empowerment is still unfinished. To make welfare a sustainable tool of empowerment and equity, policy execution must be strengthened, accountability must be maintained, and grassroots social change must be encouraged.

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VANAVARAYAR FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT PRIZE

Salt Sathyagraha Movement in Tamil Nadu with a special Reference to Vedharanyam

P. Thenmozhi

Salt Sathyagraha Movement in Tamil Nadu

The Lahore Congress session conducted by Jawaharlal Nehru declared complete independence for India as its goal. As the decided at Lahore session Gandhi declared 26th January as Independence Day. It was widely celebrated throughout the country. The Congress Working Committee met at Sabarmati from 1 4th to 16 February 1930 vested Gandhi with full powers to start the Civil Disobedience Movement. He announced his decision to open his campaign by opposing the Salt Act because of poorest peasant suffered the most by the incidence of the salt Tax.

Civil Disobedience Movement

The Congress working committee authorised Gandhiji to launch a programme of Civil disobedience Movement in with ultimate object of attaining complete independence for India. Gandhiji wrote a letter to the Viceroy on March 1930, narrating the evils of the British rule and demanded their removal from India. Gandhi decided to start Civil Disobedience Movement in India.[1]

Dandi March

At first he also informed him of his decision to launch the Satyagraha campaign from Sabarmati to Dandi. On 12th March 1930 Gandhi and 78 chosen disciples commenced historic Dandi March, with a solemn vow to break the Salt Law. Gandhi walked from village to village. Nearly 400 village official resigned their posts to register their support to Gandhi struggle for freedom. Dandi March lasted for 24 days. Gandhi reached Dandi on the morning of 5th April 1930. Soon after the prayers Gandhi and satyagrahis broke the salt Law by Picketing up salt lying on the sea-shore.[2]

Civil Disobedience Movement in Tamil Nadu

Civil Disobedience Movement had a great impact in all the district of Tamil Nadu. In North Arcot District This movement was developed three stages from January to April 1930 consisting several meetings, demonstrations and processions and sent satyagraha volunteer to do satyagraha movement in outside of the district of Arcot. During the time Independence Day was celebrated in the meetings and some places like Vellore and Gudiyathamm.[3]

Salt Satyagraha in Madras Beach

T. Prakasam and K.Nageswari Rao set up a camp to break the salt laws at Madras and make salt at Marina Beach. They were fired and their car was attacked. Then Police arrested the leaders, raided the camp, and broke it up. This was followed by hartal in the city. Paparty's meeting was held at Madras Beach on 27th April and was brutally dispersed by troops of armed police.[4]

Salt Satyagraha at Rameswaram

The volunteers manufactured salt at Rameswaram but were arrested. Many people supported Satyagrahis and provided food and other facilities.

Salt Satyagraha in other places in Tamil Nadu

An attempt was made from April to June to make salt on the coastal areas Ovary, AnjengoVeppolodu, and Tharuvaikulam.At these Satyagrahis chanted, "**Let us march March to the seashore to make salt"**

Determined to carry the struggle to success the patriots empowered different methods. They sought the support of all sections of the population. The students also joined the struggle for strength. Meetings of satyagraha, hartal, picketing staging dramas, and singing of patriotic songs formed the different manifestations of popular resentment.[5]

Assistant Professor

Vedaranyam March

Civil Disobedience Movement had a great intensive in Trichirapalli and Tanjore District. In Vedaranya this movement was divided into three parts,

1. Preparation for March
2. March from Thrichinopoly to Vedaranyam
3. Picketing Salt at Vedearanyam

In Tamil Nadu C.Rajagopalachari led the movement and travelled on foot from Thrichirapalli to Vedaranyam for picketing salt on the coast. it was considered the second important March, the first being the Dandi March of Gandhiji, to break the Salt law in Tamil Nadu at first, Rajaji planned the march from Thrichirapalli on 13 April and reached Vedaranyam on April 28.[6]Rajaji selected 100 members to follow him to break the salt law. He presented to them the hazards of the venture. The British regime might unleash a reign of terror. The participants might be arrested, imprisoned, or harassed by the regime. On 13th April 1930, the led by Rajaji started from Tiruchi.

Rajaji learned that the District Collector, Thorne, had declared that any person who gave help or aid to the marchers would make themselves liable to penal action.

People boldly joined the March and silently prayed for the success of the march and also secretly provided food and other facilities to the Satyagrahis. Satyagrahis received warm welcomes all along the route at Tanjore, Kumbhakonam, Tiruthiraipoondi, etc.[7]

On the march they stood in silent prayers, two girls daughters of Rajaji and Dr.Rajan pressed Kumkum red powder of blessing and luck, on each forehead. After that Satyagrahis sang the song "Kathiyinri Rathaminri" which had been composed for the occasion by the poet Ramalingam Pillai.

The Satyagrahis reached Vedaranyam on 28th April. Rajaji declared that he would break the salt law on April 30. On that day Rajaji along with 16 fellow marchers broke the Salt Law.[8]

Rajaji and his associate were arrested. Rajaji was sentenced to six months. He was fined Rs.200. If he did not pay the fine, he would spend another three months in prison. Rajaji smiled and said he would rather spend three more months n British prison.

Waves of Satyagrahis moved to Vedaaranyam. Thousands broke the salt laws. Thousands were beaten on the fists and palms on which they sported precious salt. Hundreds of demonstrators were arrested and taken away to prison. Rajaji was detained at the Vellore jail. The Vellor jail thronged with nationalists. Apart from Rajaji, there were PattabiSitaramaya, Prakasam, Sambamoorthy, Raman Menon, Madhava Menon, and Santhanam.[9]

Women's participation Vedarayam march

Thousands of women came out of their homes to participate in this movement and many of them were imprisoned. This movement had widespread popularity and participation of the people.[10] Five women participated Vedaranyam march among them RukmanLakshmipathi and SuchetaKirpalini were very famous.[11]

Dalits participation Vedarayam march

Rajaji believed the cooperation of all the communities was important. He highly believed Dalits to support this movement. Many Dalit people participated in this movement. Rajaji mentioned Dalits as a symbol of sacrifice. Muthaiah was a prominent leader of Dalits who actively participated Vedaranyam march. He was arrested and imprisoned by the British. Karupanan was also arrested and sentenced to six months. His native place was Coimbotore.12

Conclusion

Salt Satyagraha created great tremendous enthusiasm in India as well as Tamil Nadu. Some places of picketing of shops and demonstrations often invited indiscrimination action in which innocent women and aged people suffered humiliation and injury. The British government announced Round Table Conferences to Stop the Civil Disobedience Movement. It created great awareness among the people in Tamil Nadu.

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The Evolution of Women's Education in the Madras Presidency and Tamil Nadu: Colonial Educational Policies, Social Reform, and Educational Transformation (1820–1967)

P.Tamilselvan

Introduction

Education is an important instrument of social transformation and human development. Women's education, in particular, contributes to individual empowerment, family welfare, social awareness, and national progress. However, the development of women's education in colonial India was a gradual process shaped by social customs, economic conditions, religious beliefs, and government policies. In the Madras Presidency, educational opportunities for women were initially restricted, and access to formal schooling varied according to caste, class, religion, and geographical location.

During the early nineteenth century, traditional attitudes towards women's education remained a significant obstacle. Practices such as child marriage and restrictions on women's public participation limited educational opportunities. Nevertheless, Christian missionaries, Indian philanthropists, and social reformers began establishing schools for girls and advocating educational advancement. The initiatives of Sir Thomas Munro, the educational policies of the British administration, and the recommendations of Wood's Education Despatch of 1854 contributed to the gradual institutionalisation of education.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women's education expanded through the establishment of schools, teacher-training institutions, and colleges. Women who obtained education increasingly participated in social reform, professional occupations, and public life. Following Independence, governmental initiatives further extended educational opportunities. The history of women's education in the Madras Presidency and Tamil Nadu therefore illustrates the relationship between educational development, social reform, and women's changing status.

Early Development of Women's Education in the Madras Presidency

The early nineteenth century witnessed the gradual emergence of organised educational initiatives in the Madras Presidency. Before the expansion of formal schooling, indigenous educational institutions, including village schools and *tinnaipallikoodams*, provided basic instruction in many localities. However,

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educational opportunities for girls remained limited, and their participation in these institutions varied considerably.

Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras from 1820 to 1827, played an important role in examining the condition of education. His educational survey and recommendations in the early 1820s contributed to the development of a more systematic approach to public instruction. Although his initiatives primarily concerned the organisation of education generally, the wider expansion of elementary schooling created a foundation for subsequent educational developments.

Christian missionaries were among the early organised supporters of girls' education. Missionary societies established schools and boarding institutions in different parts of the Presidency, including Madras and Tirunelveli. These institutions offered opportunities for girls to receive elementary education and, in some cases, continue their studies beyond the primary level. Missionary activities also contributed to the development of teacher preparation and the establishment of permanent school buildings.

Nevertheless, missionary education had limitations. Christian religious instruction formed an important part of many institutions, and the participation of Hindu and Muslim girls was influenced by family attitudes, community customs, and religious concerns. Access was also uneven, with some institutions attracting predominantly Christian pupils or girls from relatively privileged communities.

Despite these limitations, missionary initiatives helped establish an institutional foundation for female education in the Madras Presidency.

Wood's Education Despatch of 1854 and Its Impact

Wood's Education Despatch of 19 July 1854 was a landmark in the history of education under British rule. Issued by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, it outlined a comprehensive framework for educational administration and became widely known as the “Magna Carta of English Education in India.”

The Despatch recommended the establishment of separate departments of public instruction, the development of universities, the expansion of primary and secondary schools, the promotion of vernacular education, teacher training, and the introduction of a grant-in-aid system. It also explicitly recognised the importance of female education and recommended government encouragement and financial assistance for educational institutions.

One of its major contributions was the establishment of an organised administrative structure for education. In the Madras Presidency, the Directorate of Public Instruction was established in 1854, and Alexander Arbuthnot became its first Director in 1855. Inspectors and assistant inspectors were appointed to supervise schools and support the expansion of educational facilities.

The University of Madras was established in 1857, alongside the universities of Calcutta and Bombay. Initially, its principal function was to conduct examinations and award degrees. Its establishment nevertheless marked an important development in higher education and eventually created opportunities for women to pursue advanced studies.

The grant-in-aid system encouraged the development of educational institutions managed by private bodies and missionary societies. Financial assistance could support school buildings, teachers' salaries, educational materials, and other institutional requirements. Such arrangements helped expand the educational infrastructure beyond directly administered government institutions.

However, the implementation of the Despatch was uneven. Although it recognised the importance of female education, it did not provide a sufficiently detailed and immediate programme for achieving universal access. Governmental support for girls' education developed gradually, while missionary organisations and private initiatives continued to play an important role.

Thus, Wood's Despatch established an important policy framework for the expansion of women's education, but the practical realisation of its recommendations required sustained institutional and social efforts.

Expansion of Girls' Schools and Teacher Training

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the number of educational institutions available to girls gradually increased. Missionary societies established girls' schools in Madras, Tirunelveli, and other parts of the Presidency. Some institutions provided elementary education, while others introduced more advanced instruction and boarding facilities.

The Sarah Tucker Female Training School, established at Palayamkottai in 1858, became an important institution in the history of women's education in southern India. Its development reflected the growing recognition that the expansion of girls' schooling required trained female teachers.

Teacher training was particularly significant because social restrictions often made it difficult for girls to attend schools staffed entirely by male teachers. Preparing women for teaching also created an employment opportunity for educated women and helped strengthen the educational system.

Schools for girls were subsequently established in parts of Madras, including Black Town and Purasawalkam. Some received government grants after coming under official inspection. These developments demonstrated the gradual expansion of cooperation between the colonial administration and private educational organisations.

The progress of female education remained limited, however, by social conservatism, insufficient funding, the shortage of trained teachers, and the concentration of institutions in urban areas. Rural girls and those belonging to economically disadvantaged communities continued to face considerable barriers.

Nevertheless, the establishment of schools and teacher-training institutions provided the foundation for the further expansion of women's education during the twentieth century.

Social Reformers and the Advancement of Women's Education

The development of women's education was closely connected with wider social reform movements in India. Reformers challenged practices and attitudes that restricted women's opportunities and argued that education was necessary for social improvement.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy advocated social reform and opposed practices that undermined women's dignity and rights. Reform movements associated with the Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, and Arya Samaj also contributed to debates on women's status and educational opportunities, although their activities and influence varied across regions.

In the Madras Presidency, the growth of modern education contributed to the emergence of new discussions concerning women's rights, social equality, marriage, and public participation. The spread of print culture and the circulation of reformist ideas helped bring these questions into public debate.

Annie Besant played a significant role in public life and educational activity in Madras. Through her speeches and organisational work, she encouraged social awareness and advocated reforms concerning women's position in society.

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy was another important figure in the advancement of women's public participation. Her entry into the Madras Legislative Council in 1927 represented a significant milestone in women's political representation. Her work in social reform and public health also demonstrated the importance of education in enabling women to participate in public institutions and influence social policy.

The Self-Respect Movement associated with Periyar E. V. Ramasamy further challenged patriarchal customs and inequalities in Tamil society. Its emphasis on rationalism, social equality, and women's rights contributed to debates concerning women's autonomy and social position.

These reform initiatives helped establish women's education as more than an educational question. It became part of a broader struggle against social restrictions and for greater equality and participation.

Women's Higher Education and Professional Opportunities

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed important developments in women's access to higher education. The University of Madras began admitting women to university examinations in 1876, marking a significant step in the expansion of higher educational opportunities.

The Madras Medical College also contributed to this development by admitting women to medical studies during the nineteenth century. Access to professional education gradually opened opportunities for women to enter medicine, teaching, and other occupations.

Queen Mary's College, established in Madras in 1914, became an important institution for women's higher education. Its establishment reflected the growing recognition that women required educational opportunities beyond the elementary and secondary levels.

The expansion of higher education contributed to the emergence of educated women who could enter professional employment, participate in public affairs, and support further educational initiatives. Education also provided women with greater opportunities for economic independence and social mobility.

However, higher education remained inaccessible to large sections of the female population. Financial constraints, geographical barriers, family responsibilities, and prevailing social attitudes continued to limit participation. The growth of women's colleges therefore represented substantial progress without eliminating educational inequality.

Government Policies and the Expansion of Women's Education

Government policies increasingly addressed the need to expand girls' education during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Indian Education Commission of 1882, commonly known as the Hunter Commission, recommended greater attention to primary education and the encouragement of female education. Its recommendations contributed to discussions concerning grants, teacher training, and the supervision of girls' schools.

During the early twentieth century, educational development was accompanied by demands for compulsory elementary education. The efforts of Gopal Krishna Gokhale to promote compulsory primary education highlighted the importance of expanding access to schooling. In the Madras Presidency, the Elementary Education Act of 1920 provided a legislative framework for compulsory education for boys and girls within the specified age groups and areas to which it applied.

The expansion of girls' education also depended on practical assistance. Scholarships, fee concessions, educational materials, and teacher-training programmes helped reduce some of the barriers faced by female students. Nevertheless, the availability and effectiveness of these measures varied across institutions and communities.

During the late colonial period, the development of women's education became increasingly associated with employment, professional training, and social participation. The establishment of additional colleges and the growing availability of educational facilities helped strengthen this trend.

Yet progress remained uneven. Although educational opportunities increased, female literacy and school participation continued to be affected by poverty, rural isolation, caste inequalities, and gender-based expectations.

Women's Education after Independence

Following Indian Independence in 1947, the expansion of education became an important objective of public policy. The governments of Madras State and, subsequently, Tamil Nadu introduced measures to extend elementary, secondary, and higher education.

The expansion of elementary schools created opportunities for more girls to enter formal education. Government initiatives also sought to reduce educational discontinuation and improve access to schooling. Teacher-training programmes and the development of educational institutions contributed to the gradual strengthening of the system.

Secondary education expanded through the introduction of diversified and vocational courses. In addition to conventional academic subjects, educational programmes increasingly included domestic science, music, technical subjects, and other areas intended to prepare students for different occupations. However, the availability of particular courses varied between institutions.

Women's higher education also developed during the post-Independence period. Ethiraj College for Women in Madras, Lady Doak College in Madurai, and Nirmala College in Coimbatore were among the institutions that contributed to the expansion of women's collegiate education. Colleges gradually improved their libraries, laboratories, hostels, and other facilities.

The University Education Commission of 1948–1949, chaired by S. Radhakrishnan, examined the broader problems of higher education. The Kothari Commission of 1964–1966 subsequently emphasised the importance of women's education in national development and the effective utilisation of human resources.

Professional and technical education also became increasingly important. Women gradually entered fields such as medicine, engineering, agriculture, law, and other professional occupations. These developments broadened the relationship between education, employment, and women's economic independence.

Despite these advances, educational opportunities remained unequal. Girls from poor households and rural communities often experienced greater difficulties in continuing their education. Consequently, the expansion of educational institutions did not immediately translate into universal female literacy or equal access at every educational level.

Impact of Women's Education on Social Transformation

The expansion of women's education contributed to significant changes in social attitudes and opportunities. Education enabled women to acquire literacy, develop wider social awareness, and participate more actively in public life. Educated women increasingly entered teaching, medicine, administration, and other occupations, thereby broadening their roles beyond traditional domestic expectations.

Women's education also strengthened participation in social reform and political activity. Educated women were better positioned to engage with questions concerning marriage, property, employment, political representation, and social equality. The contributions of women reformers and public figures demonstrated that education could provide the knowledge and institutional access necessary to challenge established restrictions.

The growth of women's education also affected family life. Literacy and access to information could improve women's ability to participate in family decisions and support the education of their children. However, these changes were not uniform and depended on social background, economic circumstances, and access to educational institutions.

In the Madras Presidency, educational development interacted with wider social and political changes, including debates on caste inequality, women's rights, and social justice. The relationship between education and social transformation was therefore complex. While education created new opportunities, broader changes in employment, family relations, and social attitudes were also necessary to achieve greater equality.

Limitations and Challenges

Despite the progress made between the nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century, women's education continued to face substantial obstacles. Poverty restricted the ability of many families to meet educational expenses, while the limited availability of schools in rural areas affected access.

Social customs, early marriage, domestic responsibilities, and the preference given to boys' education also contributed to the unequal distribution of educational opportunities. Caste and class inequalities further influenced which girls could attend school and continue to higher education.

Colonial educational policies also had limitations. Official recognition of female education did not always

result in adequate funding or effective implementation. The reliance on missionary societies and private organisations meant that the expansion of education depended partly on the resources and priorities of these institutions.

Furthermore, increases in the number of schools did not necessarily guarantee improvements in educational quality, retention, or completion. The distinction between institutional expansion and actual educational attainment is therefore essential to understanding the historical development of women's education.

After Independence, governments introduced further measures to expand educational access. Nevertheless, disparities in literacy, school attendance, and higher education persisted, demonstrating that educational equality required sustained public investment and wider social reform.

Conclusion

The development of women's education in the Madras Presidency and Tamil Nadu between 1820 and 1967 was a gradual historical process shaped by colonial educational policies, missionary initiatives, social reform movements, and post-Independence government measures. Early efforts by missionaries and philanthropists established schools for girls, while Wood's Education Despatch of 1854 provided an important framework for organised educational administration and officially recognised the need to encourage female education.

The subsequent expansion of girls' schools, teacher-training institutions, colleges, and professional education created new opportunities for women. Social reformers and women leaders contributed to changing attitudes towards female literacy, public participation, and gender equality. Following Independence, educational policies and institutional expansion further strengthened women's access to elementary, secondary, collegiate, and technical education.

Nevertheless, progress remained uneven because of poverty, caste inequalities, rural disadvantages, social conservatism, and weaknesses in policy implementation. The history of women's education therefore demonstrates both the transformative potential of education and the limitations of institutional expansion without corresponding social and economic change.

Ultimately, women's education became an important foundation for social reform, economic participation, and the advancement of women's rights in Tamil society. Its historical development illustrates that educational progress is not merely a matter of establishing schools and colleges; it also requires sustained efforts to ensure equal access, meaningful participation, and opportunities for women from all sections of society.

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The Return of the 'Outsider': The Samsung Workers' Strike at Sriperumbudur and a Century of Trade Union Struggles

Dr. M. Lakshmanan

Introduction: The Return of the 'Outsider'

The Samsung India workers' strike at Sriperumbudur, situated along the Chennai–Bengaluru industrial corridor, in September–October 2024 revived an issue that has shaped labour relations in India for more than a century: the recognition of trade unions and the right of workers to organise collectively. Although the immediate dispute concerned wages, working conditions and the recognition of a newly formed union, its significance extended beyond the factory. It raised questions about workers' dignity, collective bargaining and the relationship between industrial development and labour rights.

In the early twentieth century, the Madras Labour Union (MLU), formed in 1918, encountered opposition from the management of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills. One of the objections raised against the union was that its leadership included 'outsiders'—individuals who were not employed in the mills but assisted workers in organising themselves and articulating their demands. The term was used to question the legitimacy of external support for collective labour action.

More than a century later, the description of trade union organisers as 'outsiders' reappeared in the Samsung dispute. The industrial setting had changed considerably: the cotton mills of colonial Madras had given way to a modern electronics manufacturing plant integrated into international production networks. Yet the question of who could represent workers, and whether management should recognise that representation, remained contentious.

This article examines the Samsung strike in the context of the history of trade union struggles in Madras and contemporary Tamil Nadu. It first considers the formation of the Madras Labour Union and the legal background to trade union organisation. It then examines the industrial development of Sriperumbudur, the grievances that led to the Samsung strike, the responses of management and government, and the renewed protests of 2025. Finally, it analyses the historical continuities and differences between the two disputes.

The central argument is that the return of the 'outsider' label reveals a continuing tension between workers' efforts to secure collective representation and employers' resistance to independent trade union organisation. The comparison does not imply that the two historical situations were identical. Rather, it highlights the enduring importance of union recognition in determining the balance of power between employers and workers.

Historical Background: The Madras Labour Union, 1918–1926

The formation of the Madras Labour Union in 1918 marked a significant development in the organisation of industrial workers. Associated with the workers of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, the union sought to provide a collective platform through which employees could articulate their grievances and pursue improvements in their conditions of employment.

The union's emergence challenged the assumption that industrial disputes should be resolved exclusively through individual dealings between employers and employees. Collective organisation enabled workers to present common demands, establish solidarity and seek the assistance of individuals experienced in public affairs and labour organisation. However, management opposition centred partly on the participation of persons who were not themselves employed in the mills.

The conflict became particularly serious during

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the Buckingham Mills strike of November 1920. The mill management initiated legal proceedings against B. P. Wadia and nine other members of the strike committee, claiming damages of Rs. 75,000 and seeking a permanent injunction. The action sought to restrain the union and its representatives from activities that the management characterised as a conspiracy to injure the mills and induce workers to breach their employment contracts.

The proceedings demonstrated the legal vulnerability of collective labour action at a time when trade union organisation lacked the statutory protections subsequently provided by legislation. The use of civil proceedings against union representatives also illustrated how disputes over wages and employment could develop into wider conflicts concerning the legitimacy of organised labour.

Nationwide protests led by moderate leaders such as N. M. Joshi, the activities of labour organisations such as the All India Trade Union Congress, and the conventions of the International Labour Organisation facilitated the passage of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926. The Act established a statutory framework for the registration of trade unions and provided specific legal protections for registered organisations. The legislation marked an important stage in the institutional development of the labour movement in India. However, the existence of a legal framework for union registration did not, by itself, resolve all questions concerning employer recognition or the effectiveness of collective bargaining.

The Madras experience is relevant to the Samsung strike because both episodes raised questions about the role of union representatives who operated beyond the immediate workforce. In the earlier case, the controversy concerned the legitimacy of labour organisers and the legal position of collective action. In the contemporary dispute, the issue arose within a different statutory and industrial environment, but the legitimacy of independent representation remained central.

Industrial Transformation: Sriperumbudur after Liberalisation

Following the liberalisation of the Indian economy in the early 1990s, the region developed into an important centre for manufacturing investment. Its location along the Chennai–Bengaluru industrial corridor, together with the expansion of industrial infrastructure, helped attract domestic and international companies.

Samsung established its manufacturing facility at Sriperumbudur in 2007. The factory produced consumer goods, including televisions, refrigerators and washing machines, for the Indian market and wider manufacturing networks. The workforce included a substantial number of employees, among them women workers and people who had migrated from rural areas in search of industrial employment.

The expansion of manufacturing created employment opportunities and contributed to the region's economic development. At the same time, it brought a growing number of workers into large-scale industrial establishments where questions of wages, work organisation, occupational health and collective representation became increasingly significant.

The Samsung dispute illustrates the distinction between the availability of employment and the quality of employment. Industrial investment may expand production and create jobs, but these economic benefits do not automatically ensure transparent wage structures, satisfactory working conditions or effective grievance mechanisms.

The conflict at Sriperumbudur must therefore be understood within the broader context of industrial development in Tamil Nadu. The central question is not whether manufacturing investment is desirable, but how the benefits of industrial growth can be reconciled with workers’ rights and the need for stable industrial relations.

The Samsung Strike of 2024: Background and Workers' Grievances

On 9 September 2024, more than 1,000 workers at Samsung India Electronics began a strike at the Sriperumbudur factory. The action attracted national and international attention because of Samsung's importance in India's electronics manufacturing sector and the workers' demand for recognition of the newly formed Samsung India Workers Union (SIWU), supported by the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU). The dispute developed around several interconnected issues. Workers sought improved wages, greater transparency in wage revisions, better working conditions and recognition of an independent trade union. They argued that collective organisation was necessary to present common demands and negotiate with management on a more equal footing.

CITU had already established a presence among workers in several industrial establishments in and around Sriperumbudur, including Hyundai, JK Tyres and Apollo Tyres. Its organisational activities formed part of the wider background to the Samsung workers' mobilisation.On 16 September 2024, workers from several establishments reportedly held gate meetings to express solidarity with the Samsung strikers and condemn the arrests associated with the dispute. The participation of workers from other factories demonstrated that the conflict had become a wider labour issue rather than remaining an isolated disagreement within a single establishment.

The formation of SIWU also coincided with a labour protest by the National Samsung Electronics Union in Seoul, South Korea, where workers were demanding better pay. SIWU expressed solidarity with the Korean workers at its inaugural general body meeting. This connection highlighted the international dimension of labour relations within a multinational manufacturing corporation. The union's membership became an important element of the dispute. E. Muthukumar, a CITU leader and SIWU president, reported that approximately 1,550 of Samsung's 1,723 workers had joined the union.

Wage revision and economic security

Higher wages constituted one of the principal demands of the striking workers. CITU placed the average monthly wage at approximately ₹25,000, while the workers sought an increase to ₹36,000 over three years. The workers also expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of transparency in wage revisions. They alleged that employees were not given clear explanations of the criteria used to determine pay increases or assign workers to different wage grades. Some reportedly remained at the same wage level for more than five years.

These complaints concerned more than the amount of remuneration. Workers wanted a transparent system in which wage revisions were based on identifiable criteria rather than decisions they perceived as arbitrary or discretionary. They also sought a mechanism through which employees could collectively raise concerns about pay and employment conditions.

The financial circumstances of workers further complicated the dispute. Employees supporting families and meeting monthly loan instalments could face considerable hardship when wages were withheld for days on which they did not work. The prospect of lost wages, disciplinary action or termination could weaken workers' capacity to sustain collective action. The wage dispute thus revealed the relationship between economic security and the ability to exercise collective rights. Workers may possess a formal right to organise, but the practical exercise of that right can be constrained by the financial consequences of prolonged industrial action.

Working conditions, health and dignity

Working conditions constituted another important area of grievance. Workers reportedly raised concerns about working hours, rest breaks, leave arrangements and supervisory conduct. Some employees alleged that they worked beyond nine-hour shifts without adequate overtime compensation and had limited opportunities to refuse additional work. The accounts also described work that required employees to remain standing for extended periods, with breaks reportedly lasting only

five to ten minutes. Some workers associated prolonged standing with health problems, including painful varicose veins.

Other allegations concerned the approval of annual leave and disciplinary practices. Workers claimed that leave was difficult to obtain and that some employees who arrived late or questioned workplace practices were made to stand apart or were isolated in empty rooms for extended periods. The manuscript also records allegations of dismissal without notice. These claims are significant because they concern the everyday experience of work, including bodily health, dignity and the ability to raise grievances without fear of retaliation.

Trade union recognition and collective bargaining

The formation and recognition of SIWU became the central institutional issue in the strike. According to the workers' account, an application for registration was submitted on 25 July 2024. The workers maintained that substantial numbers of employees supported the union, but alleged that management refused to recognise it while the registration process remained unresolved.

For the workers, an independent union offered a means of presenting common demands, negotiating with management and protecting employees from individual victimisation. They questioned whether existing internal grievance committees possessed sufficient authority to address their concerns effectively.

The dispute consequently extended beyond wages and working conditions. It concerned the right of workers to establish a representative organisation through which they could negotiate collectively. The demand for recognition therefore reflected a broader question about industrial relations: whether employees could participate in negotiations through representatives of their own choosing and whether those representatives would be accepted as legitimate interlocutors by management.The controversy also revived the historical question of the 'outsider'. CITU's support for the Samsung workers was presented by the union as a means of strengthening their collective position. Opposition to such involvement, however, reflected the continuing sensitivity surrounding the role of external organisers in workplace disputes.

Management's position

Samsung's response emphasised compliance with applicable laws and company regulations. During the strike, the company reportedly warned that workers would not receive wages for days on which they did not work and could face disciplinary consequences, including termination. The company also described the strike as illegal. Such a position placed the dispute within a familiar conflict between management's interest in maintaining production and discipline and workers' efforts to secure better conditions and collective representation. The dispute therefore raises a question of accountability: what mechanisms were available to examine the grievances and determine whether corrective action was necessary?

Escalation and police action

As the strike continued, CITU sought to extend the protest to Chennai in order to press the state government to intervene. A protest was planned at Valluvar Kottam in coordination with national and state-level trade unions. The police denied permission for the proposed protest on 18 September 2024 and arrested workers who had assembled there. A. Soundararajan, CITU's state secretary, was among the union leaders detained.

The police action added another dimension to the dispute. The conflict was no longer confined to negotiations between workers and management but also involved the ability of trade unions to organise public demonstrations and mobilise support.The strike continued without escalating into open confrontation between the workers and the police. It also states that the police initially permitted certain activities before subsequently withdrawing permission, removing a tent used by the workers and making arrests. The significance of this episode lies in the relationship between public order and the exercise of collective labour rights.

Government mediation and the October settlement

The Tamil Nadu government played an important mediating role as the dispute continued. The initial round of discussions did not adequately involve representatives of the principal striking union. Subsequently, the process moved towards conciliation through meetings at the office of the Department of Labour Welfare. A breakthrough came following a conciliation meeting at the department's office, attended by representatives of Samsung India and the striking workers. This meeting followed the intervention of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, who had tasked four ministers—T.M. Anbarasan (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), C.V. Ganesan (Labour Welfare and Skill Development), TRB Rajaa (Industries), and E.V. Velu (Public Works)—with mediating between the company and the workers.

On 16 October, the government announced that the strike had ended and that the workers would return to duty. The settlement was presented by the government and the company as a step towards improving workers' welfare and promoting cooperation. It enabled production to resume and demonstrated the importance of state mediation when direct negotiations between an employer and workers reach an impasse. However, the broader interests of the management remained obscured by the settlement. The company stated, "We are committed to work closely with our workers to make the Chennai factory a great place to work." India, the world's most populous country, represents an important growth market for Samsung, particularly with its expanding middle class. As a major South Korean corporation, Samsung also holds considerable economic significance, with its output accounting for a substantial share of South Korea's GDP.

The union registration dispute

The registration of SIWU remained a contentious issue during and after the strike. The dispute over the use of the Samsung name became a point of contention, while the union and its supporters questioned the delay in completing the registration process. The Government sought repeated adjournments, which contributed to the delay and strained relations between the Tamil Nadu government and the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which is associated with CITU.

Renewed Protests in 2025: The Limits of the Settlement

The developments of 2025 demonstrated that the October 2024 settlement had not eliminated all the tensions underlying the Samsung dispute. Although SIWU was registered in January 2025, questions concerning the treatment of union representatives and the handling of disciplinary proceedings continued to affect relations between the workers and management.The suspension of three union office-bearers prompted renewed protests in February 2025. Approximately 500 workers reportedly participated in a sit-in demanding the withdrawal of the suspensions.

A further period of industrial action followed. A month-long strike ended on 7 March 2025 after several rounds of negotiations. Under the reported understanding, the union agreed to a fair internal inquiry into cases involving 23 suspended workers, while the company permitted protesting employees to return without requiring a written undertaking that they would not strike again.

Nevertheless, the sequence of events raises an important analytical point. The end of a strike does not necessarily signify the resolution of an industrial dispute. A settlement may restore production and establish procedures for further discussions while leaving disagreements over representation, disciplinary action and working conditions unresolved.

The 2025 protests also demonstrate the importance of distinguishing between formal union registration and effective collective bargaining. Registration gives a union a recognised legal status under the applicable framework, but the practical effectiveness of representation depends on the willingness of the parties to negotiate, the functioning of grievance procedures and the treatment of union representatives.The Samsung dispute thus illustrates

how industrial conflict may recur when an agreement addresses the immediate disruption without resolving the institutional and workplace issues that contributed to it.

The persistence of the 'outsider' label

The comparison between the Madras Labour Union and SIWU is central to understanding the historical significance of the Samsung strike. In the early twentieth century, the management of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills objected to the involvement of persons who were not employed in the mills but assisted workers in organising themselves. More than a century later, the role of external trade union organisers again became a point of contention.

The recurrence of the term 'outsider' does not mean that the two disputes were identical. Colonial Madras operated under a different political and legal framework, while contemporary India has statutory institutions, established trade union organisations and a substantially different industrial economy.Nevertheless, the comparison reveals a continuing question about representation: who has the authority to speak on behalf of workers, and on what basis can that authority be challenged?

From the workers' perspective, external organisers can provide experience, organisational capacity and assistance in negotiations that individual employees may find difficult to undertake independently. From the employer's perspective, the involvement of external organisations may be regarded as an intrusion into workplace affairs or as a source of industrial disruption.

The historical significance of the 'outsider' label lies in the way it can shift attention away from the substance of workers' grievances towards the legitimacy of those who represent them. In both periods, the controversy over representation formed part of a wider struggle over the conditions under which workers could organise collectively.The label itself does not establish whether a union's demands are justified. Nor does the involvement of an external organisation necessarily demonstrate that a union lacks support among employees. The more relevant questions concern the wishes of the workforce, the legal position of the organisation and the effectiveness of the mechanisms through which disputes are negotiated.

Collective bargaining and the balance of power

The Samsung dispute also illustrates the importance of collective bargaining in industrial relations. Individual workers may find it difficult to negotiate wage revisions, challenge supervisory decisions or raise complaints about employment conditions when dealing with a large corporation. A representative organisation can bring such concerns together and present them through a common negotiating process.

Collective organisation does not eliminate differences between workers and management. Rather, it provides an institutional means through which competing interests can be discussed and, where possible, reconciled.The workers' reported complaints about wage transparency, leave, working hours and disciplinary practices demonstrate why grievance mechanisms matter. If employees believe that complaints are not heard or that raising concerns may expose them to retaliation, dissatisfaction can accumulate until it develops into collective action.

Similarly, management requires predictable production schedules, compliance with workplace rules and the ability to address legitimate operational concerns. These objectives are not necessarily incompatible with workers' rights. They can be reconciled more effectively when both parties have reliable channels for communication and negotiation.

The central challenge is therefore to create industrial relations in which workers' representation is not treated merely as an obstacle to production, but as a potential means of resolving disputes before they escalate.

The role and responsibility of the state

The Tamil Nadu government's intervention helped bring the 2024 strike to an end. Its role in facilitating

negotiations illustrates the importance of public institutions in resolving disputes between employers and workers.However, mediation and investigation are distinct functions. A government may successfully facilitate an agreement without independently examining every allegation concerning working conditions. The existence of a settlement should therefore not be taken as proof that all workplace grievances were investigated or resolved.

The original reports reviewed for this article do not establish whether the Labour Department conducted a formal inspection of the factory specifically to investigate the allegations concerning working hours, rest breaks, leave, supervisory conduct and occupational health. Nor do the reports establish that these allegations were formally rejected by the Department. Further examination of inspection records, official statements and relevant proceedings would be necessary to determine the extent of any independent investigation.

The same distinction applies to management's position. A general assertion that employees were treated well does not amount to a point-by-point response to the specific complaints raised by workers. At the same time, the absence of a detailed response in the reports reviewed cannot, by itself, establish that management failed to address those complaints through other channels.These evidentiary limitations identify an important area for further research. A fuller assessment would require access to official inspection findings, documented company responses, records of conciliation proceedings and, where available, testimony from workers and other parties.

The state's responsibilities extend beyond restoring industrial peace. Effective labour administration also requires transparent procedures, appropriate investigation of workplace complaints and the consistent application of the law. The credibility of public intervention depends partly on whether workers and employers can trust the institutions responsible for resolving their disputes.

Foreign investment and workers' constitutional rights

The Samsung dispute raises wider questions about the relationship between foreign investment, industrial development and workers' rights. Governments seek to attract investment because manufacturing can contribute to employment, exports, technological development and economic growth. Large industrial establishments may also generate wider economic activity through suppliers, services and supporting infrastructure.However, investment promotion and the protection of workers' rights should not be treated as mutually exclusive objectives. Industrial growth is more sustainable when it is accompanied by fair employment practices, accessible grievance procedures and effective mechanisms for collective representation.

The right to form associations and trade unions has an important place in India's constitutional and legal framework. Its practical exercise, however, depends on the operation of relevant legislation and institutions. The legal position concerning union registration and recognition must be distinguished carefully, since registration does not automatically settle every question about an employer's obligations in collective bargaining.

The history of the Madras Labour Union and the contemporary experience of SIWU both demonstrate that the existence of a legal framework does not eliminate disputes over representation. The effectiveness of workers' rights depends not only on their formal recognition but also on the procedures through which they can be exercised.

The allegations concerning the delay in union registration and the treatment of union representatives in the Samsung dispute therefore merit careful examination. Any assessment of government or corporate conduct must be grounded in documentary evidence, but the broader question remains important: how can public institutions ensure that the pursuit of industrial investment proceeds alongside the effective protection of labour rights?

Industrial peace cannot rest exclusively on production targets, investment commitments or the return of workers to their jobs. It also requires confidence that grievances can be raised without arbitrary consequences, that representative organisations can function within the law, and that disputes will be addressed through meaningful negotiation.

Industrial Development and the Continuing Struggle for Recognition

The Samsung workers' strike at Sriperumbudur was a significant industrial dispute because it brought together questions of wages, working conditions, collective representation and the responsibilities of the state. Although the immediate conflict occurred within a modern electronics manufacturing plant, its underlying issues have a longer history in Tamil Nadu's labour movement.

The experience of the Madras Labour Union in the early twentieth century provides a useful historical point of comparison. The opposition encountered by B. P. Wadia and other labour organisers demonstrated the difficulties faced by workers seeking collective representation at a time when trade union organisation lacked the statutory framework that developed subsequently. The Samsung dispute, despite its different legal and economic setting, again raised questions about the legitimacy of union leadership and the role of external organisers in workplace negotiations.

The comparison reveals both continuity and change. Industrial production has been transformed, and trade union organisation now operates within a more developed legal and institutional environment. Nevertheless, the relationship between employer authority and workers' collective rights remains an important issue in industrial relations.

The events of 2024 and 2025 further demonstrate that ending a strike does not necessarily resolve the grievances that caused it. The return to work, subsequent registration of SIWU and renewed negotiations represented important developments, but the reported protests of 2025 indicated that disagreements over union representatives and disciplinary proceedings continued. Sustainable industrial peace requires more than a temporary settlement; it requires procedures capable of addressing the underlying causes of conflict.

The question of workplace conditions also deserves further investigation. The allegations recorded in the workers' accounts require assessment through appropriate evidence, while the role of management and the Labour Department must be evaluated through their documented responses and actions. Independent scrutiny is essential to distinguish between claims, established findings and unresolved questions. Ultimately, the Samsung dispute highlights the need to reconcile industrial development with workers' dignity and collective rights. Attracting foreign investment and expanding manufacturing are important economic objectives, but their long-term success depends partly on fair employment practices, effective grievance mechanisms and meaningful dialogue between employers and employees.

A century after the Madras Labour Union encountered opposition over the involvement of 'outsiders', the term returned to debates surrounding workers' organisation at Sriperumbudur. Its recurrence is not proof that labour relations have remained unchanged. Rather, it serves as a reminder that the legitimacy of collective representation continues to be contested even as industrial structures and legal institutions evolve.The historical significance of the Samsung strike lies in this continuing struggle. It demonstrates that the development of a modern industrial economy must be measured not only by investment, production, and employment but also by the extent to which workers can participate in determining the conditions under which they work. Industrial peace becomes sustainable when economic growth is accompanied by respect for workers' rights, effective collective bargaining, and accountable institutions. Maintaining a balance between these competing interests requires a crucial role for the government. However, the government appeared to have allowed the

dispute to drag on, leaving the company and the workers to wear each other down rather than facilitating a timely settlement that addressed the mutual interests of both parties.

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SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY
THE SECTIONAL PRESIDENT ADDRESS

Caste Census: Precedence and Current Issues - A Journey Ahead

Dr. A. Thennarasu

Respected General President, General Secretary, Office Bearers, Members of the General Body of the Tamil Nadu History Congress, Local Secretary, Delegates, Media, Faculty and Students of Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I regard it as a responsibility and honor to deliver socio - economic sectional president address at its Thirty Second Annual Session. At the outset I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Office Bearers and General Body of the Tamil Nadu History Congressto this privilege given to me. I wish to share with you the developments and trends of caste census by focusing on the precedence and current crisis and an attempt to see the changes of direction in such a way.

In India, caste is a shapes identities, determines opportunities, and influences the nation's political direction. The demand for a comprehensive caste census is, therefore, not merely a statistical exercise but a demandfor a mirror to be held up to the nation a mirror that reflects the true topography of its social and economic inequalities. The debate surrounding this enumeration sits at the contentious intersection of identity politics, social justice, and administrative realism, making it one of the most significant and polarizing issues in contemporary India.

India is experiencing a significant political and social crisis surrounding the government's decision to include caste enumeration in the current decennial census—the first such count since 1931. This decision has reignited national debates about social justice, reservation policies, and the role of caste data in governance. Tamil Nadu has emerged as one of the most vocal proponents of the caste census, viewing it as essential for evidence-based social justice policies. However, the issue has created deep political divisions, with concerns ranging from methodological challenges to fears about entrenching caste identities further.

1. Background and Historical Context

Century Old Decennial Data

The last comprehensive caste enumeration in India was conducted in 1931 during the British colonial period. Post-independence India deliberately avoided caste counting in its decennial censuses, with policymakers believing it would help in gradually dismantling caste-based social hierarchies. However, this absence of reliable caste data has left policymakers operating in a statistical vacuum when designing affirmative action and welfare programs.

Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC)

The Socio-Economic and Caste Census of 2011 was a monumental and unprecedented attempt by the Indian government to capture a detailed survey of the nation's social and economic composition. Its primary ambition was two fold: first, to identify impoverished households based on specific, verifiable criteria like income, housing conditions, and land ownership, and second, to enumerate the caste of every Indian citizen. This dual purpose set it apart from the regular population census, which deliberately avoids collecting general caste data. While the socio-economic component was largely successful and became the core data for targeting beneficiaries in welfare schemes, the caste enumeration component faced huge barriers. Recent Pushes

Several factors have contributed to the renewed push for caste enumeration. Firstly 'State-level initiatives'played a huge role. For example Bihar's 2023

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caste survey revealed significant demographic shifts, with Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs) comprising over 63% of the state's population. Secondly, electoral pressure led the political parties have increasingly used caste census promises as electoral strategies. Thirdly,growing demands for evidence-based reservation and welfare policies. Fourthly, increasing public opinion is strongly mobilized to meet the requirements of constitutional obligations. Lastly, Mandal Commission's recommendations and subsequent Supreme Court judgments have emphasized the need for contemporary data

2. The Current Crisis: Key Dimensions

Political Dimensions

The announcement to include caste in the census has come to the fore several political dimensions. Opposition parties question whether the move represents genuine reform or electoral calculus, particularly given its timing around key state elections. States that have already conducted caste surveys are pressing the Centre for action, while others remain skeptical about the implications. The decision affects alliance politics, as different caste groupswithin political coalitions may have competing interests regarding data collection and subsequent policy changes.

Methodological Concerns

The technical aspects of conducting a caste census present significant challenges. Plans for self-enumeration and digital data collection raise concerns about accuracy and accessibility. Determining which castes belong to which categories remains contentious. Proposed connections to the National Population Register (NPR) have raised civil liberties concerns. Hence it is a herculean task to ensure accurate self-reporting across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts

Social Implications

The census debate touches fundamental questions about Indian society. Whether enumeration will entrench or help dismantle caste identities is a question that leads to identity politics. There is always growing concerns about increased caste consciousness and potential conflicts. At the same time it is a question of fair representation and resource allocation.

3. Arguments in the Debate

For Caste Census

The Proponents in favor of caste census present severalcompelling arguments. Firstly, current reservation andwelfare policies operate without reliable demographic data, making them potentially ineffective or misdirected and hence they seek evidence-based policymaking. Secondly, as a measure of social justice updated caste data could reveal contemporary socio-economic hierarchies and guide appropriate reclassification of disadvantaged groups. Thirdly, transparent data collection would enable better monitoring of policy outcomes and resource allocation as a way of democratic accountability. Fourthly, effective implementation of constitutional provisions for affirmative action requires comprehensive demographic data.

Against Caste Census

Critics raise several concerns. Enumeration might perpetuate caste consciousness rather than promote a casteless society. Technical challenges in data collection could lead to inaccurate results with serious policy implications. Census data could be misused for electoral gains by manipulation rather than genuine social reform. Also critics point out the administrative complexity and cost of caste enumeration may outweigh its benefits.

4. Policy and Social Implications

Reservation Policies

The census results could trigger significant changes in India's reservation framework. New demographic datamight lead to reclassification of which groups qualify for different reservation categories. Population proportions could influence demands for changes in reservation percentages. Also data might support arguments for creating sub-categories within existing reservation groups.

Welfare Mission

Caste data could reshape welfare program design. Updated population denominators would affect distribution of resources as benefits under various

schemes. Better targeting could reduce both inclusion and exclusion errors in welfare programs. As an effective monitoring mechanisms segmented data would enable better tracking of program effectiveness across different groups. Social Dynamics

The enumeration process itself could have social consequences. The census might heighten caste consciousness, both positively and negatively. Competition for resources based on census results could aggravate inter group social conflicts. The process might influence how individuals and communities understand their social identities.

5. Challenges and Concerns

Technical Challenges

Ensuring accurate self-reporting across diverse populations presents significant challenges. Plans for digital enumeration may exclude marginalized communities with limited technology as a result of digital divide. Standardizing caste categories across India's linguistic and cultural diversity is complex.

Rights and Privacy Concerns

There is a question about how caste data will be stored, used, and protected from misuse. Concerns about making caste declaration mandatory and, its implications for individual choice. Also the proposed linkages to NPR and other government databases raise surveillance concerns.

Political Risks

Risk that census timing and results could be influenced by political considerations. Debates over methodology and implementation could delay the entire census exercise.. Disagreements between the Centre and states could complicate implementation.

6. Contemporary Developments (2024-2025)

Recent Policy Announcements

Government of India has issued a gazette notification in June 2025 to conduct the 16th Population Census in 2027, which includes an enumeration of castes for the first time in independent India's history. The census will be conducted in two phases, with the first phase beginning in snow-bound areas on October 1, 2026, and the second phase beginning across the rest of India on March 1, 2027.

This data is expected to be crucial for revamp reservation policies and ensuring targeted government programs reach their intended beneficiaries.

As laid down under constitutional provisions this census can also be used as the basis to redraw LokSabha constituencies. It's another field of controversy centeredon the policy and implementation.

The Union government's commitment to include caste enumeration has been accompanied by several clarifications and modifications. To refine the methodological procedure discussions are around about digital versus traditional enumeration methods. Delays in census implementation due to technical and logistical challenges must be sorted out. Also there is increased engagement with state governments and civil society organizations.

State Responses

Different states have responded variably to the Centre's announcement. Tamil Nadu, Bihar, and several others have welcomed the decision and offered cooperation. Some states have expressed concerns about implementation challenges and social implications. However certain political leaders continue to question the necessity and timing of caste enumeration.

Civil Society Engagement

Various civil society organizations have engaged with the debate. Researchers have provided technical inputs on methodology and policy implications. Human rights advocates have raised concerns about potential misuse of caste data. Different community organizations have articulated their positions on enumeration and its implications.

7. Tamil Nadu's Position and Advocacy

Historical Leadership

Tamil Nadu has been at the forefront of the caste census movement, with the DMK party leading advocacyefforts for decades. Tamil Nadu led the early initiative as the government under the rule of DMK pioneered caste data collection through state commissions in the late 1980s and has consistently

pushed for national enumeration. The Tamil Nadu Assembly has passed formal resolutions urging the Centre to implement caste enumeration alongside the population census. The state has used various platforms, including inter-state conferences and parliamentary forums, to build consensus for a national caste census.

The Stance of Current Administration

While welcoming the Centre's announcement, chief minister of Tamil Nadu has criticized the timing and demanded concrete implementation timelines and methodology. Tamil Nadu has framed the caste census as vindication of its long-standing position while questioning the Centre's motivations. Also it consistently argues that reliable caste data is essential for transparent, evidence-based social justice policies. State-Specific Context

Tamil Nadu's advocacy is shaped by its unique social and political landscape. The state has one of India's most extensive reservation systems, with quotas exceeding 50%through constitutional amendments and legal provisions. Persistent caste-based discrimination and exclusion in Tamil Nadu underscore the need for better disaggregated data to design effective interventions. Caste considerations significantly influence political competition and coalition formation in the state.

8 International Perspectives and Comparisons

Global Experiences

The experiences of some foreign nations with ethnic/racial enumeration provide relevant insights. Few examples are worthy to mention here. United States exercise of regular collection of racial and ethnic data for policy purposes, with ongoing debates about categories and methodology, Use of racial data by Brazil for affirmative action policies, with similar challenges around self-identification and social implications, and South Africa'spost-apartheid data collection for redressing historical inequalities, offering lessons for India's context.

Lessons for India

International experiences suggest several points towards policy decisions. These include recognition that social categories evolve and require periodic revision, importance of linking data collection to specific policyobjectives and outcomes and the need for broad social consensus on the purposes and methods of enumeration.

9. Future Implications and Scenarios

If Caste Census Proceeds

Should the caste enumeration go forward several outcomes are possible. These include significant policy transformation in reservation and welfare policies based on new demographic realities, shifts in electoral strategies and coalition politics based on revealed caste demographics and increased public discourse about caste inequalities and social justice measures. If Caste Census is abandoned.

Alternatively, if the initiative is shelved and status quo maintained existing policies would continue without demographic validation or adjustment. Further the decision could have electoral implications for parties that have taken strong positions. More over States might pursue alternative independent surveys, creating a patchwork of different data sources.

Compromise Scenario

Middle-ground approaches might involve the following. Starting with pilot projects in selected States or regions as a phased implementation, limitation incollecting data only for specific policy purposes rather than comprehensive counting and encouraging academic surveys in support of independent research initiatives rather than official government enumeration. 10. Recommendations and Way Forward For Policymakers

Develop clear, scientifically sound and transparent methods for caste enumeration with broad stakeholder input. Ensure strong data protection measures and voluntary participation principles to protect the rights and privacy of citizens.

Clearly articulate the policy linkage how census data would be used for specific policy objectives. Conduct extensive public education about the purposes and implications of caste enumeration. For Tamil Nadu

Leverage the state's experience of technical expertise with social surveys to contribute to national met o^ development. Use Tamil Nadu's advocacy to build coalition with broader consensus among -Prepare and to make ready for how caste census results might affect state-level policies and programs.

For Civil Society

Constructive engagement in methodology discussions and implementation oversight. Monitoring and make ensure the enumeration processes respect individual rights and community interests. Educate the public on the implications of caste census and importance of accurate participation.

Conclusion

The history of caste enumeration in India is a product of colonial governance, nationalist idealism, and ' democratic assertion. The caste census crisis represents a critical juncture in India's ongoing struggle with caste-based inequality and social justice.

The current crisis, stemming from the absence of reliable data, undermines the project of social justice and fuels political opportunism Tamil Nadu's leadership in advocating for enumeration reflects both the state's progressive political tradition and its practical need for evidence-based policy making. The failed experiment of the SECC 2011 should not be the final word but a learning experience. However, the controversy surrounding the initiative highlights the complex challenges of addressing caste in contemporary India.

The debate encompasses fundamental questions about the role of caste in Indian society, the relationship between data collection and social change, and the balance between individual rights and collective welfare. While proponents argue that enumeration is essential for effective social justice policies, critics worry about entrenching divisions and creating new forms of exclusion.

A technically powerful, administratively efficient, and politically transparent caste census is not an indulgence but a necessity for 21st-century India. It is a complex undertaking, fraught with challenges. However, the greater risk lies in continued ignorance. To refuse to count is to refuse to see the intricate patterns of inequality that define Indian society. A scientifically conducted census will not, as critics fear, perpetuate caste. Instead, by making deprivation visible and measurable, it can provide the evidentiary basis for policies that ultimately make caste irrelevant to life chances. It can be a powerful tool for empowerment, moving the nation towards a better future.

As India moves forward with this contentious initiative, the experiences and perspectives of States like Tamil Nadu will be crucial in shaping both the methodology and outcomes of caste enumeration. The ultimate success of this endeavor will depend not just ontechnical execution, but on building broad social consensus about its purposes and ensuring that the resulting data serves the cause of justice and equality rather than division and discrimination.

The caste census crisis thus represents both an opportunity and a challenge for Indian democracy. How the nation navigates this complex terrain will have profound implications for social cohesion, political stability, and the ongoing project of building a more equitable society. Tamil Nadu's advocacy and experience will undoubtedly play a significant role in determining the direction and success of this critical national undertaking.

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தொல்தமிழ்ச் சமுகத்தில் மணிமேகலை கூறும் சமய அளவைகளின் பண்பாட்டு வரலாறு

முனைவர் ஜ.வள்ளி

மணிமேகலை கூறும் அளவைகளும் சமயங்களும்

மணிமேகலை காப்பியத்தில் 27ஆம் காதையான சமய கணக்கர் தம்திறம் கேட்ட காதையில், காப்பிய நாயகி மணிமேகலை பல சமயங்களைப் பற்றி அறிந்து கொள்ள பல்வேறு சமய கணக்கர்களிடம் தத்தம் சமயநெறி குறித்துக் கூறுமாறு கேட்கிறாள்,

''நவையறு நன்பொரு ளுரைமி னோவெனச்

சமயக் கணக்கர் தந்திறஞ் சார்ந்து

வைதிக மார்க்கத் தளவை வாதியை

எய்தின ளெய்திநின் கடைப்படி யியம்பென''

-மணிமேகலை, காதை 27, பாடல்வரிகள் 1-18

இதில், வைதீக மார்க்கத்து அளவைவாதி தொடங்கி, சைவவாதி, பிரம்மவாதி, வைணவவாதி, வேதவாதி, ஆசிகவாதி, நிகண்டவாதி, சாங்கியவாதி, வைசேடிகவாதி, பூதவாதி உள்ளிட்ட பல சமயப் பள்ளிகளுக்குச் சென்று அவர்தம் மெய்நெறிகளின் விளக்கம் பெறுகிறாள். காண்டல், கருதல், உவமம், ஆகமம், அருத்தாபத்தி, இயல்பு, ஐதீகம், அபாவம், மீட்சி, உள்ளநெறி ஆகிய பத்து அளவைகள் ஒன்றினுடைய அல்லது ஒரு பொருளினுடைய உண்மையைத் தெளிவுற அறிந்து கொள்ள உதவும் நெறிகளாகச் சமயக் கணக்கர்களால் எடுத்துரைக்கப்படுகின்றன.

''காண்டல் கருத லுவம மாகமம்

ஆண்டைய வருத்தா பத்தி யோடியல்பு

ஐதிக மபாவ மீட்சி யொழிவறிவு

எய்தியுண் டாநெறி யென்றிவை தம்மாற்

பொருளி னுண்மை புலங்கொளல் வேண்டும்''

-மணிமேகலை, காதை 27, பாடல்வரிகள் 1-18

மேலும், உலகாயுதம், பௌத்தம், சாங்கியம், நையாயிகம், வைசேடிகம், மீமாஞ்சகம் ஆகிய ஆறு சமயங்களும் அவற்றின் ஆசிரியர்களாக

உதவிப்பேராசிரியர், தமிழ்த்துறை, சி.டி.டி.இ.மகளிர் கல்லூரி, சென்னை. *vallisri18@gmail.com*

பிருகற்பதி, சினன், கபிலன், அக்கபாதன், கணாதன், சைமினி ஆகியோர் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளனர்.

''இ பெற்றிய அளவைகள்

பாங்குறும் உலோகாயதமே பௌத்தம்

சாங்கியம் நையாயிகம் வைசேடிகம்

மீமாஞ்சகம் ஆம் சமய ஆசிரியர்

தாம் பிருகற்பதி சினனே கபிலன்

அக்கபாதன் கணாதன் சைமினி

மெய்ப்பிரத் தியஅனு மானம் சாத்தம்

உவமானம் அருத்தா பத்தி அபாவம்

இவையே இப்போது இயன்றுள அளவைகள்''

-மணிமேகலை, காதை 27, பாடல்வரிகள் 77-85

மேலும், உலோகாயதம், பௌத்தம், சாங்கியம், நையாயிகம், வைசேடிகம், மீமாஞ்சகம் ஆகிய சமயங்களின் ஆசிரியர்களாக

பிருகற்பதி, சினனே, கபிலன், அக்கபாதன், கணாதன், சைமினி ஆகொயோரையும் இவற்றிடையே இப்போது ''மெய்ப்பிரத்தியம், அனுமானம், சாத்தம், உவமானம், அருத்தாப்பத்தி, அபாவம் ஆகிய ஆறு அளவைகள் மட்டுமே உள்ளவை''(2) எனவும் பொருள் கூறப்படுகிறது.

அருத்தாபத்தி அளவையும் அரிட்டாப்பட்டி ஊரும்

மணிமேகலை சமயக்கணக்கரிடம் அறிந்து கொண்ட அளவைகளுள் அருத்தாபத்தி அளவையும் ஒன்று. சமயநெறிகள் சமய அளவைகளால் போதிக்கப்பட்டு வந்ததை மணிமேகலை ''அளவைவாதியை எய்தின ளெய்திநின் கடைப்படி யியம்பென'' என்று கேட்பதன் மூலம் அறியமுடிகிறது. மதுரை மாவட்டம் மேலூர் வட்டத்தில் சமணத் தொல்லியல் தளம் உள்ள அரிட்டாபட்டி என்னும் ஊர் உள்ளது.

அரிட்டாப்பட்டி என்னும் இவ்வூர்ப்பெயர், 'அருத்தாபத்தி' என்னும் சமய அளவைப் பெயரோடு ஒத்துள்ளதால் இவற்றிற்கிடையே தொடர்பு உள்ளதாகத் தோன்றுகிறது. அரிட்டாப்பட்டி ஒரு முக்கிய சமணத் தொல்லியல் தளமாகும். இங்குள்ள கல்வெட்டுகள், கற்படுக்கைகள், சிற்பங்கள் சமயநெறி போதித்தோர் இவ்விடத்தில் வாழ்ந்ததை எடுத்துக் காட்டுகின்றது. மேலும், இவ்வூர் குறித்துக் கூறப்படும் பெயர்க்காரணங்களும் கவனிக்கத்தக்கது. மயிலை சீனி. வேங்கடசாமி அவர்கள், ''அரிட்டாபட்டி என்னும் பெயர் பௌத்த மதத்தைப் பரப்ப மகேந்திரருக்கு உதவியாய் இருந்த அரிட்டர் எனும் பிக்குவை நினைவூட்டுகிறது. இந்த அரிட்டர் எனும் பௌத்த முனிவர் இங்குள்ள குகையில் தமது சீடருடன் வாழ்ந்து இருக்கக்கூடும் என்றும், ஆனது பற்றியே குகைக்கருகில் உள்ள சிற்றூர் அரிட்டாபட்டி என்று வழங்கலாயிற்று'' என்று கூறியுள்ளார். தொல்லியல் அறிஞர் சொ. சாந்தலிங்கம் அவர்கள், ''கி.மு. 3ஆம் நூற்றாண்டு தொடங்கி கி.பி 17ஆம் நூற்றாண்டு வரையிலான காலத்தைச் சேர்ந்த தொல்லியல் ஆதாரங்கள் அரிட்டாபட்டியில் சமணம் மற்றும் சைவம் செழித்து இருந்ததையே காட்டுகின்றன என்றும் 'பதுநாள் நோற்ற அரிட்டநேமி படாரர் மிசிதிகை இது' எனும் கிரந்த கல்வெட்டு திருப்பரங்குன்றத்தில் உள்ளது. அரிட்டநேமி என்னும் இச்சமண முனிவரின் பெயரையொட்டி கூட பாதிரிக்குடி எனும் ஊருக்கு அரிட்டாபட்டி என்ற பெயர் வந்திருக்கலாம்'' (3) என்றும் கூறுகிறார்.

மேற்கண்ட கருத்துகள் சமய அடியார்களால் இங்கு சமயநெறி பரப்பப்பட்டதை உறுதி செய்கிறது. இச்சமய நெறிகள் பல அளவைகள் மூலம் கற்பிக்கப்பட்டு வந்தன என்பதை மணிமேகலை வழி மேலே கண்டோம். இவற்றிலிருந்து, ஊர்ப்பெயர்கள் அங்குக் கற்பிக்கப்படும் அளவைகளின் பெயர்களால் அக்காலச் சமுகத்தால் வழங்கப்பட்டுள்ளது என்பதும் அளவையைக் கற்பிக்கும் ஆசிரியர்ளும் அவ்வளவைப் பெயர்களாலேயே சுட்டப்பட்டுள்ளனர் என்பதும் உறுதியாகின்றது. எனவே, அருத்தாபத்தி அளவை போதிக்கப்பட்ட இடம் அருத்தாப்பத்தி என்றே அக்காலத்து மக்களால் சுட்டப்பட்டு

காலப்போக்கில் அரிட்டாப்பட்டி என மருவியுள்ளது தெளிவாகின்றது.

அருத்தர்-அரிட்டர்

சமய அளவைகளைக் கற்பிக்கும் அளவைவாதிகள் அல்லது சிறந்தோர் அவ்வளவைகளின் பெயர்களால் அல்லது அடைமொழியுடன் ஆசிரியர்களாக அழைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளனர். அருத்தாபத்தியர் அல்லது அருத்தர் என்றழைக்கப்பட்டு அவை காலப்போக்கில் மருவி அரிட்டர் என்றாகியுள்ளதை அரிட்டநேமி என்னும் பெயர் உணர்த்துகிறது. தமிழ் இலக்கியங்களில் அருத்தாபத்தி, அரிட்டர் என்னும் சொற்களையொத்த அருத்தம், அருத்தர், அருத்தநூலார் போன்ற சொற்கள் காணப்படுகின்றன. இவற்றின் உரை வெவ்வேறு பொருளுரைப்பதாக இருந்தாலும் அருத்தம் என்னும் ஒரு அளவையைக் கருத்தில் கொண்டு ஒப்புநோக்குதல் அவசியமாகும்.

அரும் பொருள் அருத்தும் திருந்து தொடை நோன் தாள் - பெரும்பாணாற்றுப்படை ;68

அருத்தம் செறிக்கும் அறிவிலார் பின் சென்று - நாலடியார்:31 4/3

அருத்தம் அடி நிழலாரை வருத்தாது - பழமொழி நானூறு :242/2

அருத்தம் நூலவரொடும் ஆய்ந்து மற்று அவர் - சூளாமணி:10 1762/1

அருத்தம் என கொண்ட அட்டகம் யாவையும் விட்டிலவால் - நீலகேசி:5

அருத்தனார் அடியாரை அறிவரே - தேவா-அப்பர்:1077/4

அருத்தனே அடியேனை குறிக்கொளே - தேவா-அப்பர்:1204/4

மேற்கண்ட பாடல்வரிகளில் அருத்தம், அருத்த நூலார், அருத்தர் ஆகிய பெய்ரகளைக் குறித்த போற்றல்களும் தூற்றல்களும் உள்ளன. மேலும் சமணத்திலிருந்து சைவத்திற்கு மாறிய நாவுக்கரசர் சிவனை, அருத்தன் என்ற பெயரில் அழைப்பதும் இங்கு நோக்கத்தக்கது. எனவே அருத்தாபத்தி அளவை இங்கு சிறப்புற்றிருந்ததும் அதன் பெயரால் இவ்விடமும் அதன் ஆசிரியரும் மக்களால் சுட்டப்பட்டதும் உறுதியாகிறது.

மீட்சி அளவையும்- மீனாக்ஷிபுரமும் (மீனாட்சிபுரம்)

மதுரை மாவட்டத்தில் மேலூர் வட்டத்தில் மீனாக்ஷிபுரம் என்னும் ஊர் உள்ளது. இங்கும் தமிழிக் கல்வெட்டுகளும் சமணப்படுக்கைகளும் உள்ளன. சங்கால மன்னனான நெடுஞ்செழியன் பெயர் இங்குள்ளக் கல்வெட்டில் உள்ளது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது. மீனாக்ஷிபுரம் என்பது மீட்சி என்னும் அளவை கற்பிக்கப்பட்டு வந்த இடமாகக் கருத இடமுண்டு. இவ்வூர் அரிட்டாப்பட்டிக்கு (அருத்தாபத்தி) அருகே உள்ளதும் இங்குச் சமயநெறிகள் கற்பித்தோர் வாழ்ந்ததும் அவர்களுக்கு கற்படுக்கை அமைத்துக் கொடுத்த கல்வெட்டுக் குறிப்புகளும் இக்கூற்றிற்கு துணைநிற்கின்றன. மேலும், அருத்தம் என்னும் சொல்லாடல் தமிழ் இலக்கியங்களில் கையாளப்பட்டிருப்பதைப் போன்று மீட்சி என்னும் அளவையின் பெயர் தமிழ் இலக்கியங்களில் இடம்பெற்றுள்ளது. மேலும் மணிமேகலையில் மீட்சியே ஆதிகண்டமாக முக்கிய அளவையாகக் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது.

எல்லாம் மீளும் இ வகையால் மீட்சி

ஆதி கண்டம் ஆகும் என்ப - மணிமேகலை: 30/133,134

பரிபாடலில் ''வந்த நெறியும் மறந்தேன்'' என்னும் பாடலடியை அடுத்து

''மீட்சியும் கூஉக்கூஉ மேவும் மடமைத்தே

வாழ்த்து உவப்பான் குன்றின் வகை'' - பரிபாடல் 18, 19/65

என்னும் பாடல்வரிகள் மீட்சி குறித்து பேசுகிறது. திருநாவுக்கரசரும் மீட்சி குறித்துப் பாடியுள்ளார்.

காட்சி பெற்றிலளாகிலும் காதலே

மீட்சி ஒன்று அறியாது மிகுவதே - தேவாரம்-அப்பர்:1940/1

இங்ஙனம் மீட்சி என்னும் சமய அளவையை பழந்தமிழ் இலக்கியங்களில் வழங்கப்பட்டிருப்பதைக் காணலாம். எனினும், இப்பாடலின் உரைகள் அளவைகள் குறித்ததாக இல்லை. எனவே, மீட்சி குறித்தும் இப்பெயர்ப் பொருத்தம் குறித்தும் விரிவான ஆய்வுகளும் இலக்கிய மீள்வாசிப்பும் அவசியமாகின்றன.

உவம அளவையும் இவ குன்றமும்

மதுரைக்கு அருகில், ஆனைமலை என்னுமிடத்தில் சமணத் தொல்லியல் தளம் உள்ளது. இங்குக் குடைவரை கோயிலும், கல்வெட்டுகளும், சமணப்பெரியார்கள் வாழ்ந்த தடயங்களும் உள்ளன. யானை கால்களை மடித்துத் தன் துதிக்கையை நீட்டி படுத்திருப்பது போல் தோற்றம் அளிப்பதால் இம்மலை ஆனைமலை என அழைக்கப்படுவதாகக் கூறுவர். ஆனைமலை என்பது இதன் ஊர்ப் பெயராக வழங்கப்பட்டாலும் இங்குள்ளக் கல்வெட்டு இம்மலையை இவகுன்றம் எனக் கூறுகின்றது. எனினும், இம்மலையை உவ குன்றம் எனக் கருத இடமுண்டு. இவ்விடம் அரிட்டாபட்டி, மீனாட்சிபுரம் போன்றே தொல்லியல் தடயங்களைக் கொண்டுள்ளதாலும் மேற்குறிப்பிட்டவை அளவைகளால் பெயர் பெற்றவை என்பது சான்றுகளுடன் இங்கு விளக்கப்பட்டிருப்பதாலும் இவ்விடம் உவம அளவை கற்பிக்கப்பட்ட இடமாகக் கருதலாம். அஃதாவது உவம அளவை கற்பிக்கப்பட்டதால் உவகுன்றாக இவ்விடம் சுட்டப்பட்டு பின் காலப்போக்கில் ஒலித்திரிபு ஏற்பட்டு பலவிதமாக மருவியிருக்கலாம். இக்கருத்திற்குப் பின்வரும் சான்றுகள் துணை நிற்கின்றன.

- *'திரு ஐராவதம் மகாதேவன், இவகுன்றம் என்றால் இக்குன்றம் என்று பொருள் கூறுகிறார். எனினும், இவ என்பது யானையைக் குறிக்கும்; இபம் என்னும் வடமொழிச் சொல் இவ என்று குறிக்கப்படுகிறது. ஆதலில் இவகுன்றம் என்பது யானைக்குன்றமே எனப்படுகிறது''(4).*
- *மதுரை மாங்குளத்திற்கு அருகில் உள்ள ''மீனாட்சிபுரக் கல்வெட்டு உள்ள மலை ஓவாமலை என்று அழைக்கப்படுகிறது''(5)*
- *''ஓவாமலையில் தங்கியிருந்து சமணப் பணியாற்றிய சமண சமயப் பெரியார்களுக்காகக் கற்படுக்கைகளுடன் கூடிய சமணப்பள்ளிகள் தானமாகக் கொடுக்கப்பட்ட செய்தியைக் குறிக்கும் ஆறு பண்டையத் தமிழ்க் கல்வெட்டுகள் கண்டறியப்பட்டுள்ளன'' (6)*

மேற்கண்ட கூற்றுகள் சமயப் பள்ளிகள் இருந்த இடங்களான மீனாட்சிபுரமும் ஆணைமலையும் முறையே இவகுன்றம், ஓவாமலை என அழைக்கப்பட்டு வந்ததை உறுதி செய்கிறது. இதன் காரணம் இவ்விடங்களில் உவம அளவை கற்பிக்கப்பட்தால் இருக்கலாம் அது காலப்போக்கில் டஒலித்திரிபு ஏற்பட்டிருக்கலாம் என்பதை உணர்த்துகின்றன.

- *மேலும், இங்குள்ளக் கல்வெட்டுகளில் ''கணிய் நந்த அஸிரிய் இகுவன்கே தமம்'' என்ற சொற்றொடர்கள் இடம்பெற்றுள்ளன. இதனை, ஆசிரியக உவன்கே தம்மம் என்று திரு ஐராவதம் மகாதேவன் படித்துள்ளார்'' (7)*

மேற்கண்ட கூற்று இகுவன்கே, உவன்கே என்னும் பெயர்கள் உவ என்னும் அடிச்சொல் கொண்டுள்ளதை உணர்த்துகின்றது. மேலும் அருத்தாபத்தி அளவை கற்பித்தோர் அருத்தர் - அரிட்டர் என்றானது போல், உவம அளவை கற்பித்தோர் உவமன் -உவன் என மருவியிருப்பது தெளிவு.

அவ்வாறே, உவம அளவை ஒட்டிய செய்திகள் சங்க இலக்கியம், மணிமேகலை போன்றவற்றில் இடம்பெற்றுள்ளன. இப்பாடல்களுக்கு வழங்கப்படும் உரைவிளக்கங்கள் வேறாக இருந்தாலும் மேற்கண்ட கூற்றை நினைவில் கொண்டு தொல்லியல் நோக்குடன் காணுதல் அவசியமாகின்றது.

உவக் காண் தோன்றுவ ஓங்கி வியப்பு உடை

இரவலர் வரூஉம் அளவை அண்டிரன்

புரவு எதிர்ந்து தொகுத்த யானை போல - நற் 237/6

நூல் அறி வலவ கடவு-மதி உவக் காண்

நெடும் கொடி நுடங்கும் வான் தோய் புரிசை

யாமம் கொள்பவர் நாட்டிய நளி சுடர் - அகம் 350/15

மேற்கண்ட பாடல்களில் முதல் பாடலில் இடம்பெற்றுள்ள உவ, காண், யானை, அளவை போன்ற சொற்களும் இரண்டாம் பாடலில் இடம்பெற்றுள்ள நூலறி வலவ, உவ போன்ற சொற்றொடர்கள் ஆனைமலை கல்வெட்டுச் சொற்றொடர்களோடு பொருந்தி நிற்கின்றதைக் காணலாம். எனினும் இப்பெயர் மற்றும் பாடல் தொடர்கள் ஒற்றுமைகள் குறித்த விரிவான ஆய்வுகள் தேவை.

காண்டல் அளவையும் காட்சிநாதரும்

மெய்ப்பொருள் அறிய உதவும் சமய அளவைகளில் முதலாவது கூறப்பட்டுள்ள அளவை காண்டல் ஆகும். இவ்வளவை காட்சி என விரித்து விளக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.

மருள் இல் காட்சி ஐ வகை ஆகும் - மணிமேகலை:27/14

இக்காட்சி அளவையை ஒத்த கடவுளர் பெயர்கள் கோயில்களில் காணப்படுகிறது.

நாகப்பட்டினம் மாவட்டத்தில் செம்பொனார்கோயில் எனப்படும் ஸ்ரீ ஸ்வர்ணபுரீசர் கோயிலில் (கோவில் முகவரி: செம்பொனார்கோயில் ஸ்ரீ ஸ்வர்ணபுரீசர் கோவில், செம்பொனார்கோயில் டீ அஞ்சல், தரங்கம்பாடி தாலுக்கா, நாகப்பட்டினம் மாவட்டம், தமிழ்நாடு - 609 309) காட்சிநாதர் சன்னதி ஒன்று உள்ளதாகத் தெரிகிறது. ''இந்தக் கோயிலின் உற்சவர்கள் சோமாஸ்கந்தர், நடராஜர் மற்றும் சந்திரசேகர். பிட்சாடனர் சிலை மிகவும் பழமையானது. ராஜா சிவனையும் அவரது இரு பக்க துறவி மற்றும் அமைச்சரையும் வணங்கும் சுதை சிற்பங்கள். அம்பாள் சப்த கன்னியர்களுடன் தனி சன்னதியில் இருக்கிறார். வனதுர்கை, விஸ்வநாதர், ஸ்ரீநிவாசப்பெருமாள், சிபி காட்சிநாதர் ஆகியோரின் மான் மற்றும் மழுவுடன் கூடிய சிலைகள், பாலசுப்ரமணியர், கஜலட்சுமி, ஜேஷ்டாதேவி, வீரபத்ரர், சூரியன், பைரவர் ஆகியோரைக் காணலாம்'' (8) என்னும் குறிப்பு இச்செய்தியை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது.

மேலும், காட்சிநாதர் ஆலயம் குறித்து கெடிலக்கரை நாகரிகம் என்ற நூலில் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது.

''காட்சிநாதர் ஆலயம் என்பது கெடிலக்கரை நாகரிகம் என்ற நூலில் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ள, முன்னர் இருந்த ஒரு சிவன் கோயில் ஆகும். இந்த கோயில் இப்பொழுது சிதைந்து போயிருக்கலாம் அல்லது இப்போது வேறு பெயர்களில் இருக்கக்கூடும். இறைவன் காட்சிநாதர் அல்லது திருக்காட்சிபிரான் என்றும், இறைவி காட்சி நாயகி அல்லது தெரிசனாம்பிகை என்றும் இந்த கோயிலில் அழைக்கப்பட்டனர்''(9).

இவ்வாறே, காட்சி என்னும் சொல்லாடல் சங்க இலக்கியம் முதலே மெய்ப்பொருள் என்னும் பொருளில் கையாளப்பட்டுள்ளது. மிகப்புகழ்வாய்ந்த தமிழ்ச் சங்கப்பாடலான யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர் என்னும் பாடல்,

ஆர் உயிர்

முறை வழிப்படூஉம் என்பது திறவோர்

காட்சியின் தெளிந்தனம் - புறம் 192, கணியன் பூங்குன்றன்

மேற்கண்ட பாடல், தெளிந்த காட்சி பற்றியும் திறவோர் பற்றியும் பேசுகிறது. மேலும் பல பாடல்கள் காட்சி குறித்து எடுத்துரைக்கிறது.

பொய் இல் காட்சியோர் பொருள் உரை ஆதலின் - வஞ்சி:28/168

ஆசு அறு காட்சி ஐயர்க்கும் அ நிலை - குறி 17

துக்கம் துடைக்கும் துகள் அறு காட்சிய

நிக்கந்த வேடத்து இருடி கணங்களை - வளையா: 2/1,2

காட்சி பெற்றிலளாகிலும் காதலே

மீட்சி ஒன்று அறியாது மிகுவதே - தேவாரம்-அப்பர்:1940/1

சங்க இலக்கியம் முதலே காட்சி என்னும் சொல்லாடல்கள் தமிழ் இலக்கியங்களில் அதிகளவில் கையாளப்பட்டுள்ளது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.

சங்க இலக்கியம் - காட்சி 21, காட்சியர் 2, காட்சியான் 1, காட்சியின் 2.

சங்கம் மருவிய இலக்கியம் - காட்சி 4, காட்சியர் 1, காட்சியவர் 8, காட்சியவர்க்கு 1, காட்சியார் 3, காட்சியின் 1, காட்சியொடு 2.

சிலப்பதிகாரம் - காட்சி 8, காட்சிய 1, காட்சியது 1,காட்சியை 1, காட்சியோர் 1,

மணிமேகலை - காட்சி 8, காட்சியது 1, காட்சியை 1, காட்சியோர் 1.

சீவக சிந்தாமணி- காட்சி 7, காட்சிக்கு 5, காட்சிய 2.

ஐஞ்சிறு காப்பியங்கள் -காட்சி 30, காட்சி-தன்னால் 1, காட்சிசுஇல் 1, காட்சிசுஉடையார்க்கு 1, காட்சிக்கு 2, காட்சியது 1, காட்சியன் 2, காட்சியின் 1, காட்சியுடன் 1, காட்சியும் 5, காட்சியேன் 1, காட்சியை 1.

பக்தி இலக்கியங்களில் காட்சி என்னும் சொல்லாட்சி இடம்பெற்றுள்ளன.

உள் நிலாவிய ஒருவனே இருவர்க்கு நின் கழல் காட்சி ஆர் அழல் - தேவாரம் -சம்பந்தர்:2023/3

கடு கொடுத்த துவர் ஆடையர் காட்சி இல்லாதது ஓர் - தேவா-சம்:2930/1

காட்சியால் அறியான் கழிப்பாலையை - தேவா-சம்:3274/3

கண்டுகோடலும் அரியார் காட்சியும் அரியது ஓர் கரந்தை - தேவா-சம்:2491/3

கறி விரவு நெய் சோறு கையில் உண்டு கண்டார்க்கு பொல்லாத காட்சி ஆனேன் - தேவாரம்-அப்பர்:2114/2

கலை எட்டும் காப்பு எட்டும் காட்சி எட்டும் கழல் சேவடி அடைந்தார் களைகண் எட்டும் - தேவா-அப்:2433/2

கபாலம் ஏந்தி கடை-தோறும் பலி கொள்ளும் காட்சியாரும் - தேவா-அப்:2680/3,4

மேற்கண்ட சான்றுகளில் இருந்து சங்க இலக்கியம் முதலே காட்சி என்னும் சொல்லாடல்கள் தமிழ் இலக்கியங்களில் அதிகளவில் கையாளப்பட்டு வந்துள்ளதை அறியமுடிகிறது. எனினும், இவற்றில் காட்சி அளவை பாடல்கள் எவை என்பது குறித்த விரிவான ஆய்வுகள் தேவை.

கருதல் அளவையும் கணியன் என்னும் பெயரும்

காண்டலை அடுத்து வருவது கருதல் அளவை ஆகும். இக்கருதல் அளவை கணித்தலைக் குறிக்கின்றது.

கருத்து அளவு அவது

குறிக்கொள் அனுமானத்து அனுமேய

தகைமை உணரும் தன்மையது ஆகும்- மணிமேகலை:27/25

காண்டல் பொருளால் கண்டிலது உணர்தல் - மணி:27/ 40

அஃதாவது கருதலாவது ஒன்றனை ஊகித்துணர்தலாகும். கண்டதைக் கொண்டு காணாதலைக் கணித்தல். எனவே இது கணித்துணர்தலைக் குறிக்கின்றது. சங்கப்புலவர்கள் பெயர்கள் பல கணியன் என்றிருப்பது இங்கு எண்ணத்தக்கது.

மேலும், மீனாட்சிபுரம் போன்று சமய அளவை தடயங்களைக் கொண்டிருக்கும் குகைகளில் உள்ள கல்வெட்டுகளில் கணி நந்தாசிரியர் பெயர் இடம்பெற்றிருப்பதும் இங்குக் கருதல் அளவை கணித்தல் எனப்பெயர் பெற்றிருந்ததை உணர்த்தி நிற்கின்றது.

''கல்வெட்டுப் பாடம்

கணிய் நந்தஸிரிகுவன் கே தம்மம்

ஈத்த நெடுஞ்செழியன் பணாஅன்

கடலன் வழுதி கொட்டுபித்த பாளிய்''

செய்தி: கணிய என்பது சமண முனியைக் குறிக்கும் பிராகிருதச் சொல். நத்தி என்ற சமண முனிக்கு பாறையைக் கொட்டிக் கொடுத்துள்ளதைக் கூறுகிறது''(10).

மேற்கண்ட மதுரை மாங்குளம் கல்வெட்டுகள் எனப்படும் மீனாட்சிபுரக் கல்வெட்டுகள் ஆறில் நான்கு கல்வெட்டுகள் கணிய என்னும் அடைமொழி கொண்ட ஆசிரியரைக் குறிப்பதாக உள்ளது இங்கு குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது. மேலும், இவ்வளவை கற்பிப்போர் அல்லது அதில் சிறந்தோர் கணியன் என அழைக்கப்பட்டதை உறுதி செய்கின்றது. எனினும் இவை குறித்த விரிவான ஆய்வுகள் அவசியம்.

முடிவுரை

மணிமேகலை காப்பியத்தில் உள்ள சமய அளவைகளின் பெயர்கள் தொல்லியல் தளங்கள் உள்ள சில ஊர்ப்பெயர்களோடும் கல்வெட்டில் இடம்பெற்றுள்ள பெயரோடும் ஒத்துள்ளதை ஆய்ந்ததின் மூலம், தமிழ்ச்சமுகத்தில் பழங்காலத்தொட்டே காட்சி, கணித்தல், உவமம், அருத்தம், மீட்சி போன்ற பல அளவைகள் கற்பிக்கப்பட்டு வந்ததை அறியமுடிகிறது. அவை குறித்த சான்றுகள் சங்ககாலம் முதல் தொடர்ந்து வந்துள்ள காலங்களிலும் இலக்கியப் பதிவுகளில், கல்வெட்டுகளில் காணக் கிடைக்கிண்றன. அளவைகள் மற்றும் அவை கற்பித்த ஆசிரியர்கள் சிறப்பின் காரணமாக அல்லது சமுகத்தின் வரவேற்பின் காரணமாக அதன் பெயராலேயே வழங்கப்பட்டு வந்துள்ளனர் என்பது தெளிவாகிறது. மேலும் ஒரு இடத்திலேயே ஒன்றிற்கும் மேற்பட்ட அளவைகள் கற்பிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன என்பதும் தெளிவாகிறது. சான்றாக, மீட்சி அளவை கற்பிக்கப்பட்ட இடம் மீனாட்சிபுரம் என ஊர்ப்பெயர் பெற்றாலும் கல்வெட்டுகளில் அம்மலை உவமளவை குறிக்கும் உவகுன்றம் என அழைக்கப்படுவதும் கருதலாகிய கணித்தல் அளவை கற்பிக்கும் கணியர் நந்தாசிரியர் பெயர் உள்ளதும் கூறலாம். மேலும், மேற்குறிப்பிட்ட அளவைகள் ஒரு சமயத்திற்கு மட்டுமே உரியவை அல்ல என்பதும் குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது. மணிமேகலை குறிப்பிடும் பல்வேறு சமயங்கள் இவ்வளவைகள் மூலமே தத்தம் நெறிகளை மக்களிடையே கற்பித்து வந்துள்ளன. எனவே, தொல்தமிழ்ச் சமுகம் அளவைகளை மெய்ப்பொருள் அறிவியலாக மட்டுமே போற்றிவந்த பண்பாட்டினை உடைய சமுகமாக இருந்து வந்தது என்பது புலனாகிறது. மேலும் இச்சமய அளவைகள் குறித்த விரிவான பண்பாட்டு ஆய்வுகள் இன்றியமையாதவை.

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Pattern and Practices of Religious Endowments of the Cholas in the Eastern Kaveri Delta Region

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Land Grants

Land endowments represented the most valuable and enduring contributions among the various forms of temple patronage in the Chola period. Commentators of the *Dharmasastra* regarded land gifts as the highest form of donation, since they ensured long-term sustenance and stability for religious institutions. Chola rulers, queens, royal functionaries, and wealthy individuals frequently granted extensive tracts of fertile agricultural land to temples. These benefactions are documented in inscriptions that provide meticulous details regarding the size of the donated lands, their precise boundaries, irrigation facilities, and the tax exemptions attached to them.2 Such lands generated a stable and renewable source of income, enabling temples to finance daily worship, festivals, the feeding of pilgrims, and charitable distribution to the poor.

Numerous inscriptions from the Eastern Kaveri Delta illustrate the diversity of such endowments. For example, in 1173 A.D., Rajathiraja II's inscription from the Tyagarajasvamin temple at Tiruvarur stated that a land brought as *Irajathiraja-pperuvilai* as *Kani* in the name of goddess Paraloka Menmoli Nachchiyar.3 Similarly, during the Rajendra I regnal year, an inscription seems to register a gift of land donated to the Kiranur, Sivalokanathar temple by the queen of Rajendracholan.4 In the 20th regnal year of Rajaraja III, engraved in the *maha-mandapa* of the Tiruvanjinathar temple, Nannilam taluk in Thiruvarur District, another inscriptional note about a gift of land that was donated to the same temple in the name of the goddess by a local native.5 The inscriptions from the Marudeeswara temple's north wall of the mandapa register the land grant and a tank called *Murukkangulam* by the residents of the *Devadana* village, Sattamangalam. The land was to be utilised as a flower garden for the god of Tirutturaipoondi.6 The inscriptions within the Sowriraja Perumal Temple at Thirukkannapuram documented the endowment of land for the Central purpose of a lamp to the temple's central deity.7

Monetary and Material Contributions

In addition to land endowments, monetary and material contributions constituted an essential dimension of temple patronage in the Chola period. Donations in gold, silver, and coins were regularly made to finance temple upkeep and commission ritual objects necessary for worship. Members of the royal family, alongside wealthy patrons, also gifted precious jewels and metal ornaments, which were employed to adorn temple deities during festivals and other ceremonial occasions.8 In some instances, monetary gifts were deposited as fixed capital, with the accrued interest designated for sustaining routine temple services, thereby providing temples with a reliable financial resource. Thus, monetary grants occupied a significant and indispensable place within the spectrum of donations directed to temples.

Epigraphic evidence from the Eastern Kaveri Delta illustrates this practice in considerable detail. At the Tiruvanjinathar temple in Tiruvanjiyam, Nannilam taluk, an inscription engraved on the south wall of the central shrine, dating to the third regnal year of *Tribhuvanachakravartin* Rajadhiraja, records a monetary contribution for perpetual maintenance of five temple lamps.9. On the Vedaranyesvara temple south wall, there was an inscription about a Gift of 150 *Kasu* of gold by Kottappichcholar for a perpetual lamp in the Tirumaraikkadu temple.10 Further, a record from 1249 CE (3rd regnal year of Rajendra III) at a temple in Thiruthuraipoondi documents a financial gift earmarked for the annual Adippuram festival at the shrine of the goddess.11. These inscriptions collectively demonstrate

that monetary and material endowments not only supplemented the agrarian-based resources of temples but also ensured the uninterrupted performance of worship, festivals, and ritual observances, reinforcing the religious vitality and the socio-economic significance of temples in the Chola realm.

Lamp Endowments

Lamp endowments formed a distinctive and highly symbolic category of temple donations in the Chola period. Lighting lamps held deep religious significance within Hindu tradition, serving as a practical element of ritual worship and a spiritual metaphor for the eternal presence of divinity. Inscriptions across the Chola realm frequently record gifts dedicated to maintaining perpetual lamps (*nandavilakku*)12. Such provisions ensured that the sanctum remained illuminated without interruption, reinforcing the idea of unbroken worship and continuous divine presence. Devotees contributed not only the lamps themselves but also arranged for a regular supply of oil, ghee, or sesame seeds, thereby guaranteeing the eternal flame. The act of sustaining perpetual light was considered a sacred duty and believed to confer enduring spiritual merit upon the donor and their lineage.

Epigraphic evidence attests to the widespread nature of this practice. At the Thyagarajaswami temple in Thiruvarur, an inscription from the 20th regnal year of Rajakesari Aditya I records the donation of three *velis* of land to the Araneri shrine to maintain two perpetual lamps.13 In the period of rajaraja III, on the temple wall of Rajatagirisvarar, Tiruttengur, it says about the undertaking that the *Sivabrahmanas* of the temple gave to burn the lamp for which they received 4000 *kasus*.14 Another inscription comes from the west wall of the first *prakara* in the Thyagarajaswami temple, Tiruvarur, during the reign of Kulottunga II, documenting the purchase of tax-free land from Brahmins, the produce from the land for three perpetual lamps.15 The Tyagaraja temple in Thirukuvalai, during the period of Rajendradevah, had a damaged record of an endowment of 135 *kasu* by an unnamed donor for three perpetual lamps in the temple, providing one *ulakku* of oil daily (totalling 91 *nali* and 1 *Ulakku* annually).16 The inscription from the Tyagarajaswami temple, Thiruvarur, dated on the 32nd regnal year of Parantaka I, records an endowment. It states that the *sabha* (assembly) of Pandanainallūr undertook to provide oil for a perpetual lamp in honour of God Sri Arur-tiru-araneri Mahadeva Bhattaraka. The expenses were to be met from the interest on 30 *kalanju* of gold endowed for this purpose.17 The revenue from this land supported various temple services, including the continuous lighting of lamps.

Livestock and Agricultural Produce

Alongside land and monetary donations, livestock and agricultural produce endowments represented a crucial dimension of temple patronage in the Chola period. Cows were gifted to provide a steady supply of milk, goats were donated for ritual sacrifices, and paddy was offered for festivals and daily worship. Such contributions not only sustained temple rituals but also integrated agrarian resources into the functioning of religious institutions. These donations were usually entrusted to temple officials or priests, who were central in administering the temple

economy.18. Offerings of agricultural produce, particularly rice, were prepared and presented to the deity as *neyvaidyam,* symbolising both devotion and the channelling of agrarian surplus into sacred service.19 Epigraphic records from numerous temples reveal that hundreds of such endowments, especially of livestock, were specifically instituted to ensure the perpetual burning of lamps, underscoring the interconnection between agrarian wealth, ritual practice, and devotional symbolism.

Inscriptions from different periods illustrate the diversity of these endowments. An inscription at the Punyanathasvamin temple, Thiruvidaivasal, Nannilam, from the 11th regnal year of Rajendra Chola I, records a woman devotee who gifted paddy to the temple for the feeding of the dancing girls during the *Chithirai* festival.20 When the period of Rajaraja I, on the north wall of Tiruvidaikkali Subramanya temple, registers about the provision made by the assembly of that place as annual payment of 287 *kalam* and odd of paddy to the temple by some nearby specified land owners.21

Another inscription from 1229 CE, the 13th regnal year of Rajaraja III, at the Piravi Marudheswarar temple, Thiruthuraipoondi, notes a grant dedicated to providing rice three times daily as temple offerings.22 In the Ramanatheswara temple at Thiruviramisvaram, during the period of King Rajendran I, the inscription records the sale of land to feed Siva *yogis* in the temple.23 The temple inscriptions of Viratesvara in Korukkai describe a gift of paddy for meeting the expenses of maintaining servants of *Tiruppalliyarai*, who constructed the cave called *Tirunavukkarasu-tirukkuhai*, for feeding the destitute during the period of Kulothungachola.24 These inscriptions highlight how livestock and agricultural produce were systematically integrated into temple institutions as ritual offerings and essential economic resources. Such endowments exemplify the symbiotic relationship between agrarian society and religious institutions, reinforcing temples' central role as spiritual and financial hubs in the Chola realm.

Art and Ritual Items

Temples of the Chola period accumulated a rich and diverse collection of artistic and ritual objects, which played an indispensable role in religious life and communal identity. Among the most significant were bronze icons, temple chariots (*rathas*), palanquins, musical instruments, bells, and vessels, all integral to performing rituals, festivals, and grand processions. These objects enhanced worship's visual and auditory splendour and reaffirmed the temple's function as the central locus of collective religious and cultural expression.25 Through patronising artisans, particularly bronze casters, sculptors, carpenters, and musicians, temples sustained specialised crafts, fostered artistic innovation, and preserved traditional skills across generations. Committing processional icons and elaborate ritual platforms further enriched ceremonial practices while reinforcing community participation, shared identity, and devotional engagement.

Inscriptions provide detailed insights into such practices. At the Thyagarajasvamin temple in Thiruvarur, King Rajendra I made notable gifts for performing special rituals, including the ceremonial bathing of the deity with scented water on his father's birthdays, Rajaraja I.26 An inscription dated on the 15th regnal year of Uttama Chola from the Kailasamudaiyar temple in Nagapattinam, records the benefactions of Tribhuvana Madeviyar, the chief queen, who endowed resources for monthly sacred baths (*abhisheka*) and ritual offerings during the new moon days. Her donation further included provisions for feeding 200 Brahmins during the solstitial transitions of *Uttarayana* and *Dakshinayana* Sankranti, with a detailed enumeration of items such as perfumes, garments, grains, rice, ghee, sesame, and curd.27 Inscriptions in the 6th year of Rajendra Chola, on the Gomiktisvara temple in Tiruaduthurai, give a list of the gold and silver vessels and ornaments, and also images of some deities, presented by the royal persons like Iraman Abhimanatongiyar, the mother of Trilokya-Mahadeviyar, the mother of king Rajendracholadeva, and by the perception (*gurudevar)* of Rajadhiraja and the servants of the place.28 These records illustrate how the accumulation and ritual use of art objects and ceremonial items embellished religious practice and articulated broader patterns of Patronage, piety, and cultural production in the Chola realm. Temples thus emerged as dynamic centres where artistry, devotion, and community converged, leaving a legacy of material culture and ritual traditions that continues to resonate.

Conclusion

From the 9th to the 13th century CE, the Imperial Cholas dedicated their Patronage in the form of land, agricultural produce, gold and other wealth given for temple worship, festivals, rituals, and daily life, particularly in the fertile Eastern Kaveri Delta Regions of the modern districts of Thiruvarur, Nagapattinam, and Mayiladuthurai. Temples were not merely sacred spaces but dynamic institutions that sustained resources to manage the economy. The diverse endowments of the Cholas ensured that temples flourished as centres of devotion, economic activity, and social organisation. The temples became the cornerstones of the Chola empire, serving as centres of spiritual life, economic activity, and social organisation, and their Patronage remains a profound testament to the intricate relationship between devotion, power, and prosperity in medieval South India.

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Social Conditions and Temple Economy in Tondaimandalam

S.Jayanthi[1] and B Rahamedsha[2]

Introduction

The temple is historically more important as a social and economic entity than as a religious institution. The Hindu temples attained the zenith of its influence on the socio-economic life of the medieval Tamil country, particularly under the imperial Cholas. This fame, wealth and honor continued thereafter under the patronage of Hindu kings of later Pandya and Vijayanagar. Primarily the temples were a centre for spiritual, art, architecture and culture. In the medieval Tamil country, the temples became very rich institutions by virtue of the huge endowment of lands, gold and money. With this power of wealth, the temples were the most powerful economic institutions which not only sustained by means of the generous and continuous endowments from the society, but enabled the other members of the society to turn to it in times of need for economic support.

Temples in Tondaimandalam

Tondaimandalm or *Tonda* or *Tundira* being a synonym of Sanskrit Pallava (Creeper) and the name of a well - known Imperial dynasty of the Tamil country. *Tuntaka – Vishaya* is mentioned in some of the Chalukya copper plate‟s grants. *Tondaimandalam* which was under the rule of Pallavas, during the reign of *Aparajita* it was captured by Chola ruler *Aditya* I.

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This division comprised parts of the present Chennai, Kanchipuram, Chingleput and Vellore districts in Tamilnadu and also in Chittoor and Nellore Districts. The phenomenal growth of an intense and emotional bakti to Siva and Vishnu on the one hand and an out-spoken hatred of Buddhists and Jains,and their philosophies on the other marked the period when the Pallavas came to power in Kanchi in the sixth-seventh centuries A.D. This was the period of the Saiva Nayanmars and Vaishnava Alvars. They were great tamil hymnists and followed by bands of devotees traversed the Tamil country up and down singing hymns at all the holy places big and small and thus sanctified the places (sathalas or tirupathis)by their visits or hymns in praise of the gods there. These came to be known as Padal Perra t Sthaiams or Vaippu Sthaiams among the Saivites and as Mangala Sastam Perra Sthalams among the Vaishnavas. The Tevaram trie Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar of. The Pallava period is associated thus with many such holy spots and temples in Tondaimandalam.

Appar (also known as Tirunavukkarasu Nayanar) was born in Tiruvorriyur in Southern Tondaimandalam and Sundaramurti in Navalur in the same region (Nadu nadu as it then came to be called). Manickkavacagar, though hailing from the Pandya country, was greatly devoted to Chidambaram and its Lord Nataraja. The other Nayanmars among the sixty-three, who belonged to Tondai nadu and Nadu nadu (both/Comprising ancient Tondaimandalam) are Aiyyadikal Kadavarkon of Tondai Nadu kannappar of Uduppur near Kalahasti, Kalikkambar of Pennagadam, Kaliyar of Tiruvorriyur, Tirunllakandar of Chidambaram, Tirunilakanda Yalpanar of Erukkattampuliyur (Nadu nadu), Narasinga Mxiniayaraiyar, Chief of Nadu nadu, Pusalar of Tiruninravur, Murkar of Tiruverkadu and Vayilar of Mylapore. Sekkilar, the compiler in poetry of the lives of the Sixty-three Nayanmars in his Periyapuranam was a native of Kunrattur in Chingleput District in Tondai-Nadu.

Among the twelve Vaishnava alvars, the earliest three namely, Poygaialvar, Puda/rttalvar and Peyalvar were born respectively in Kanchi, Mallai(Mahabalipuram) i and Mylapore and the fourth, Tirumalisai Alvar was born in the village of the same name (Tirumalisai) in the present day Chingleput District. Tirumangai alvar of slightly later tines, in the Pallava period is the only Alvar that has praised Nandivatman II and his temple Vaikunthaperumal of Karachi. The great Vaishinava philosopher Sri Ramanuja was born in Sri Derumbudur in the Chingleput District. It is these and other great savants that lent weight to the saying "sanror-udaittadu Tondainadu" meaning Tondainadu is the home of many great men.

Though we find that the early Nayanmars and Alvars covered the whole country and sang hymns about Gods (Siva or Vishnu) all over the land, they have significantly enough bypassed the wonderful rock-cut cave temples, monolithic temples (rathas) and structural temples in the new medium of stone as a permanent fabric of temple architecture and sculpture; the only exception is the single instance of the Karachi Vai kunthaperumal temple referred to above.

But it was left to the cholas who succeeded the Pallavas to re-build many of the then extant and deteriorating brick temples as stone temples(Karrali), to build new temples in stone and to enlarge extant ' stone temple In places sanctified in the hymns of the £aiva and Vaishnava saints. Thus the religious spurt initiated in Pallava times resulted in a prodigious multiplication of stone built temples all over Tamil Nadu including Tondaimandalam. Though the essential form and features of the vlmana, as laid out in stone, in the monolithic primordial .servlee of the rathas and bas relief representations as at Mahabalipuram, taken up and continued in the structural stone constructions and lay out of the temple complex, were scrupulously maintained in the subsequent phases, modification of the shapes and forms of individual features and components occurred in course of time during the successive but continuous phases giving scope for the recognition of distinct styles and idioms in architecture. Thus beginning from the monolithic ratha forms, which form as if they were the base, In a chronologically unbroken and continuous chain of temples through the centuries till the present times, a careful study of the distinctive characteristics of each phase offers good

scope for an evolutionary study. This is possible by arranging in chronological order, the temples datable from their foundation inscriptions found on the structure itself, evaluating the change in sane or other of the features, characteristic of the phase or period and applying the deduced criteria to dating others where a foundation inscription is not available.

As regards Tondaimandalam, the following brief list of the most important temples, assignable to the various places may be given. In such a list, temples of all plans, forms and talachchanda (rise in storeys or talas) are included, though many of them are not apsidal (chapicara or gajaprstha- or hastiprjstha. or tunganaimadam), they would form the basis for a comparative study and supply the characteristics of each of the phases in the region (Tondaimandalama) that would help in fixing in absolute or relative terms, the dates or periods of the numerous apsidal temples of Tondaimandalam, which form the subject of the present study and their chronological treatment. It may be reiterated here that Tondaimandalam (as against the rest of the Tamil country and the whole of South India) has the largest number of apsidal temples . extant belonging to various periods, from about the 5th century (Chezerlabrick temple) A.D. to the 15th - - 16th century or the Vijayanagar - Nayak times.

Temples of the Pallava period

Cave Temples : All the cave temples of Mahendra varma I and cave temples of the Mahendra type, except the upper rock-cut cave temple of Tiruchirappalli, are to be found in Tondaimandalam and all the Mamalla type cave temples are found only in Mahabalipuram.

Rathas; The carved out vimana forms, the so-called Rathas too, of Mamalla, are restricted to Mahabalipuram only.

Structural temples : a) Early Phase-Kuram, (Siva temple), Tirukkalukkunram (temple on the top of hill), Mahabalipuram (shore temple, Olakkanesvara temple), Panamalai, Mahabalipuram (Mukundanayanar temple), Kanchi (Kailasanatha, Iravatanesvara, Piravatanesvara, Airavatesgfvara, Vallsvara, Tripurantakesvara). Later Phase ; Kanchi (Vaikunthaperumal, Mukteswara,, Matanges'vara), Uttiramerur temple Kuram (Adikesava), Kalambakkam, Sumangali, Takkolam, Nemali and Vikkanampundi (VisaleSvara temple) in Chittoor District and Virattanesvara temple at Tiruttani, Oragadam, (adhisthana alon^-Pallava), Baktavatsala temple (an apsidal shrine-converted into a bhandaram) in Tirukkalukkunram.

Temples of the Chola Period

Early Chola phase temples in Tondaimandalam are not many but in the Middle Chola phase dating after N A.D. 985 there are many significant ones They are Ravikuiamanickka Isvaram and Kundavai Vinnagaram in Dadapuram, South Arcot District. Nilakanthlsvara-Laddigam.Adipurlsvara, Tiruvorriyur, Vattappirai Amman temple-close to the Adlpurlsvara of Tiruvorriyur, Masilamarilsvara-Vada Tirumullaivoil, Rajendra Cholisvaram-Kavantandalam, Nataraja shrine-Tiruvorriyur temple,Tiripuranta Kesyara-Kuram and ; The Amman shrine in the same temple,Brahmadesam temple, South Arcot, RlmariathesVara temple, EsalamCSouth Arcot, Pandava perumal temple, Kahchipuram, Pralayajr'alesvara Pennadam South Arcot, Vyagrapurlsvara Tiruppulivanam Chingleput Ulagalandaperumal Vishnu temple, Tirukkovilur, Kulampandal-Siva temple. The above 16 temples are the temples of the times of Rajaraja I and Rajendra I Later Chola phase temples in Tondaimandalam (A.D. 1070 and later) are Janamejayesvara temple - Senji, Apatsahayesvara temple, Chingleput District, Amritaghatesvara temple, Melakkadambur South Arcot District, Sivakami temple in Chidambaram temple complex, Jvaraharesvara temple, Kanchipuram, Dharmesvara temple, Manlmangalam Chingleput District, Ekamresvara temple, Settur Pondicherry, Siva temple, kllakkadambur near Chidambaram, South Arcot District, Old Siva temple, Magaral Chingleput District

Temples the Hoysala Period

The Later Hoysalas who held a part of Tamil Nadu in the North, had their capital in Tiruvannamalai and have added to the temple complex of Arunachalesvara at that place. The four gopuras of the middle court were built by Hoysala King Ballala III (known as Vallala Maharaja) after whom the eastern

one among the four is known locally as Vallala Gopuram, dated about A.D. 1277.

Temples of the Vilavanagara/Nayaka Periods

Vijayanagar, Gingee, Vellore and Chandragiri rulers built a large number of structures as in Kanchipuram, Gingee, Vellore, Tiruvannamalai and many other places consisting of shrines (vimanas), mandapas, gopuras, etc. They are too numerous to need mention here But all these are mentioned here, since (though many of these are not apsidal or gajaprstha) they form the basis of comparative study in respect of the architectural features of the different phases of temple architecture along with the regional idioms of Tondaimandalam temples of each phase as this area was more exposed to Chalukya, Rashtra'kuta, .Nolarnba and Hoysala influences from across the border than were the temples of Tamil Nadu further south.

In conclusion it may be said briefly that Tondaimandalam in peninsular India, which geologically is the oldest land mass of the subcontinent, has many distinctive features to its credit.The earliest temples in stone occur in Tondaimandalam exclusively. The unique manolithic vimaria forms (rathas) in Mahaballpuram of the Pallavas (7th century A.D.) are the earliest of the kind in India while such work is imitated in other parts of India in the two subsequent centuries. Likewise the earliest structural temples belong to this area and the Later Pallava phase. The earliest apsidal, all-stone example that is extended in whole too is from here carved by the Pallavas in Mahabalipuram on the northern border of the Tondaimandalam.

Social Divisions

One of the formative factors in the cultural development of any country is the pattern of the social divisions of the people constituting the community. This is of the utmost importance in considering the developments in the Chola period. In ancient India society was founded upon Varna and Ashrama, four-fold classification of the entire people into Varnas or castes and a four-fold division of the life of each individual into Ashramas or stages. This system of social division which is now known as the caste system had a great and important role to play in those earlier centuries. It provided certain social privileges to some individuals from their birth and helped in canalizing their various activities. It inculcated a spirit of fellowship and sympathy and assistance amongst the members of the group. It functioned as a type of trade union or benefit society and was eminently wasteful due to wrong choice of professions. The grading of classes by occupation produced a society similar to that recommended by Plato in his "Republic" and embodying the essence of his definition of justice, in that members of each occupation knew and attended to their business and did not aspire to perform the functions of members of different classes.

From the numerous inscriptions which are available it is very clear that during the Chola period these different groups organized on the basis of occupation functioned in an orderly and disciplined manner, discharging their responsibilities as ordained. They are not considered superior to other groups. But it is a matter of considerable significance that despite the existence of such grades in these groups there were neither mutual rivalries nor jealousy nor intense group or caste feeling leading to the rupture of social and cultural life. For example, we have an inscription which refers to Brahmanas along with a group of Vaishya merchants. Similarly there were Vaishyas who took to arms and became warriors.

The Brahmanas, however, occupied a position of honour all round. This is evident by the multiplicity of endowments in several temples for the feeding of Brahmanas learned in the Vedas. The important inscriptions referring to this aspect. Even in villages the Brahmanas kept to themselves, in some cases owned all the lands and kept in view their high ideals and spent their time in really spiritual and ethical occupations. They were in demand in all places where culture and learning were required to resolve difficulties. They *arbitrated* when there were differences of opinion between the members of the local assemblies. Their word was given much weight and normally their judgement was never questioned. In the case of several endowments made for the provision of material comforts of Brahmanas the entire village shared the

responsibility, thus testifying to the esteem in which this particular group was always held.[1]

The temple inscriptions help to understand the composition of various and reveal the nature interaction that the temple had with the people of the village like *the Brahmins, Siva Brahminas ,Nagarathar, Kaikkolar, sri Bhandarattor, stanattar, chetties, Vanniyar, Vellalas, Manradies, Pariyars, Sankarapandi, thuluva velars, Vannar, Idiyar, Agamudayars, Fisher Man, Chakkiliyar, Maravar, gold smith, Carpentars, pallies, Devaradiyar, position of communities, Valaigi and indagi communities*

Economic Impact of Temples

The temples of the early period were mostly simple institutions, in size and function. Moreover, during the early times, the land donations and gifts in cash and kind were made to the temples on a limited scale. So the wealth belonging to them was also limited. Since the temples were simple, fewer people were only required to carry out the functions of the temple. Hence the employment opportunities with the temples were very less.

But during the imperial Chola period and thereafter, huge religious establishments, like Thanjavur Brihadisvara temple, were built. Its construction and maintenance offered employment to numbers of architects and craftsmen who vied with one another in bold planning and skilful execution. Such establishments required more elaborate personnel for their management in various levels with varied capacities. The daily routine, especially of the larger temples, gave constant employment to a number of priests, choristers, musicians, dancing girls, florists, cooks and many other classes of servants. So the temples in the medieval Tamil country were not merely a place of worship. It filled a large place in the socio-economic life of the people. Thus the temple became a major source of employment for the people, next only to the State. The strength of the temple establishment varied according to the size and resources. Being a great landlord and possessed enormous wealth due to large endowments in land and cash bestowed on temples, the medieval temples afforded large number of employees and paid them wages by way of lands directly or indirectly.

Thus the employment opportunities to the society with the temples directly had an impact in the economic life of the society. The management of the temple was in the hands of either an individual or a group of persons known as sthanattar who administered the temple properties, controlled the temple servants and carefully guarded the interests of the temple.The temples usually employed various personalities like Priests (sivacharyas, bhattas), assistants of priests (tavasigal), non-brahman priests, scholars and reciters, manager of the temple (koyil-kelvi) administration Staffs (panmahesvaras), treasurers (pandarattar), superintendents (devakanmigal), accountants (koil-kanakku), musicians, singers, gardeners, artisans, dancing girls. Besides the above the temple also employed many servants mainly for watchmen (meykaval), sweeping and smearing of cow-dung in the temple, bringing water, making garlands, looking after the lamps (tiruvilakkukkudi), pounding the paddy to remove husk from the rice for sacred food offering, carrying plates along with the deity during the festival occasions, waving the fly whisks to the deity and for many other menial works.

The huge number of employees deployed in the temple services in the middle ages made the position of the temple as an employer of considerable importance. An eleventh century Tanjore inscription of Rajaraja I attest to this. An eleventh century inscription Thanjavur of Rajaraja I records that 400 dancing girls were assigned each a share (pangu) comprising a house and one veli of land yielding a net revenue of 100 kalam of paddy. The second part of the inscription also records a list of male temple servants (about 200), viz., dancing-masters, musicians, drummers, singers, accountants, superintendent of temple women and the female musicians, parasol-bearers, lamp lighters, watermen, potters, washer-men, barbers, astrologers, tailors, a brazier, master-carpenter (tachch-acharya), carpenters, a goldsmith and others. Each of them assigned one or more shares of the sam yielding capacity as mentioned above. An inscription from Jambai, South Arcot district, dated 1068 A.D issued in

the reign of Virarajendra, records the grant of tax free land of 500 kuli in the devadana village Tagadi and in addition, another 40 kuli of land (as house site and garden) to one Arangan Sendan for looking after all the accounts of the temple. Besides permanent employees, the temple also sometimes employed labour for temporary work such as executing the repairs in the shrine, and the wages paid took the form of gift of land and a house-site.

Another thirteenth century epigraph from Tiruvilimilalai issued in the reign of Rajaraja III records a gift land and house site to a carpenter (tachchachari) for executing the repairs in the shrines of Ninraruliya-Nayanar and Nerivarkulali-Nachchiyar in the Vilinathasvamin temple of the place.Though the later Pandya and Vijayanagar epigraphs are not like Thanjavur epigraphs which give an elaborate account on the appointment of temple servants, the available epigraphs are sufficient to construct the subject. The later Pandyas reign also noticed similar appointments of servants for various services in the temple. An inscription from Jambai, South Arcot district, dated 1300 A.D issued in the reign of Maravarman Kulasekhara I records the alienation of 900 kuli of dry land at Mananduyyaperumal-nallur which was a tax-free devadana of the temple in favour of a Brahman of Manalur for his services on the days of festival in the temple. It is stated that the sthanikas received from him 31 panam in lump sum for the payment of kadamai on the land levied by the nadu.

A fourteenth century inscription found at Narttamalai, Tiruchirappalli district, issued in the reign of Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya records the distribution of 10 ma of land belonging to the temple to ten devaradiyar for serving in the temple twice a day by the Uravar. Tiruppanangadu inscriptions attest to the employment of a number of people in the temples for various services during the Vijayanagar period. Another inscription from the same place dated 1380 A.D issued in the reign of Kampana-Udaiyar records the appointment of three shepherd residents of the place as tiruvilakkukkudi for the supply of 1 alakku of ghee and 2 nali of milk each for god in the temple. It is told that necessary endowments were made to the shepherds. A fifteenth century inscription from Triuppudaimaruthur, Tirunelveli district, dated 1499 A.D records the grant of land and daily food to a dancing girl (devaradiyar) Kalattinatha-Manikkattal and her descendants for their services in the temple by the temple authorities. Likewise, a sixteenth century inscription from Tiruvadi, South Arcot district, records the gift of 2 ma of wet land, 1 ma of dry land and a house-site to a poet who compose poems for the god by the temple authorities.Numerous other inscriptions suggest that the employment of temple servants and assignment of land for their maintenance, viz., for cleaning the temple floor, keeping the sanctuary lamp alight, keeping the temple yard clean, persons who fetched water for bathing the deity, cooking in the temple kitchen, tending the temple garden, drummers, conch-blowers, stone-masons, songsters, potters, carpenters, bhattas, sivabhramans,dancing girls,and goldsmith was very much in vogue during the period under study. Besides assigning lands to the temple servants as wages for their services, temples also paid them in way of kind,kind and money or money.The appointment of most of the temple servants Socio-Economic Functions of Temples during Medieval Tamil Country 11^{th}-16^{th} Century A.D

Temples as Bankers

The large endowments in the form of land, gold and money bestowed on temples by the various donors of the medieval society made the temples a richest institution. Particularly, many donors, from the royal family to the individuals, donated in gold and money to the temples. Due to the availability of enormous amounts of money, the medieval temples delivered an economic function as a banker which really helped the agrarian society at that time.

The deposits received by the medieval temples were of donatives in nature. They were made for certain specific purposes. Those donations were not repayable to the depositor. At the same time, the temples had no rights to use them for some other purpose rather than the ones specified by the donor. So the temples lend those donated money to the society on interest basis.

Generally the loans were given by the temple on the condition that either the interest should be paid back to the temple in cash or some specified items should be supplied to the temple in lieu of the interest. From the interest the temples fulfilled the purpose for which the donations were made. The temples played a prominent role in mobilizing funds within a region by giving loans to the village assemblies for their various needs. Among the clients of temple bank, village assemblies were predominant. A number of village assemblies said to have received money thus borrowed were utilized in bringing waste lands under cultivation.

From the produce of these lands the interest on the money borrowed was paid. The money itself was apparently never returned. Village assemblies could alienate lands whenever the liabilities incurred by them could not be otherwise discharged.A twelfth century epigraph from Erumbur, South Arcot district, issued in the reign of Rajaraja II

records that a private individual purchased land from the village assembly of Urumur and made a gift of it to the temple as devadana. Towards the payment of kadamai on these lands the assembly agreed to measure out to the temple trustees 55 kalams of paddy. But owing to famine, they could not maintain it. Therefore they borrowed 60 kasu for interest from the temple treasury to manage the situation. Another inscription of Rajaraja II in Alangudi, Tanjore district registers that the village appears to have been afflicted with a famine caused probably by failure of rain. The inhabitants of the village applied to the local temple treasury. The temple helped the distressed by giving 1011 kalanju of gold and 464 palam of silver. In exchange of this, the members of the village assembly alienated 8 3⁄4 veli of land in favour of the god. From the produce of this land the interest to be Paid.

The temples lend money to individuals also. An inscription from Kodumbalur, dated 1269 A.D, issued in the reign of Jatavarman Vira Pandya records that certain Kaikolas and Kaikkola-mudalis borrowed money from the Tirumudukunramudaiya-Nayanar temple on interest basis. It is mentioned that later the individuals sold five pieces of their land to the temple in order to clear their debt. The temples generously lend money, at times even selling their landed properties, to the villagers to carry out repairs in the irrigational facilities. Such support to the agrarian community by the medieval temples, were regarded high as it helped to increase the agricultural produce and fiscal benefits. An inscription from Tiruppanangadu, dated 1381 A.D, issued in the reign of Viruppana-Udaiyar records that when the village tank breached and no funds were available for the repair, the temple authorities helped the villagers, by selling a portion of the temple land and utilizing the proceeds for repairing the breach in the tank. Sometimes the village assembly mortgaged the jewels of the God from the temple in order to pay the default land dues and later conveyed lands to the temple.Instances shows that the village assembly, at times, borrowed money from the temple in order to pay the land tax defaulted by them. A Sevalur inscription dated 1503 A.D in the reign of Danmayara Maharaya records a sale of land by the urars of Tenur to the temple of Tiru-Bhumisvaramudaiya-Nayanar of Sevalur for 300 sakkaram-panam which they had originally borrowed from the temple treasury to pay the king‟s dues. A sixteenth century epigraph from Tiruvarangulam, Pudukkottai, records the loan lent by the temple treasury to the Vellala tenants and the owners of padikaval right in three villages of Palaikkudi, Kalangudi and Kilinallur for clearing up certain dues demanded by the chief Svami Narasa Nayakkar.Later, when the villagers and the owners of padikaval rights were not able to pay back the money they had borrowed from the temple treasury, they sold away some of their lands to the temple.

Conclusion

In general history comprises all these phases but the nature of its perspective would naturally compel attention only to Historical evolution. Among this historical perspective, religion is very expensive and very important to know the nature of the society. In Tamil country, the religious policy of the Hindu Kings is the hall mark of well – known historical fact with toleration and broad mindedness. The patronage of such

enlightened monarchs, in Tamil country presented a conductive atmosphere in which various religious faiths like Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, and Vaishnavism found it possible to spread and flourished even at a pretty early age, without fear of emasculation or persecution. The religious history of Tondaimandalam and its surroundings can in a way be said to reflect the general trends that were at work in the religious sphere of Tamil country as a whole all the above mentioned religious beliefs had their following here in the past as can be gauged by many of the vestiges, that have been left behind in the sources of literary, epigraphy and architectural evidences.

The Architectural features of the nine temples were briefly cited as corroborative evidence with special attention focused on structural details of the temple and its constituents. These temples are important for my study because they preserve the different architectural and stylistic patterns that were in vogue at different epochs in the Tamil country. We are indeed fortunate to have a good number of structures in the temple of Tondaimandalam that are specifically datable. They give us the prevailing norms of construction and style. They serve as landmarks in architectural evolution and provide us with the necessary data for comparison with architectural details of the undated structure and for fixing the date of the latter. The Tondaimandalam Navagraha temple originated by some Saiva groups in the Kundrathur village. It is not exactly known how these Siva temples have been transformed into Navagraha sthalas. The scholars opinion is that the people of Tondaimandalam could not go to Cholamandalam frequently to worship the Navagrahas. Hence, they would have created these sthalas in and around the Tondaimandalam region. Most of the temples have undergone renovation and these Navagraha panel seem to have come into existence during the Vijayanagara period

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The Chola Legacy of Interlinked Lakes And Drainage in Sustaining the Cauvery Delta

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Introduction

The monsoon-driven ecology of South India has historically required innovative water control. For agrarian societies, especially rice-based economies, lakes (eris) and drainage channels have become the backbone of subsistence, state revenue, and social order. By the Chola period (9th–13th centuries CE), the Cauvery delta emerged as one of the most intensively managed agrarian landscapes in Asia, where water was regulated not only by monumental works such as

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Kallanai but also by thousands of interconnected lakes and feeder channels (Sastri, 1935; Stein, 1980). These systems transformed rainfall variability into agricultural stability, demonstrating early watershed management. While the Kallanai Dam and its canals have attracted significant attention, the cascade of interlinked lakes and drainage channels under the Cholas remains less systematically studied. These cascades operate as hydraulic series, where water flows from one tank to another through channels, maximizing storage and minimizing waste. Such interconnections enable redundancy: when one lake fails, the next downstream lake compensates. This study highlights these cascades as a distinct and innovative feature of Chola irrigation.

Early Historical Accounts: The pioneering works of K. A. Nilakanta Sastri (1935) established the Cholas as one of the great irrigation-building dynasties of South India. His *The Cholas* synthesized inscriptional evidence to argue that irrigation was central to both agrarian expansion and temple-centered, redistributive economies. Later, Stein (1980) advanced the idea of the Chola state as a "segmentary state," where irrigation networks linked local village institutions with the royal center. These foundational studies highlighted the political economy of water management but gave limited attention to the sequential tank systems that structured rural landscapes.

Epigraphic Sources: The South Indian Inscriptions (SII) series and *Epigraphia Indica* remain the most important sources for reconstructing Chola irrigation practices in Tamil Nadu. Inscriptions from Uttiramerur (c. 919–921 CE) describe the functioning of *eri-variyam* (tank committees) under Parantaka I, while the Bahur inscription (1027 CE) under Rajendra Chola I codifies compulsory desilting obligations for all cultivators (Chandnibi, 2022a).

These records demonstrate that irrigation was maintained through legally enforced communal labor in the past. Inscriptions also describe how the upstream and downstream tanks were linked through feeder channels (*kalvai).* Some explicitly mention water flowing "from one *eri* to another," suggesting the deliberate construction of cascade systems rather than isolated reservoirs (Karashima, 1984). Moreover, temple inscriptions from Thanjavur and Gangaikonda Cholapuram detail land endowments for tank upkeep, confirming the integration of hydraulic maintenance into religious institutions (Rathika 2016).

Archaeological and Hydrological Studies: Modern hydrological surveys and GIS-based mapping have rediscovered tank cascade systems across Tamil Nadu. Studies have shown that Chola-era tanks were constructed in series along natural drainage lines, enabling sequential filling during the monsoon (Millennium Water Story, 2021). The International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID, 2012) recognizes the Kallanai-linked canal and tank systems as a unique historical model of sustainable irrigation. Recent work in the Villupuram and Thanjavur districts confirm that many existing tanks originated in the Chola period, although they were often rebuilt by later dynasties. Hydrological analysis emphasizes the redundancy and resilience of cascades: if one tank is breached or silted, others downstream continue to function. This contrasts with large single reservoirs that are at risk of catastrophic failure. Thus, the cascading system represents an early form of watershed-based risk management (PNR Journal, 2022).

Institutional and Social Historiography: More recent scholars have focused on the institutional governance of irrigation. Chandnibi (2022b) analyzes the rules of *eri-variyam* tank committees, showing how elected assemblies manage desilting, sluice operation, and penalties for non-compliance. Marimuth (2015) situates tank committees within the broader sabha system, emphasizing its democratic elements. Together, these studies suggest that Chola irrigation was not simply royal patronage but a deeply localized system of community-based water management.

Comparative Perspectives: Finally, comparative studies of Sri Lanka's tank cascade systems (Mendis, 2002) highlight the similarities in the logic of sequential filling and community maintenance. While Sri Lanka emphasized large storage reservoirs feeding cascades, the Cholas adapted cascade logic to the deltaic environment of the Cauvery Basin, linking river

diversion, canals, and village tanks into a coherent hydraulic whole.

Structure of Chola-Era Lakes and Drainage Systems

The Chola Empire at its height, stretched from the Cauvery Delta in Tamil Nadu to large parts of South India, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia. Centered on the fertile delta region, the empire's political and economic power was sustained by sophisticated irrigation systems, including canals, interlinked lakes, and drainage cascades. The map highlights how the Cholas transformed their agrarian base into a foundation for overseas expansion, temple building, and cultural patronage, demonstrating the centrality of water management in sustaining imperial power. Figure 3 shows the Cauvery River Basin and its tributaries, including the Bhavani, Amaravathi, and Kollidam, which played a crucial role in sustaining the Chola irrigation networks. The river originates in the Western Ghats and branches into numerous distributaries across the delta before draining into the Bay of Bengal. This hydrological complexity allowed the Cholas to design an extensive system of dams, canals, interlinked lakes, and drainage cascades, transforming the Cauvery Delta into one of the most productive agrarian regions of premodern South Asia.

Tank Cascades and Sequential Filling: A defining feature of Chola water management was the construction of interlinked tanks (eris) arranged in cascades, where the surplus from an upstream lake flowed through drainage channels into the next downstream reservoir. This system allows rainfall and canal-fed water to be captured, stored, and reused repeatedly before finally joining larger rivers or distributaries. Inscriptions refer to *kalvai* (feeder channels) that carried water "from one eri to another" (Karashima 1984). Hydrological studies confirm that many tanks in Tamil Nadu, particularly in the Thanjavur and Villupuram districts, are located along natural drainage lines, reflecting a deliberate watershed-based design (Millennium Water Story, 2021). The sequential logic of the tank cascades ensures resilience. Even if one tank is breached or silted, those downstream would continue to function. This distributed system minimizes catastrophic risks while maximizing agricultural potential across villages.

Drainage Channels and Feeder Networks: The functioning of cascades depended on drainage channels (*k*alvai) that regulated overflow and linked reservoirs. These were often stone-lined near sluices to prevent erosion; otherwise, they were shallow earthworks aligned with natural slopes. Some inscriptions specifically mention the construction of kalvai for "leading water from one eri to another" under royal or temple patronage (Rathika 2016). These channels also doubled as flood regulators, directing excess water away from settlements and back into the river systems. By integrating drainage into tank systems, the Cholas reduced the destructive impact of monsoon floods and conserved water for agriculture.

Integration with the Cauvery Canals: The Chola tank system was not isolated but was closely integrated with the Kallanai-fed canal network. Major canals, such as the Uyyakondan and Vadavaru, supplied water to tanks, which were then redistributed through cascades into village fields (ICID, 2012). This integration of macro-diversion works (Kallanai and canals) with micro-storage systems (tanks and cascades) has created a multi-scalar irrigation regime. For example, the Uyyakondan channel in Thanjavur irrigated temple lands by feeding a chain of interconnected tanks. Endowments to the Brihadisvara temple specify fields irrigated by "the waters of the Uyyakondan *kalva*i," showing how canals, tanks, and temples were interconnected (Sastri, 1935).4)

Case Studies from Thanjavur and Villupuram: Archaeological and inscriptional evidence offers case studies of cascading practices. In the Thanjavur district, cascades link upland tanks to the fertile delta plain, ensuring year-round rice cultivation. The Bahur inscription (1027 CE) records community obligations for tank and channel upkeep, illustrating institutionalized maintenance (Chandnibi 2022a). In Villupuram, surveys have revealed tank chains where water flowed through 5–10 interconnected eris before draining into larger rivers. These cascades sustain dry-zone agriculture by stretching limited rainfall (PNR

Journal, 2022). Similar arrangements are recorded in Kanchipuram, where Pallava-period tanks were expanded by the Cholas to link with the Cauvery distributaries. Together, these cases confirm that Chola lakes and drainage systems functioned not as isolated reservoirs but as hydraulic cascades, binding ecology, engineering, and institutions into a coherent agrarian strategy that persisted for centuries.

Institutional Governance of Lakes

Eri-Variyam (Tank Committees) as Custodians: The sustainability of the Chola tank and drainage cascade system rested not only on engineering but also on institutionalized governance mechanisms. Central to this were the *eri-variyam* (tankcommittees), one of the most prominent village committees (variyams) described in the Chola inscriptions. The Uttiramerur inscriptions (c. 919–921 CE, Parantaka I) record detailed rules for the election of committee members, including qualifications, disqualifications, and tenure (Marimuth 2015). The eri-variyam is specifically responsible for the desilting of tanks, maintenance of bunds and sluices, and supervision of connected drainage channels. The *eri-variyam* embodied decentralized management: while major canal works like Kallanai reflected royal initiative, the upkeep of tank cascades was embedded in village assemblies, ensuring regular local participation. This decentralized custodianship explains the longevity of Chola irrigation, even across political transitions.

Community Labor and Legal Obligations: Epigraphic evidence shows that irrigation maintenance was a community legal obligation. The Bahur inscription (1027 CE, Rajendra Chola I) mandated that all cultivators between the ages of 10 and 80 (excluding untouchables) contribute labor to annual desilting works (Chandnibi, 2022a). Such codification ensured that irrigation upkeep was routine rather than sporadic. Community mobilization extended to embankment strengthening, sluice repair, and channel clearing. The inscriptions reveal penalties for non-compliance, ranging from fines to loss of land rights, demonstrating the seriousness with which irrigation duties were enforced (Chandnibi, 2022b). In this sense, irrigation governance was both participatory and coercive, combining communal responsibility and juridical authority.

Temple Endowments and Religious Patronage: Temples played a critical role in financing and supervising tank maintenance. Large temples, such as the Brihadisvara at Thanjavur and Gangaikonda Cholapuram, received land grants specifically earmarked for irrigation works (Sastri, 1935; Stein, 1980). These lands were irrigated by tank cascades and canals, and their produce funded both temple rituals and the maintenance of hydraulic infrastructure. Endowments often include stipulations for channel cleaning or sluice repairs as acts of religious merit. The linkage of irrigation maintenance to divine service reinforced its legitimacy: water management was not only an economic necessity but also a form of Dharma. By intertwining hydraulic upkeep with temple-centered patronage, the Cholas created a dual guarantee of sustainability: local assemblies enforced obligations, and temples provided long-term financial stability.

Fiscal Instruments: Taxes and Levies: In addition to communal labor and temple patronage, the Chola kings institutionalized irrigation finance through specific taxes and levies. Inscriptions mention *eri-ayam* (tank tax) and *eri-amanji* (levy for repairs), collected from cultivators and pooled into funds managed by village assemblies or temple trustees (PNR, 2022). Another levy, the padikaval, was earmarked for the protection of sluices and embankment security. These fiscal tools ensured that irrigation maintenance was not dependent on irregular royal donations but was embedded in recurring, locally managed revenue streams. This financial base allowed for the systematic upkeep of cascades across the Cauvery Delta and beyond.

Officials: Neerkatti and Padikaval: The effective functioning of lakes and drainage cascades also required designated officials. The *neerkatti* (waterman) is responsible for opening and closing sluices, allocating water turns, and ensuring equitable distribution across fields. Compensation is often provided in the form of land shares or portions of produce (Chandnibi, 2022a). The *padikaval* served as a sluice watcher or protector of embankments, funded by a special tax. His duties

included preventing tampering, unauthorized diversions, and safeguarding against breaches of security. These posts illustrate how irrigation governance operates at the micro-level, linking technical responsibilities with institutional authority.

Socio-Agrarian Impacts of Cascading Lakes

Water Security and Redundancy: The cascade system of lakes and drainage channels offered water security in an unpredictable monsoon environment. By designing tanks in series, the Cholas created a redundant hydraulic network: surplus water from one *eri* automatically replenished the next downstream one. Even in years with weak rainfall, this ensured that multiple reservoirs retained usable water. Such resilience is critical for stabilizing rice cultivation, preventing crop failure, and sustaining agrarian surpluses (Karashima, 1984). The system effectively distributed ecological risk across communities, binding villages together in interdependence.

Intensification of Agriculture: Tank cascades facilitated the intensification of wet rice agriculture in the Cauvery Delta and adjoining uplands. Inscriptions frequently record fields irrigated by specific tanks, highlighting their role in double cropping (Rathika, 2016). The sequential storage and release of water enabled continuous cropping cycles, with paddy as the dominant crop, supplemented by pulses and oilseeds in tank-fed dry tracts. This intensification expanded taxable land, enriched temples through land endowments, and allowed the Cholas to finance their armies,naval expeditions, and monumental architecture (Stein, 1980).

Settlement Patterns and Population Density: Hydraulic cascades shaped the settlement geography. Villages were clustered around tanks, with hamlets (cheris) and larger settlements (*nattars)* positioned along the drainage lines. Epigraphic records describe new settlements established in previously dry areas once tanks were constructed in them (Sastri, 1935). Archaeological surveys in Villupuram have revealed linear settlement patterns aligned with tank chains, demonstrating how irrigation infrastructure dictated habitation. This resulted in an increased population density, particularly in the Cauvery Delta, which emerged as the agrarian and political heartland of the Cholas.

Temple-Centered Redistribution: Tank cascades are deeply integrated into the temple economy. Endowments often specify that revenues from irrigated lands be used for temple rituals, festivals, and irrigation maintenance (Chandnibi, 2022a). Temples functioned as landholders, employers, and custodians of irrigation assets, redistributing wealth through the employment of priests, artisans, and cultivators. Tank-centered irrigation thus reinforced the fusion of sacred and economic life, where sustainable water management was considered an act of religious merit (dharma).

Cultural and Ritual Significance: Beyond their economic roles, tanks have cultural significance. Many are associated with temples and are used in ritual bathing, processions, and water festivals. Inscriptions note temple donations specifically for keeping tanks full during the annual ceremonies (Stein, 1980). The symbolic role of water as both a life-sustaining and sacred element reinforces communal participation in its management. Thus, cascading lakes are simultaneously agrarian assets and cultural monuments, shaping both livelihoods and identities.

Research Gaps and Future Directions

Although the Chola tank and drainage cascade system has received scholarly attention, significant research gaps remain in both historical and scientific analyses. Addressing these issues will deepen our understanding of Chola irrigation and its lessons for modern sustainability.

Chronology and Origins: The precise chronological sequence of tank cascade construction under the Cholas has not been fully established. While inscriptions mention repairs, donations, and obligations, they rarely describe the original building phase. Many tanks attributed to the Cholas may have had pre-Pallava or Pallava origins and were later expanded under imperial patronage (Karashima, 1984). Scientific methods, such as optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) and radiocarbon dating of sediments, could clarify construction timelines and phases.

Hydrological Modeling: Modern studies have mapped tank cascades, few have quantitatively modeled their hydrological performance under medieval climatic conditions. Simulations of rainfall-runoff patterns, storage efficiency, and sedimentation rates could reveal how cascades balance surplus and scarcity. Such studies would also illuminate why cascades endured while single large reservoirs elsewhere often failed (ICID, 2012).

GIS and Spatial Mapping: Despite the inscriptional evidence of cascades, there is no comprehensive GIS-based mapping of the Chola tank networks. Identifying drainage lines, upstream–downstream linkages, and settlement clustering would enable scholars to reconstruct the hydraulic geography of the Chola Delta. Comparative GIS studies of Sri Lankan cascades could highlight convergences and ecological adaptations (Mendis, 2002).

Institutional Practice in Villages: While inscriptions mention eri-variyam committees and officials such as neerkatti and padikaval, the day-to-day functioning of these institutions is less clear. How were the irrigation turns negotiated? How were disputes settled across villages in a cascading manner? Micro-histories based on regional inscription clusters can provide insights into practical governance beyond normative rules (Chandnibi, 2022a).

Integration with Temples and Fiscal Structures: The relationship between temple endowments and irrigation cascades is well noted, but much of the focus has been on large temples, such as Brihadisvara. Smaller village shrines and local endowments remain understudied in the literature. Examining how temple irrigation funds intersected with local taxes (eri-ayam, padikaval) could clarify how financing was distributed across various scales.

Climate and Environmental Change: Finally, there have been few studies on how Chola cascades respond to long-term climatic fluctuations. Paleoenvironmental studies (lake cores, pollen analysis, and monsoon reconstructions) could illuminate the resilience of cascades to multi-decadal droughts and extreme floods. These insights can inform modern debates on climate adaptation.

Conclusion

The Chola legacy of interlinked lakes and drainage cascades represents one of the most enduring experiments in premodern watershed management. Constructed across the Cauvery Delta and adjoining uplands, these systems have transformed a monsoon-dependent ecology into a resilient and productive agrarian landscape. By designing tanks in sequential cascades, the Cholas maximized rainfall capture, reduced flood risk, and ensured redundancy in the water supply. Thus, the cascade system functioned as a hydraulic safety net, stabilizing rice cultivation and sustaining agrarian surpluses that underpinned Chola prosperity. In the Thanjavur region of Tamil Nadu, the Cholas employed diverse irrigation methods, including lakes, wells, tanks, and canals, but they placed special emphasis on artificial irrigation structures such as large lakes (eris). The significance of irrigation is reflected in Tamil literature: the epic Silappadikaram explicitly references Chola irrigation, underscoring its importance to agrarian life. Faced with recurrent droughts, early rulers such as Karikala Chola pioneered large-scale water projects. Later, in the 10th century CE, Parantaka I (907– 953 CE) commissioned the celebrated Veeranam Lake (Veeranam Eri) near Kattumannarkoil. Associated with both Parantaka I and Aditya Chola, the lake drew water from the Kollidam River via the Vadavaru distributary and could store nearly 1,465 million cubic feet. Despite its dependence on monsoons, the reservoir remained a monumental achievement, later supplemented by inflows from the Mettur Dam and the Lower Anicut. Veeranam Lake also holds a cultural place in Kalki Krishnamurthy's Ponniyin Selvan and is remembered in modern times as the "gift to Chennai city," as it continues to provide drinking water during scarcity. The durability of Chola irrigation lay not only in engineering but also in institutional frameworks.

Village assemblies maintained tanks through eri-variyam committees, while compulsory labor, temple endowments, and levies such as eri-ayam and padikaval ensured their continuous upkeep. Temples functioned as custodians of irrigation wealth, linking water management to religious legitimacy. These mechanisms made irrigation a collective and continuous responsibility rather than a royal initiative alone. From a comparative perspective, Chola cascades parallel Sri Lanka's tank systems and Pallava/Pandya works but stand out for integrating river-fed canals, cascades, and temple economies. Their resilience offers enduring lessons: sustainable water governance requires not only infrastructure but also distributed storage, redundancy, community participation, and institutional accountability. Thus, the Chola cascades illustrate how water management has sustained both ecology and society across generations.

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Maritime Trade and Colonial Control: A Study of Thoothukudi under Dutch Rule

A. Ajith

Introduction

Located on Tamil Nadu's Coromandel Coast, Thoothukudi has long been acknowledged as a major South Indian marine hub. Both Indian and foreign traders found it to be a desirable location due to its proximity to the pearl-rich Gulf of Mannar and its connections to inland trade routes. Thoothukudi has been a vital part of Indian Ocean trade networks since ancient times, connecting South India with Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Sri Lanka. When European colonial powers arrived in the sixteenth century, the port was transformed into a disputed area that was influenced by competition, compromise, and the desire for commercial supremacy.

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Due in large part to their dominance over the profitable pearl fisheries and missionary endeavours, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to establish a stronghold in Thoothukudi. But by the middle of the seventeenth century, Portuguese domination had been overthrown by the Dutch East India Company (VOC), which marked the beginning of a new era of colonial involvement. In addition to seeing Thoothukudi's potential as a commerce hub, the Dutch also saw it as a key location in their greater fight for control of the Indian Ocean. Their deliberate attempts to incorporate the port into the larger Dutch commercial empire were evident in their attempts to create monopolies in the coastal commerce, textiles, and pearls.

The character of Dutch dominance in Thoothukudi is examined in this study, with particular attention paid to the relationship between colonial control and marine trade. In order to protect their interests, it looks at how the Dutch restructured trade networks, dealt with local leaders and communities, and established governmental and military institutions. This dissertation examines how Thoothukudi changed under Dutch control in order to emphasize the port's significance as a hub for regional trade and a site of international imperial rivalry. The study places Thoothukudi in the context of larger discussions about trade, colonialism, and how European expansion affected South Indian society.

The Dutch in India

As early as 1602 A.D., the Dutch had sent factors to the Indian continent. The Dutch made a new move with the establishment of the Dutch East India Company. A number of ships were sent into the Indian Ocean following the establishment of the Dutch East India Company. Their primary goals were to take control of India's pearl and chank fishing industries and to attack the Portuguese trading system from the front.

Dutch Capture of Thoothukudi

Tirumalai Nayak's relations with the Portuguese quickly soured. A Portuguese navy invaded him in 1635 after he imprisoned the Portuguese captain of Thoothukudi in 1634. In response to this danger, Tirumalai Nayak allowed the Dutch to construct homes along the Fishery Coast and gave them a lease to erect their first factory at Kayalpattanam in 1645. In exchange, Tirumalai Nayak ousted the Dutch from Kayalpattanam in 1648 and viewed them as foes. In February 1649, Governor J.M. Suycher's Dutch fleet landed at Manappadu, marched to Tiruchendur and Thoothukudi, and engaged the Portuguese in combat in an attempt to exact revenge. The Portuguese's hold on Thoothukudi weakened due to Dutch blockades and food shortages, even with reinforcements from Goa and Sri Lanka.

The Dutch demanded indemnity, and when it was not paid, they attacked Thoothukudi, sacked and burned part of the town, and forced priests to collect money. By 1652, Tamil Muslim merchants of Kayalpattanam allied with the Dutch. The fall of Colombo in 1655 and the capture of Sri Lanka strengthened Dutch power, paving the way for their conquest of Thoothukudi.

In 1657–1658, Rijklof Van Goens led a final campaign of the Dutch. The Portuguese defended for a week but were defeated. Meanwhile, Parimalappa Pillai, chief minister of Tirumalai Nayak, secretly sold the Fishery Coast to the Dutch, sealing Portuguese decline. On 28 February 1658, the Dutch captured Thoothukudi and soon expanded their control to Vembar, Vaippar, Punnaikayal, Pazhayakayal, Kayalpattanam, Manappadu, and Cape Comorin, with trade outstations at Alwarthirunagari.

Thus, Dutch power replaced Portuguese dominance on the Pearl Fishery Coast, marking a decisive shift in colonial control over Thoothukudi.

Settlement of Thoothukudi

The Dutch East India Company's principal trading port was Thoothukudi. It was a key location along the Dutch's proposed triangle trade route that connected Colombo and Eastern Batavia. Additionally, it was designated as the Dutch East India Company's Pearl

Fishery Coast headquarters. The Dutch gave it the political, economic, and cultural weight it deserved.

Trade Activities

The Dutch were primarily present on the Pearl Fishery Coast for trade. Only until Thoothukudi was settled did the Dutch's involvement in the trade get more traction. The Dutch, who benefited significantly from this commerce, were keenly aware of the significance of the pearl and chank fisheries. They also participated in the textile and slave trades.

Trade in Textiles

When there was a significant demand for textile exports to Batavia and the Netherlands in A.D. 1661, the Dutch were interested in the Pearl Fishery Coast's textile trade. Instead of establishing weaving establishments here, they bought cloth from Kilakkarai's Muslim merchants and weavers. However, in A.D. 1663, they set up their first dyeing facility at Kayalpattanam and their second at Thoothukudi to carry out dyeing to meet their export needs and preferences. Thoothukudi, where dye roots were discovered in the surrounding areas, supplied these dyeing units with dye materials.At Kuttapuli, close to Kanyakumari, the Dutch also erected a thatched shed to store the cotton fabrics that the local traders brought. The development of cloth manufacture and trade on India's southeast coast was initiated by the Dutch.

Conclusion

The Dutch occupation of Thoothukudi marked a decisive turning point in the history of the Pearl Fishery Coast. By displacing the Portuguese in 1658, the Dutch East India Company secured control over one of the most important maritime centres of South India. Their dominance was rooted in trade, particularly pearls, chanks, and textiles, which they integrated into their wider commercial network stretching from Colombo to Batavia and Europe. Through the establishment of factories, dyeing centres, and trade outposts, the Dutch reorganized the economy of the region and gave Thoothukudi new political and commercial significance.

Yet, Dutch control was never uncontested. It was shaped by rivalry with other European powers, shifting alliances with local rulers, and the participation of Tamil Muslim merchants and Parava communities. While their commercial strategies brought prosperity to the Dutch Company, they also disrupted traditional occupations, introduced monopolies, and altered social dynamics along the coast.

In essence, Thoothukudi under Dutch rule illustrates how maritime trade functioned as a mechanism of colonial control, linking a local port to global imperial ambitions. The Dutch legacy in Thoothukudi, though later overtaken by the British, remains significant as it highlights the interplay of commerce, colonialism, and local society in shaping the history of South India’s coastal world.

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Indentured Servitude in Madras Presidency: A Veil for Continuing Slavery Trade under Colonial Rule

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The Genesis of European Involvement in the Slave Trade

The engagement of the Europeans in the Indian subcontinent's slave trade did not originate in isolation; it evolved alongside the growth of European colonial ambitions and maritime trade networks across Asia. In the early 17th century, as European powers sought to consolidate their control over Indian Ocean commerce, the trafficking of human beings emerged as a lucrative and brutal component of their colonial economy. Among these powers, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) was particularly notorious for its systematic exploitation of human labour through the slave trade, especially along the Coromandel Coast of South India. One of the most infamous centres of this trade was Pulicat, a coastal town north of which served as the VOC's capital in India before the Dutch moved to Nagapattinam. The prominence of Pulicatin the slave trade was largely due to its proximity to impoverished rural hinterlands, which became easy targets during periods of famine, conflict, and social disruption. Dutch records reveal that between 1621 and 1665, 131 ships transported over 38,000 Indian slaves, the majority of whom were procured through local brokers operating out of Pulicat. These brokers often worked in collaboration with Dutch officials, exploiting vulnerable communities, particularly during times of drought or economic collapse, by offering food, clothing, or minimal payments in exchange for people, often children and women. The majority of slaves exported from the Coromandel Coast were not destined for Europe but for Dutch colonies in Southeast Asia, such as Batavia, Ceylon, and even as far as the Cape Colony in South Africa. The demand for labour in plantations, military garrisons, domestic service, and port construction drove this human trade. The slaves were typically shipped in harsh conditions aboard VOC vessels, with many not surviving the journey due to disease, overcrowding, or abuse. While in the Atlantic slave trade, race was a dominant factor in the dehumanisation of African slaves; in the Indian Ocean region, including South India, slavery was built more upon social hierarchies, caste discrimination, and economic vulnerability. The indigenousDalit and Tribal communities, who were already marginalised, bore the brunt of this European exploitation. Many of those captured were Paraiyars and other weaker-community individuals, whose social status made them easy targets and whose lives were seen as expendable by both foreign and local elites. The distinctive feature of the European involvement, especially that of the Dutch, compared to earlier indigenous practices of servitude was the scale, commercialisation, and internationalisation of the trade. Even though there were many forms of bonded labour and caste-based servitude existed in pre-colonial South India, the Dutch restructured these practices into a formal, profit-driven industry that commodified human beings and integrated them into the global capitalist economy. The legacy of this trade, its demographic impacts, social disruptions, and moral implications, remains largely understudied in Indian history. Understanding its genesis is crucial to unpacking the broader narrative of European imperialism in South India. It reveals the cold calculations that underpinned colonial commerce, in which local suffering was converted into colonial profit, and entire communities were uprooted to sustain the labour demands of distant colonies.

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The Institutionalisation of the Slave Trade in Madras

Elihu Yale, whose name is today more famously associated with Yale University in the United States, an Ivy League institution that stands as a symbol of education and prestige. However, the origins of this legacy are deeply intertwined with a far darker chapter of colonial history, the formalisation and institutionalisation of the slave trade in the Madras Presidency during the tenure of Yale as President of Fort St. George from 1687 to 1692. While Yale is often celebrated for its philanthropic donations, a closer examination of its administrative role reveals a starkly different legacy, one marked by cruelty, exploitation, and the systematic commodification of human lives.During the late 17th century, the British East India Company was expanding its reach across the Indian subcontinent, establishing trade outposts and administrative centres to control the flow of goods and labour. Madras was among the most important of these centres. Under the leadership of Yale, the colonial administration did not merely tolerate the slave trade; it actively bureaucratised and normalised it as a vital component of its economic and maritime policies.One of the most reliable instances of this was the decree issued in 1688, mandating that every British ship departing from Madras must carry at least ten slaves. This was much more than a mere ruling; it indicated a decisive shift from sporadic or opportunistic enslavement to a state-sanctioned, compulsory policy of human export. The scale of this operation was truly frightening in its efficiency; within a period of one month after the decree, 665 individuals were forcibly taken from the region and shipped out to serve as slaves in other parts of the British Empire. This kind of bureaucratic approach to human trafficking reveals the depth of institutional commitment to maintaining a steady supply of enslaved labour. The role of Yale was not just limited to oversight. He wielded his administrative power to enforce slavery as a form of judicial punishment. The colonial courts under his presidency sentenced many individuals, predominantly from suppressed and marginalised communities such as the Paraiyars, to enslavement for offences that were often minor or fabricated. These punishments included whipping, branding, and transportation overseas, effectively transforming the justice system into an apparatus of social control and economic exploitation. The people were separated from their families, and children as young as six or seven were not spared from being shipped away, often never to reunite with their loved ones.This systemic use of enslavement under legal pretences underscores the deep hypocrisy of colonial rule. While the British claimed to bring “civilisation” and “justice” to their colonies,the administration of Yaleinstitutionalised a brutal regime that commodified humans as mere cargo. This was imperial greed at its most ruthless, an economy built on human suffering, masked behind bureaucratic orders and legal decrees.It is very clear from further scrutiny that Yale personally profited from this system. The wealth he accumulated during his time in Madras was derived significantly from a colonial economy dependent on slave labour. The profits generated by the trade and exploitation of enslaved individuals contributed to his ability to later fund philanthropic ventures, including donations to educational institutions back in England and America. This unsettling fact links the prestigious Yale University with colonial exploitation and slavery.The consequences of Yale's policies extended far beyond his tenure. Through the institutionalisation of slavery as a regular component of British operations in Madras, he helped lay the groundwork for a system of labour control that persisted even after slavery was officially abolished. The social and economic hierarchies reinforced during this period entrenched patterns of marginalisation and exploitation that shaped South Indian society for centuries.The administration of Elihu Yale in Madras reveals a critical truth about colonial history. In view of the philanthropic narrative lies a story of institutionalised cruelty, where human lives were reduced to economic assets under the guise of colonial governance. It is significant to understand the role of Yale in formalising the slave trade for confronting the darker legacies of European imperialism, legacies that continue to reverberate in modern societies. While considering historical figures and institutions, it is essential to recognise and reckon

with the full scope of their actions, including those that wrought suffering and injustice on countless lives.

Table 1: Chronological Statistical Timeline, Indian Slave, Indentured Shipments, and Legal Milestones

Year	Place/Region
1621–1665	VOC (Dutch) intra-Asian slave shipments (Bay of Bengal region) *Master list (June 1621–Nov 1665)*: 26,885 men, women, and children transported in VOC ships (of whom 1,379 died en route in those records).
1624–1665	Dutch shipments from Arakan (Rakhine) and Coromandel Dutch records report 11,000 slaves shipped from Arakan (1624–1665) and large numbers taken from Coromandel ports during mid-17th-century crises (e.g., 2,118 exported in 1646).
1700s-1790s	Local slave markets on the Coromandel (Pulicat&Triplicane region) Contemporary company correspondence and local reports document open slave markets (women & children sold) and periodic shipments; numbers are episodic rather than centrally tallied in British records.
25 March1807	Abolition of the Slave Trade Act (British Parliament) The Act outlawed the transatlantic slave *trade* on British ships (financial penalties, etc.)
1811-1812-1823	British Slave-trade/child-labour measures Slave Trade Felony Act 1811 criminalised the importation of slaves into British territory; various local regulations sought to restrict slavery/child labour in India.
23 August 1833	Slavery Abolition Act (British Empire) Royal Assent given; it *did not* automatically extend to East India Company territories (so slavery persisted in parts of India).
2, November 1834	First recorded arrival of indentured Indians to Mauritius Mauritius was the first formal destination used in the new indenture scheme after abolition; Aapravasi Ghat (Port Louis) began receiving recruits in 1834.

Source: Madras Court of Admiralty Records. *Proceedings on Slave Trade Cases, 1684–1700.* Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

The Mechanisms of the Slave Trade

The slave trade in colonial times was not a haphazard or purely clandestine activity; it was a highly organised system, supported by both local collaborators and European colonial structures. It operated through a network of brokers, judicial institutions, Company officials, and private traders, all of whom were complicit in maintaining a supply of human labour for both local use and overseas markets. This systematic structure reveals the deeply embedded nature of slavery in the colonial economy of South India. At the foundational level, the slave trade was often facilitated by local brokers, many of whom were Indians who operated under the influence or employment of European trading houses. These brokers were motivated by profit and played a key role in identifying, capturing, or coercing individuals into servitude, particularly during times of crisis such as famines, epidemics, or armed conflicts. Among the most affected were marginalised communities, especially the Dalit community, who were historically oppressed and viewed by upper-caste elites as "polluting" or "untouchable." British and Dutch colonial records frequently describe the Paraiyars and similar groups in degrading terms, labelling them as “natural slaves,” a colonial justification used to rationalise their capture and sale. These communities were often stripped of agency and rights under both native and colonial law, making them vulnerable to forced conscription into labour or outright slavery. In many instances, entire families were sold off, and young children, in particular, were highly sought after due to their adaptability and labour potential. There were also European colonial institutions which further legalised and streamlined the slave trade. The East India Company provided the administrative infrastructure that allowed the trade to operate efficiently. An illustration of this legal endorsement was the establishment of the Court of Admiralty in 1684 at Fort St. George. Although it was apparently created to regulate maritime trade and settle disputes among merchants, this court also played a pivotal role in legitimising slave shipments, arbitrating over contracts involving enslaved persons, and issuing rulings that upheld the rights of slaveowners over their

human property. These judicial structures ensured that challenges to the slave trade, either from local protests or ethical objections, could be overridden or ignored. The East India Company made sure that involving slavery in the legal and economic operations of the colonial government, profit always took precedence over humanitarian considerations. The slaves were often carried in the Company ships, which is specifically modified or equipped, and record-keeping practices were introduced to track the movement of human cargo with the same precision applied to spices or textiles. The result was a well-oiled machine of exploitation in which colonial bureaucracy, legal frameworks, caste oppression, and commercial greed worked together. Human lives were quantified, documented, and traded across oceans in a process that was disturbingly bureaucratic and impersonal. The mechanisms of this trade highlight not just the cruelty of individual actors but the systematic nature of colonial violence, where institutions themselves became engines of human suffering.

Table 2: Mass movement under indenture: colony breakdowns. 1.6 million Indians were transported (to many colonies over the 19th–early 20th centuries).

Country	Mass Movement Under Indenture
Mauritius	commonly cited totals: 450,000 (often published as 451,000–4,53,000 for British Mauritius between 1834-1920). (UNESCO, Aapravasi Ghat notes "almost half a million" arrivals).
British Guiana (Demerara/ Essequibo	commonly cited 238,000 (figures for 1838–1917 appear in compilations).
Trinidad & Tobago	commonly cited 147,000 (often reported as 143,000–148,000 depending on source; National Archives / local registries give 147,592 / 147,596 for 1845–1917).
Jamaica	commonly cited 36,000 (sources vary: some state 15,000 earlier shipments; later aggregated totals usually cite 36,000 between 1845–1917). Note the user's 15,000 figure likely refers to earlier/partial periods.
Fiji	60,965 (1879–1916; 87 voyages).
Natal (South Africa)	152,000 (19th-century indenture to Natal).

Source:(These colony totals come from encyclopaedic compilations and the published indenture registers; published totals vary by author and by the terminal date used — e.g., 1870 vs 1917 vs 1920 — so always check the cut-off.)

Indentured Servitude as a Facade for Slavery in South India

Slavery was eventually outlawed in the British Empire; coercive labour systems continued under different names, one of the most prominent being indentured servitude. In South India, the indentured labour became a legal and moral façade for practices that bore visible similarities to slavery. Although it was framed as voluntary contracts, indentured servitude often involved deception, coercion, and abuse, especially targeting vulnerable populations such as marginalised communities, famine victims, and orphans. It allowed colonial authorities and European companies to exploit indigenous labour under the pretence of legality and mutual agreement. Indentured servitude involved the signing of a contract, sometimes by the individual, but often by local intermediaries or guardians, committing a person to work for a fixed number of years, usually five to ten, in return for passage, minimal wages, and basic subsistence. This system thereby offered economic opportunities to the poor. However, in practise, it mirrored the conditions of slavery with long working hours, inadequate food and shelter, restricted movement, physical punishment, and little to no chance of escape. Many labourers were illiterate or unaware of the terms they were agreeing to, and once contracted, had virtually no legal recourse. The rise of indentured labour in the 19th century coincided with the formal abolition of slavery in British colonies in 1833. However, rather than dismantling systems of forced labour, the colonial administration simply rebranded and reorganised them. The East India Company and later the British Raj needed a cheap labour force to work on plantations and infrastructure projects across the empire, from Ceylon and Malaya to Mauritius, Fiji, and the Caribbean. South India,

especially the drought- and famine-prone districts of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, provided a steady supply of desperate labourers. Many indentured workers were from Dalit and tribal communities, who were historically excluded from land ownership and political power. British officials and recruiters exploited their poverty and low social status to extract labour. The Recruitment agents were paid per head, incentivising them to use fraud, false promises, and outright kidnapping to meet quotas. In several documented cases, children were forcibly taken, women were tricked into signing contracts they could not read, and families were separated without warning. In spite of the official claims that indentured labourers were free at the end of their contracts, many never returned home. As they were trapped in distant colonies, often without the means to leave or reintegrate, these individuals faced generational displacement. Moreover, the stigma of being "coolies" or bonded labourers followed them across the empire and into postcolonial narratives, reinforcing hierarchies of race, caste, and class. In South India itself, the indentured servitude is largely overshadowed by the dominant colonial histories. A closer examination reveals that this system functioned as a continuation of slavery by other means, exploiting legal loopholes and social vulnerabilities to maintain control over indigenous labour. It stands as a powerful reminder that freedom on paper does not guarantee freedom in practice, especially when systems of power are designed to benefit from the illusion of choice.

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The Black Death Plague in Colonial Coimbatore – An Overview

Kalainaya R, M.A

The plague outbreaks in Coimbatore were part of a larger epidemic that spread across colonial South India. During this era, the city faced frequent occurrence of the Black Death, with severe outbreaks reported in 1903, 1909, 1917, and 1942. The disease, caused by the Yersinia pestis bacterium, brought immense suffering and loss, leaving an indelible mark on Coimbatore's social structure, medical landscape, and cultural identity. To combat the crisis, authorities took decisive action, appointing special officers, setting up plague police, and using public announcements to inform and guide the population. Coimbatore's struggle against the Black Death showcases the city's strength and adaptability in the face of crisis. This history provides a deep insight into how people in Coimbatore handled public health, governance, and the mix of science and spirituality during the time of plague.

Objectives

- To trace the historical background and significance of Black Death Plague in Coimbatore

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- To analyse the consequences faced during the plague
- To assess the social and economic impacts in Coimbatore due to the plague
- To examine measures taken by the Colonial Government

Methodology

This study was based on both Primary and Secondary sources. The Primary sources include Gazetteers and Report. The Secondary sources include Books, Journals, Newspapers and Websites.

Plague Outbreak in Madras Presidency

The plague outbreaks in Madras Presidency during the colonial era were part of the Third Plague Pandemic, distinct from the 14th century Black Death in Europe. In 1913, the death counted as 5,130 in 17 districts due to the plague. In 1917, the death counted as 3,284 and in 1920, the plague carried away 3,869 people. Between 1901 and 1921, the region recorded around 1,74,192 plague-related deaths, with varying impact across districts. Over the next two decades, deaths declined to approximately 52,297, reflecting improved public health measures. Even as late as the 1940's and early 1950's, plague deaths continued, although at lower numbers. The city of Madras was relatively spared due to strict public health measures, including a "plague passport" system, rat control efforts, and quarantine protocols. The city was divided into zones, with travellers from affected areas required to undergo daily medical checks. These measures, along with house evacuations and cordoning off infected areas, helped limit the spread of the disease. In the first half of the 20th century, the Madras Presidency faced considerable plague mortality, yet the city of Madras itself was relatively protected in comparison to other urban centres in India.

Plague Mortality Rates

Between 1901 and 1905, plague deaths surged, peaking at 20,125 in 1904-1905 and 13,291 in 1903-1904. After a sharp decline to 898 deaths in 1906-1907, fatalities rose again, with notable spikes in 1916-1917 with 11,498 deaths and a record high of 24,708 deaths in 1917-1918. Over the two decades from 1901 to 1921, plague claimed approximately 174,192 lives, highlighting the severity and persistence of the outbreaks.

Main Challenges

Madras was a major transportation hub, connected to plague-affected areas like Rangoon, Bombay, Mysore, and Hyderabad by sea, rail, and road. This made it difficult to control the spread of the disease, as there were many potential entry points. Quarantine and segregation efforts were also complicated by social and cultural factors, such as caste prejudices and the need to respect female privacy. As a result, isolation camps were hard to manage. While some communities cooperated with evacuation efforts, fear and population movement hindered containment. The closure of key checkpoints like the plague passport office at Basin Bridge in 1912 further reduced the city's ability to monitor travellers and track infected individuals, who could easily enter public spaces like railway stations.

Outbreak of Plague In Coimbatore

The historical backdrop of the Black Death plague in Coimbatore is marked by a series of devastating outbreaks during the colonial era, especially in the early 20th century. Thousands died in each outbreak, and cumulatively, the death toll in Coimbatore mounted to tens of thousands. The first documented plague outbreak occurred in 1903, and the city faced repeated epidemics in the following years. Reports suggest that around 3,500 lives were lost during these outbreaks. Periya Govindaswamy Naidu stood out as a hero, bravely riding through the city on horseback to treat plague victims alongside native medicine practitioners Sodalamuthu and Bhashyakarulu. Compassionate figures like Meenakshi Ammal, C.K. Subramania Mudaliar's wife, and Murugaiya Pandithar played key roles in caring for plague victims.

In 1909, the plague spread rapidly, leading to high fatalities, and many residents either fled the city or were isolated. Coimbatore's population declined during the plague outbreak as many people left the city in search of safety. Periya Govindaswamy Naidu showed remarkable courage, treating plague patients despite the danger, and often disregarding government restrictions on movement. The outbreak sparked widespread fear and disruption, prompting the government to enforce strict measures, including quarantines, vaccination

drives, rat extermination programs, and travel restrictions that required medical clearances or "plague passports." By 1911, the city's population had drastically dropped to just 47,000, largely due to the high death toll and widespread migration driven by fear of the plague.

Challenges Faced During the Plague

Poor sanitation played a significant role in the spread of the disease. To combat this, authorities implemented measures such as cleaning public spaces, clearing dirty areas, and deploying rat traps. However, these efforts required substantial labor and caused significant disruption. The local healthcare system was severely strained, with practitioners like Periya Govindaswamy Naidu and traditional healers playing a crucial role in patient care. Due to mistrust of Western medicine and limited resources, many people turned to folk remedies and spiritual support to cope with the outbreak. Authorities implemented public health measures, including vaccination drives, quarantines, and travel restrictions with medical clearances and permits, which often sparked resentment and anxiety among affected communities. The plague led to significant social displacement and economic hardship, with many residents forced to relocate to escape infection or due to quarantine measures. This displacement resulted in the formation of new localities and disruptions to livelihoods. While wealthier families could afford to leave for safer areas or pilgrimages, the poor had limited options. The implementation of control measures required a large workforce, including plague police and sanitary officers. However, some officials faced challenges and resistance, including fines, for taking independent initiatives.

Social Impact

The rapid spread of plague sparked widespread panic, causing people to avoid social gatherings, temples, and marketplaces for fear of getting infected. The outbreak led to widespread disruptions, with schools, markets, and public institutions shutting down or reducing activities. Marginalized communities, like Dalits, suffered disproportionately due to poor living conditions. Traditional practices around funerals and weddings were also disrupted by plague regulations, with enforced quick burials and cremations sparking religious and cultural tensions. People built temples dedicated to Plague Mariamman as a way to cope with the epidemic, blending religious and cultural practices to deal with the crisis. Coimbatore has sixteen plague Mariamman temples, each with its own unique history and significance, with notable ones being the temples in Town Hall, Pappanaickenpalayam, and Singanallur. These temples served as hubs for rituals, where people sought divine intervention to protect themselves from the plague. The government used traditional methods like the 'Dandora' drum to make public announcements, spreading awareness about health measures. People blended cultural beliefs with medical practices, combining vaccinations and hygiene with ritual purifications and offerings to prevent the plague.

Economic Impact

The repeated plague outbreaks in Coimbatore (1903, 1909, 1917, and 1942) resulting in high mortality rates that severely impacted the workforce across agriculture, industry, and trade. This led to decreased productivity and economic output. Strict quarantine measures, including travel bans, plague passports, and isolation protocols, restricted movement and disrupted commerce, slowing down crucial trade networks. The agriculture sector suffered greatly due to labour shortages and supply chain disruptions, affecting farming and goods movement. The rural economy faced instability and income loss, while informal sectors like crafts and small-scale industries were hit hard by the loss of skilled workers and frequent plague control measures.

Measures of Colonial Government

The colonial government took strong action to control the plague, appointing officials like Abdul Hafiz Sahib to lead sanitation and public health efforts. Strict measures included rat control using traps and poison, and vaccination drives with incentives to boost participation. A special "plague police" force enforced quarantines, monitored travel, and issued "plague passports" for those coming from affected areas. Quarantine and isolation rules were strictly enforced with penalties for non-compliance. Overcrowded homes were inspected, and new sanitation rules were put in place. This marked the beginning of improved urban health infrastructure, including plague hospitals,

inspection camps, and stricter municipal sanitation practices. This approach combined law enforcement, public health infrastructure, and social monitoring, setting a precedent for epidemic management. However, it also highlighted the colonial government's reliance on coercion and surveillance to enforce public health measures.

Conclusion

To conclude, the plague had a profound impact on Coimbatore, reshaping its demographics, social structures, and economy. Repeated outbreaks took thousands of lives, drastically reducing the population and disrupting daily life. The colonial government's response, which included sanitation efforts, vaccinations, quarantines, and rat control, eventually helped contain the plague, but often clashed with local customs due to its coercive nature. The plague's effects went beyond health, altering social behaviours, cultural practices, and the economy, particularly in terms of labour and trade. Communities adapted by combining medical measures with traditional practices, such as building temples to Plague Mariamman. This experience highlights the complex interplay between colonial policies and local responses, showcasing the resilience of Coimbatore's people. Ultimately, the plague brought immense hardship but also shaped the city's public health and social landscape.

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Beyond Borders: Social and Cultural Interactions in the Palakkad–Coimbatore Region

Dr. Geetha .K

Historical Background

The Palakkad Gap has served as a trade corridor since antiquity. Archaeological and literary evidence shows that this route connected the Malabar coast, known for its spices, with the fertile Tamil plains that produced rice and cotton. Roman coins found in Kerala testify to early overseas commerce, which relied on inland routes such as the Palakkad Gap to move goods from ports like Muziris and Tyndis to the Tamil hinterland. The Tamil Sangam literature (circa 300 BCE–300 CE) celebrates the bustling trade of pepper, ivory, and pearls, and hints at the role of passes like Palakkad in sustaining exchange between the Chera and Pandya territories. Thus, even in the early historic period, the Gap acted as a cultural and economic lifeline.

From the early centuries CE to the medieval period, the Palakkad–Coimbatore zone was shaped by the shifting power struggles of the Chera, Chola, and Pandya dynasties. The Cheras controlled much of present-day Kerala, but the Palakkad Gap exposed their territory to incursions from the east.During periods of Chola expansion (9th–13th centuries), the Gap became a strategic gateway. Chola inscriptions in the region record land grants, temple patronage, and taxation systems that extended into Palakkad. Similarly, Pandya influence in the 13th–14th centuries reinforced the intertwined political history of the Tamil–Kerala

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borderlands. Rather than being isolated, Palakkad functioned as a frontier zone contested by major powers, embedding the region within wider South Indian politics.The porous nature of the border facilitated long-term migration of communities. The settlement of Tamil Brahmins in *agraharams* around Palakkad—particularly in Kalpathy, Chittur, and other villages—illustrates how ritual, educational, and linguistic traditions of Tamil Nadu were transplanted into Kerala. These agraharams preserved Tamil religious practices while interacting with the Malayalam-speaking environment, creating a distinct cultural synthesis.Similarly, weavers and artisan groups migrated through the Gap, enriching Kerala's textile traditions. Coimbatore and Kongu Nadu traders moved westward, while Malabar Muslims and Christians carried spices and forest products eastward. These exchanges laid the foundation for a shared social economy that blurred regional boundaries.

The 18th century marked another critical phase with the rise of Mysore under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. Their expansion into Malabar and Palakkad reconfigured settlement and political patterns. Palakkad fort, originally built by local rulers, was reconstructed under Hyder Ali in 1766, transforming the region into a military stronghold. Tipu Sultan's rule saw new taxation systems, land reorganizations, and attempts to control trade through the Gap. His campaigns brought migration and displacement, as communities fled or were resettled. The Mysore occupation also enhanced military infrastructure and administrative centralization, binding Palakkad more closely to the politics of Mysore and, subsequently, to British colonial interests after Tipu's fall in 1799. Thus, by the end of the 18th century, the Palakkad–Coimbatore corridor had evolved into a multi-layered historical landscape where trade, dynastic struggles, migrations, and wars continually reshaped its social and cultural character.

Bilingualism in Palakkad: The Malayalam–Tamil Interface

The Palakkad–Coimbatore region represents a classic case of bilingualism born out of geography. While Malayalam dominates the Malabar plains, and Tamil prevails in the Kongu Nadu belt, the Palakkad Gap has ensured constant interaction between the two linguistic traditions. In Palakkad, many households—especially among migrant communities—have historically been bilingual, with members conversing in both Tamil and Malayalam. Festivals, rituals, and markets demanded a fluid movement between the two tongues. This bilingual environment not only shaped everyday speech but also influenced cultural productions such as songs, proverbs, and oral narratives that carried mixed linguistic features. Thus, Palakkad became a linguistic melting pot, where language was not a barrier but a bridge for cross-cultural communication.

One of the most fascinating linguistic outcomes of this contact zone is the emergence of Palakkad Tamil, a dialect spoken by Tamil Brahmin agraharam communities and sections of the trading class. Unlike standard Tamil of Coimbatore or Madurai, Palakkad Tamil carries phonetic, syntactic, and lexical borrowings from Malayalam. For instance, Malayalam intonation patterns and vocabulary (e.g., "chetta," "ammachi") are freely inserted into Tamil speech, producing a hybrid that is mutually intelligible yet distinct. Scholars argue that this dialect reflects a borderland identity—not fully Tamil, not fully Malayalam, but uniquely Palakkad.The dialect is also a marker of social distinction, as agraharam residents used it as a cultural identity marker, while rural Tamil migrants often spoke variants closer to Kongu Tamil. This demonstrates how language intersects with caste, community, and migration history.

The Palakkad–Coimbatore corridor also became fertile ground for literary exchange. The Tamil Siddha tradition, rooted in mysticism, alchemy, and philosophical poetry, influenced ascetic communities and folk practices in Palakkad. Siddha texts, written in cryptic Tamil verse, circulated through wandering healers, yogis, and performers, embedding themselves in Kerala's cultural soil. At the same time, Palakkad's proximity to central Kerala exposed communities to

Sanskritic scholarship and temple-centered learning. Namboothiri Brahmins and Sanskrit scholars in the Bharathapuzha valley produced works in Vyakarana (grammar), Mimamsa (ritual exegesis), and Kavya (poetics) that drew upon pan-Indian classical traditions. The interaction of these two worlds—Tamil Siddha mysticism and Kerala's Sanskrit scholasticism—created a multi-layered intellectual climate. This is visible in the writings of later poets who effortlessly borrowed metaphors, idioms, and themes across languages. For example, medieval poets in Palakkad often wrote in *Manipravalam* (a mixed language of Sanskrit and Malayalam) but incorporated Tamil devotional idioms, reflecting the fusionist character of the borderland.

Literary exchanges in the region were not limited to elite texts. Oral ballads, folk songs, and temple narratives preserved shared histories of migration, war, and devotion. For instance, songs about Tipu Sultan's campaigns exist both in Tamil and Malayalam, often overlapping in vocabulary and imagery. Similarly, the Kalpathy Ratholsavam festival produced devotional hymns that circulate in both Tamil and Malayalam households, reinforcing a collective cultural memory that transcends linguistic boundaries.

Temples as Cross-Border Institutions

Temples in the Palakkad–Coimbatore region functioned not merely as religious sites but also as social and cultural bridges. On the Kerala side, temples such as the Kalpathy Vishwanatha Swamy Temple and Chittur Bhagavathy Temple drew devotees from across the Tamil border. Similarly, in Coimbatore, temples like Perur Patteeswarar Temple and Marudhamalai Murugan Temple attracted pilgrims from Palakkad.These institutions facilitated ritual exchange. Tamil Brahmin priests officiated in Palakkad temples, while Kerala-style rituals influenced temple practices in Coimbatore. The temple economy—based on land grants, donations, and festivals—created a shared cultural economy, reinforcing bonds across the borderland.

The Kalpathy Ratholsavam (chariot festival) stands out as a striking example of cultural fusion. Celebrated annually in the heritage agraharams of Kalpathy, this festival combines Tamil Shaivite rituals with Kerala's community participation. The pulling of decorated chariots through the streets resembles Tamil Nadu's temple festivals, but the local involvement, musical styles, and festive ambiance carry a distinctly Palakkad flavor.Similarly, the Chittur Konganpada festival, commemorating the victory of local forces over the Chola army, reflects the memory of inter-dynastic conflict celebrated through ritual drama and martial processions. Such festivals showcase how religion and politics intertwined, with narratives transmitted through ritual performances.

In Coimbatore, the Perur Patteeswarar temple festival regularly attracted traders and pilgrims from Palakkad, creating opportunities for cultural mingling. These events served as seasonal hubs of interaction, reinforcing shared cultural identities.The spread of the Bhakti movement from Tamil Nadu deeply impacted Palakkad's cultural life. Shaivite and Vaishnavite devotional traditions—especially those popularized by the Tamil *Alvars* and *Nayanmars*—entered Kerala through the Palakkad Gap. Temples in Palakkad, such as Kalpathy's Vishwanatha Swamy Temple, maintained ritual traditions rooted in Tamil Bhakti poetry. At the same time, Kerala's own devotional streams—particularly Bhagavata traditions linked to Krishna worship—flowed eastward, influencing devotional practices in Coimbatore. This two-way exchange demonstrates how Bhakti was not a unidirectional movement but a dialogical process of cultural borrowing and adaptation.

The Palakkad–Coimbatore corridor is also remembered as a cradle of performing arts. Palakkad produced some of the most celebrated Carnatic musicians, including Palghat Mani Iyer and Palghat K.V. Narayanaswamy, whose training and styles blended Tamil and Kerala traditions. Coimbatore, in turn, became a stage for Kerala musicians, ensuring artistic circulation across the border.Dance traditions also reflect this interaction. Bharatanatyam, rooted in Tamil Nadu's temple traditions, gained patronage among Brahmin families in Palakkad, while Kathakali performers from Kerala often toured Coimbatore during temple festivals. This mutual patronage expanded the cultural horizon of both regions.Folk forms such as

Bhagavata Mela (from Tamil Nadu) and Desa Natyam (local Kerala plays) often shared themes and performance structures, testifying to a hybrid cultural theatre born out of cross-border borrowings.

The cumulative effect of these religious and artistic exchanges was the creation of hybrid cultural identities. A Tamil Brahmin family in Kalpathy might participate in Kerala's temple Poorams; a Coimbatore merchant might sponsor Carnatic concerts in Palakkad. The fluidity of practice blurred linguistic and regional boundaries.Religion, rather than dividing people, functioned as a common cultural idiom, allowing communities to negotiate shared spaces. This underscores the idea of the Palakkad–Coimbatore region as a contact zone, where cultural borrowings were constant, and identities remained plural and adaptive.

Brahmin Agraharams and Cross-Border Identities

One of the most visible markers of Tamil migration into Palakkad is the establishment of Brahmin agraharams (traditional Brahmin settlements). The agraharams of Kalpathy, Chittur, and Govindarajapuram were modeled on Tamil Nadu's village layouts, with rows of houses facing temples dedicated to Vishnu or Shiva.Theseagraharams maintained strong ties with Coimbatore and other parts of Kongu Nadu through kinship, marriage, and ritual exchange. They preserved Tamil Shaivite and Vaishnavite traditions, but over time, they also absorbed elements of Kerala culture—such as Malayalam vocabulary in daily speech and participation in Kerala-style festivals like Poorams. Thus, the agraharams embodied a hybrid Tamil–Malayali identity, balancing continuity with adaptation.

Beyond the Brahmin elite, weaver and artisan communities played a crucial role in the region's social fabric. Tamil-speaking Kaikkolars (weavers) and Devangas migrated into Palakkad, bringing with them skills in cotton weaving that complemented Coimbatore's textile economy. They introduced techniques of handloom production, which enriched Kerala's traditional weaving clusters. Artisan groups such as smiths, carpenters, and potters also moved through the Gap, settling in villages where agricultural surpluses created demand for tools and ritual objects. These migrations fostered craft-sharing networks, producing a cultural economy in which both Kerala and Tamil Nadu traditions thrived.

The Palakkad–Coimbatore region was also a meeting point for Muslim and Christian traders, who often acted as cultural and economic mediators. Muslim merchants from Malabar carried spices, areca nut, and forest produce into Coimbatore's markets, while Tamil Muslim traders brought cotton and textiles westward. These exchanges produced a shared mercantile culture, with mosques and bazaars serving as hubs of interaction. Christian communities, especially the Syrian Christians of Palakkad, maintained networks that extended into Coimbatore's emerging urban economy. By the colonial period, Christian entrepreneurs became active in education, printing, and banking, thereby deepening cross-cultural linkages.

Intermarriage across communities and across the Kerala–Tamil Nadu divide further blurred boundaries. Tamil Brahmin families in Palakkad often married into Coimbatore lineages, reinforcing ritual and kinship ties. Artisan groups and traders similarly sustained cross-border marriage alliances that stabilized migration and settlement patterns.These kinship networks meant that cultural exchange was not confined to markets or temples but was embedded in the intimate structures of family life. Food habits, domestic rituals, and dowry practices frequently combined elements from both Kerala and Tamil traditions, creating blended cultural households.Markets, rivers, and roads provided everyday arenas for social mingling. Weekly bazaars in Palakkad attracted Tamil traders, while Kerala farmers sold paddy and coconuts in Coimbatore. Pilgrimage routes connected temples, mosques, and churches across the border, ensuring a constant circulation of people.In such shared spaces, cultural borrowing was naturalized: Malayalam speakers learned Tamil bargaining idioms in markets, while Tamil migrants adopted Malayalam culinary practices such as the use of coconut in cooking. These micro-level exchanges reveal how social interaction created a common cultural zone, even amidst linguistic and caste-based differences.

Economic Interactions

The Palakkad–Coimbatore region demonstrates how geography and cultural proximity translated into sustained economic exchange. Coimbatore emerged in the modern period as the "Manchester of South India," with its thriving handloom and later mechanized textile industries. This industrial base found a ready market in Palakkad, where traders imported cotton yarn, woven cloth, and textiles. Palakkad's own communities of weavers—migrants from Tamil regions—bridged the economies by combining Tamil weaving techniques with local consumption patterns.Weekly shandies and temple festivals became sites where textiles and agrarian products circulated side by side, symbolizing the interdependency of the two regions.

Kerala's spices—pepper, cardamom, and ginger—flowed through Palakkad to Tamil Nadu markets, while Coimbatore contributed dry grains, jaggery, and oil products. The exchange was not simply transactional but part of a broader socio-cultural practice, where traders, transporters, and middlemen maintained bilingual and bi-cultural identities. The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed infrastructural transformations that tightened the economic linkages. The construction of the Palakkad–Coimbatore railway line under the British in the late 19th century created a direct conduit for agrarian and industrial goods. Simultaneously, the improvement of roadways enabled bullock carts and later motor vehicles to enhance trade flows. The rail and road networks also accelerated cultural mobility—pilgrims, students, and workers crossed the Gap with unprecedented ease. The economic interdependence of Palakkad and Coimbatore thus transcended mere border trade. It produced shared markets, mutual reliance, and hybrid communities of traders and artisans. In many ways, the prosperity of Coimbatore's mills rested on the food security provided by Palakkad's granaries, just as Palakkad's agrarian surpluses depended on Tamil markets for distribution. The two regions, therefore, embody an intertwined economy rooted in geography and history.

Case Studies

While the broader narrative of the Palakkad–Coimbatore region highlights deep cultural, social, and economic interconnections, specific case studies allow us to see how these dynamics unfolded in lived experience. The following examples illustrate the depth and variety of this fusion zone.The Kalpathy agraharams (traditional Brahmin streets) in Palakkad represent one of the most enduring examples of Tamil cultural transplantation into Kerala. Migrant Tamil Brahmins from Kongu and Chola regions settled here between the 15th and 18th centuries, bringing with them Vedic rituals, Tamil bhakti traditions, and Carnatic music. The annual Kalpathy Ratholsavam (chariot festival) epitomizes this synthesis: Sanskrit mantras, Tamil bhajans, and Malayalam devotional participation merge in one celebratory space. The agraharams thus stand as living symbols of bilingual, bicultural heritage, preserved through ritual, cuisine, and music.

Palakkad's prominence in Carnatic music is well-known, producing legends such as Palakkad Mani Iyer (mridangam) and Palakkad K.V. Narayanaswamy (vocal). What makes Palakkad distinct is how its music schools (*gharanas*) synthesized Tamil Carnatic grammar with Kerala's Sanskritic and bhakti traditions. Concerts frequently included kritis of Tyagaraja (Telugu), Dikshitar (Sanskrit), and Malayalam devotional compositions, reflecting a multilingual repertoire. The Kalpathy agraharams functioned as both training grounds and performance venues, where young artists absorbed techniques from both Tamil and Kerala masters.

The economic interdependence of the region is best captured by the relationship between Coimbatore's textile industry and Palakkad's agrarian surpluses. By the early 20th century, Coimbatore had established itself as the "Manchester of South India," with its mills dependent on a steady supply of food grains for its workforce. Palakkad, with its surplus paddy and coconut produce, became a vital supplier. In return, cotton textiles from Coimbatore flooded Palakkad's markets, shaping everyday consumption patterns. Weekly shandies (markets) in Palakkad reveal this interdependency, with Tamil and Malayali traders coexisting in shared commercial spaces.These case studies reveal how macro-level cultural, political, and economic dynamics became tangible in everyday life. The agraharams, the music gharanas, the agrarian–

industrial trade nexus, and even the intimacy of marriage alliances collectively demonstrate that Palakkad–Coimbatore was not a periphery but a vibrant center of interaction and fusion.

Analysis

The Palakkad–Coimbatore region exemplifies how borderlands function less as barriers and more as bridges. The porous geography of the Palakkad Gap ensured that human movement was not obstructed but rather facilitated, creating conditions for sustained cultural mingling.The case studies show that cultural forms rarely remained "pure." Tamil Brahmin settlements in Palakkad became "Kerala-ized" through linguistic borrowing and temple rituals, while Palakkad's agrarian economy was "Tamil-ized" by weaving traditions and industrial linkages. Similarly, bilingual households, hybrid music traditions, and shared festivals show how distinct cultural markers blurred into new, composite forms.Borrowing from Mary Louise Pratt's concept of a *contact zone*, this borderland can be understood as a space of constant negotiation—where different groups (Kerala's agrarian communities, Tamil Brahmins, traders, weavers, laborers) interacted, contested, and fused traditions. Instead of imagining the Kerala–Tamil Nadu boundary as a rigid line, the Palakkad–Coimbatore corridor emerges as a contact zone that nurtured creativity, syncretism, and solidarity.At the same time, the region's hybridity did not erase distinct identities. Tamil Brahmins in agraharams preserved caste-based ritual practices, while Palakkad Nairs and Kerala Muslims maintained their cultural autonomy. Yet, their coexistence in shared spaces—markets, festivals, political struggles—demonstrates how integration and distinctiveness can cohabit. The region thus presents a paradox: cultural integration without cultural erasure.

Conclusion

The Palakkad–Coimbatore region is not merely a frontier between Kerala and Tamil Nadu; it is a living laboratory of cultural hybridity. Across history, geography shaped human flows, and those flows, in turn, generated patterns of social and cultural fusion that defy rigid boundaries.The analysis of language, music, economy, religion, politics, and migration all point to the same conclusion: the Palakkad Gap is not a borderland in the restrictive sense but a corridor of exchange where traditions are constantly adapted, borrowed, and reinvented.In the age of globalization, the Palakkad–Coimbatore experience offers important lessons. It demonstrates that multicultural coexistence is not achieved by erasing differences but by allowing plurality to thrive in shared spaces. In a world increasingly marked by polarization and hardening borders, this region reminds us that cultural richness often emerges in contact zones, where negotiation and hybridity replace division and exclusion.

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The Traditional Knowledge System of Kani Tribes in Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu

M.Selvaraju[1] & Dr. P. Prakash[2]

Introduction

The Kani or Kanikkar tribes live in the mountain regions of the Western Ghats, specifically in the Ambasamudram Taluk of Tirunelveli district, and in the Kallakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve area. They are known for their intimate connection with forest, using medicinal plants and forest resources for their livelihood, although they have transitioned from a nomadic life to settled cultivators in small hamlets called "Kanikudiyiruppu".

India has been home to several ethnic groups from ancient time it is also known as a nation of various cultures and subcultures. The India the world's second largest primitive ethnic group. According to D.N.Mjumdar and T.N. Madan (1956), tribes are social groups connected in language, traditions, beliefs and practices, they also recognise social distance from other people and are territorially integrated. Although primitive tribes have inhabited India for centuries, their origins and lineage remain largely research of the communities.

The terms "Scheduled Tribes" was first defined in Section 366(25) of the Indian constitution. Before their constitutional recognitions, these communities were known by various terms, such as hunter - gathers, nomadic tribes and primitive tribes. The following their inclusion in the constitution, "Scheduled Tribes" became the widely accepted designation. There Five scheduled tribe divisions in the Tirunelveli district, including primitive tribes. The included known by several synonyms such as Kaniyan, Kanikkar, Kanikarans, Velanmars and Malairasans. Although five ethnic group resided in Tirunelveli, their Settlements were relatively small.

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Study Area:

The 'Agasthiyar hills' is one of part of the Kalakkadu Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve area of Tamilnadu. The Kanikkaran or Kani is a Scheduled Tribal in the forest and hilly region of the Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Kani speaks a mixed version of Tamil and Malayalam languages.

The current study was conducted in Tirunelveli district that is located in the world map between 08°8' and 98°23' latitude and 77°09' and 77°54' longitude. The total geographical area of the district is 3876.06 sq.km. The Kani tribes traditionally lived in the regions surrounding these hills. There are several Kani communities in the lower Kondayar Dam and Pechiparai Dam and considerable attention was paid to this region.

The Kani Tribes:

The word "Kani" means "Land Proprietor" also known as "Malaiarasar", which means "the ruler of mountains". The Kani people living inside the forest are named Kanikkaran, where as members who live beyond the mountains are called "Velanmaar". They are originally namads, according to their folklore and they began to live settle around the eighteenth century. During the region of the King Marthanda Varma of Tranvancore (1729-1758), the several new land revenue system plans were put into place, on which was to give lands to the Kani people. However, this remains a folklore as it was said that King Marathanada Varma sought assistance from these people during a dire situation, and they saved his life. He granted the Kani people ownership of the whole forest, making them the indigenous inhabitants of the Travanocre highlands for Kerala State.

The Kani people administration is controlled by the chief headman subordinate headman and ritual healer, known locally as Moottukaani, Vilikkani and Pilathikani respectively. The head man plays the role of law maker, protector, giver of justice and eventually heads marriages, ceremonies and all important decision taken by him. The Vilikkani assists Moottukaani in all activities. The Pilathikani serving as the physician, healer and priest performs all the ritual practices for the ethnos from birth and death. The Kani people were divided into Ten groups under term "Illam", created primarily for the marriages system and property possession. These Ten division may broadly be divided into two caregories Ananathambi illam and Machambi illam. The Talamillam, Kayillam, Perunchillam, Mangothillam and Thenillam are among the division of Annanthambi and Mootillam, Perumanillam, Palamillam, Vilanttillam and krumillam are among the division of Machambi, the Thurston & Rangachari 1909, the Kani people traditional knowledge system.

Traditional knowledge system:

The traditional knowledge system of the Kani Tribes in Tirunelveli is rich in ethnobotanical knowledge, particularly their extensive understanding and use of medicinal plants for various ailments like cough, fever, poisonous bites and wound, This knowledge is passed down through generations and also encompasses sustainable practices for resource management, including innovative honey collection, forest conservation, and a deep understanding of wild environment s and animal behaviour. Their governance is organized around a chief headman (Moottukaani), who leads the community, making them custodians of invaluable ecological and health - related indigenous wisdom.

Ethno botanical knowledge:

The Kani people have extensive knowledge of local plants used as remedies for a wide array of illnesses, including cough, cold, fever, poisonous bites and wounds. The leaves are often the most commonly used plant parts for treatments. Specific examples of plants like Gymneme sylvestre and uses. They use various methods, such as creating plants pastes, grinding tender stems with coconut or burning fruits and inhaling their smoke for medicinal purposes.

Sustainable Practices:

i) Honey Collection:

The Kani tribes Employ innovative methods for colleting honey from forests, demonstrating a close relationship with natural resources.

ii) Forest Conservation:

They possess a strong understanding of forest ecosystems and have ethical principles for sustainable forest conservation, ensuring the long term health of their environment. Their knowledge extends to minor forest products and understanding the landscape, enabling them to live in harmony with nature.

Social and Governance system:

The Kani Settlements have a hierarchical structure led by a chief headman or Moottukaani, who is assisted by a subordinate headman or Vizhikani. The traditional Governance the Moottukaani plays a vital role in law-making, Justice and important community decisions including overseeing marriages and ceremonies.

The tribe's rich folklore and healing practices are shared and passed down through generations, forming a core part of their traditional knowledge system.

Living Places:

Through their land - standing rituals, religious practices and beliefs, the Kani have maintained a peaceful relationship with their environment, leading to a distinct way of life. They have had a high geographical knowledge and have used it to shape every part of their existence. Their greatest value is the wisdom they inherited form ancestors, which they acquired orally, without any written records. The early stages, once people began to live a settle life, they constructed shelters over trees, a tradition still some used to. They currently reside in small huts and roofed houses. They first consult the "Pilathikani" to select a location free of spiritual energy and perform poojas to utilise wild woods and plant resources to construct their homes. Their houses are built of fattened bamboo walls, natural grasses like half a grass, coconut and palm leaves for the roof, and mud and cow dung for the floors. However's are typically constructed with six pillars, which resemble the legs of the mother, father and kid that makeup a family, believing that their descendants would prosper if they build homes in this manner. Most of their houses are single -roomed and known by paddi, kudi, and Kannipatti living of modern method of life styable.

Cultural of Tradition:

The Kani tribes's traditional occupation include the production of handicrafts, seasonal collection of minor forest products such as honey and beeswax and cultivation of edible plants such as tapioca, banana, millets and cash crops. The members of a tribe usually worship a common ancestor. The nature worship is common among them. In addition to the ancestral worship and natural worship the tribals practise other types of faith such as fetishism, animism and to termism. The magic is also widespread among them.

The rituals and practices the Kani tribes are appropriate for their surroundings. Their traditional clothes are made of leaves and bark, name in their native language as 'Marauri' (as told by Manikandan an informant in a personal interview in 2023). The adopting their altire designs to suit ordinary people's current trends, they have modernised themselves. The gold decorations have little aesthetic value, instead they wear clothes, shells and beads strung with black thread. The women tropically wear many nose rings and earrings and their foreheads are adorned with crescent shaped tilak. They call their language 'Malabaksha' (language of Mountains) a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam. The both men and women contribute equally to the family's wealth. The women occupy esteemed positions within their families and moral values are held in high regard among them.

Food Habits:

The traditional food habits of the Kani Tribes in Tirunelveli rely heavily on foraged forest products like tubers, wild plants, and honey supplemented by cultivated crops like bananas and millets. However, changing socio-economic conditions have led to increased reliance on ration rice and other shop-bought foods, with a decline in some traditional practices due to poverty and limited time for food preparation.

The Kani communities consume a wide variety of wild plants, roots and tubers for sustenance, a practice they have maintain for generations. They also collect honey from the forests, which serves as a source of food. The diet includes various fruits, which they forage from the forest. The tribes cultivate crops like tapioca

and banana for consumption. They consume millets like ragi and foxtail millet, especially in areas where rice is less accessible. The Rice has become a significant part of their diet, particularly as a staple food. They make full use of the crops and their by products throughout the seasons when they are harvested.

The following edible items are typically available each month:

(i) January : Cardamom, Ginger, Potato

(ii) February : Potato, Honey, Tapioca, Cassava

(iii) March : Honey, Banana

(iv) April : Pulses, Onion, Mustard

(v) May : Sugarcane, cereals

(vi) June : Plantain, Millet

(vii) July : Pigeon pea, Millet, various tubers

(viii) August : Plantain and various tubers

(ix) September : Cardamom, Plantain, Tapioca cassava.

(x) October : Two types of Yams known as Neduvan Kilangu, Nooran Kilangu and Cardamom.

(xi) November: Ginger, Sweet Potato

(xii) December : Sugarcane

The Problem and Recommendations:

The primary problems faced by the Kani Tribes in Tirunelveli are lack of legal documentation, hindering access to rights and resources, and economic vulnerability due to dependence on forest products and limited income opportunities. Recommendations to address these issues include providing community and land ownership documents, strengthening economic initiatives through organic certification and dedicated marketing plant forms for forest produce, improving access to education and supporting the systematic documentation and scientific validation of their unique traditional knowledge.

Problems:

- The many Kani tribes essential documents like community certificates and birth certificates, which makes it difficult for them to claim their rights and access higher education.
- The Kani people are often landless or poor farmers, relying on forest products like honey and medicinal herbs for their livelihood, which can be inconsistent and low paying. But without proper documentation, Kani children often cannot study beyond the primary level, limiting their future education
- Their rich traditional knowledge of medicinal plants, which is collective and embedded in their culture, has not been systematically documented or protected leading to potential exploitation.
- While skilled in collecting and selling forest products, to Kani Tribes face challenges in reaching wider market and receiving fair process for their goods.

Recommendations:

- The Government and local authorities should facilitate the acquisition of community certificates and legal land ownership documents (Pattas) for Kani families to secure their rights and resources.
- The support Kani Tribes in obtaining organic certification for their forest produce to enhance market demand and profitability.
- The create dedicated platforms, like the shop in Palayamkottai, to directly sell Kani forest products to consumers, bypassing intermediaries and increasing incomes.
- The offer seed grants and training to strengthen their business activities and help them move into higher - value produce segments.
- The develop programs to facilitate education beyond the primary level for Kani Children helping them access higher education and improve their overall well-being.
- The address heath concerns and promote awareness about health and hygiene in their communities.

Conclusion

The study provides more insightful information on the Kani Tribes indigenous ethnos in the Tirunelveli

district and is a modest attempt to documents their distinctive characteristics, such as their beliefs, worship and intellectual traditions. They only known great deal of Traditional knowledge system is a valuable part of their cultural heritage and efforts to preserve and promote it can help support their well-being and identity. They researches have conducted traditional knowledge system, ethno-botanical surveys, living places, food habits and the problem and recommendations the medicinal plants used by the Kani Tribes. However, because the current generation is not adhering to the traditions, their beautiful natural way of life is being destroyed. Therefore the Kani people need to preserve their wisdom before it vanishes. A comprehensive investigation is necessary to save the more concealed information about the Kani groups.

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Educational Empowerment of Marginalized Women in Salem District (2000-2025) - A Study

R Thilainayaki

Need for women's education

Women empowerment can only be achieved through the provision of adequate and functional education to the women folk. This is crucial because no matter how rich or vast a nation is, without an effective, efficient, adequate and functional education for all its citizens (men and women), education which is relevant to its immediate needs, goals and objectives such a nation would find it difficult to stand on its own. The brand of education being advocated is that type of education in which is embedded the spirit of self-realization and all that were needed for the country's overall development like mass literacy, economic empowerment etc. The need for women's education is also informed by the fact that purposeful occupational achievement and satisfaction is ensured by deep self-awareness and understanding which can only be achieved through the provision of effective and functional education and guidance and counseling.

Marginalized Women's Education

Education is the most important element for the development of human beings. It helps in developing their knowledge, skills, decision making power etc. For proper development of the country, both men and women should have education. In comparison to other developed countries, the literacy percentage in India is not so satisfactory. Giving importance to education, the framers of the constitution included it in the directive principles of state policy provisions for free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 years for all children and for promotion and special care of educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the marginalized and tribe and their protection from social injustice and forms of exploitation. Marginalized consist of nearly 15% of the total population of our country[11].Without educated women, it is hard to think of a progressive family, village, society, community, state and country.

Educating an Indian woman creates a vital opportunity for the social and economic development of India. An educated Indian woman will yield a positive impact in Indian society by contributing positively to the economy of both the country and the society. Educational status is an important phenomenon of the scheduled caste women that means achieving upward social mobility and there is a conscious effort on their part to get their children educated.

Educational Attainments

In India, the marginalized, especially the women, were for centuries deprived of the facilities and privileges of education. Mainly for this reason, they had lagged behind others for years together in matters of social recognition and enjoyment of status they deserved in society. With a view to eliminate the major differences between them and others in society, they had been given opportunities by the central and state governments. Various schemes like post metric scholarship for the students and special educational development programme for scheduled caste girls belonging to low literacy levels offered by the Central Government for the empowerment of marginalized students. Various channels of education were a few among them.

Education of Children

Among most people, the influence of education on the members may be manifested in the actual application of the same in the case of their children too. The plan of family members for educating their children was very important from the viewpoint of their ambition for the building of future programmes for their young ones. It was quite common that such ambitious plans

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may have more influence among the fast developing or acculturating communities.

Conclusion

Through education, marginalized women have broken barriers, challenged social norms, and emerged as agents of change. This study highlights the power of education to uplift, empower, and transform lives, communities, and society as a whole. As we look to the future, it is imperative to continue investing in education as a catalyst for positive change, ensuring that every woman and girl in Salem district has the opportunity to reach her full potential and contribute to a more equitable and prosperous society.

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The Benefactions of "*Illam Thedi Kalvi* " Scheme in Tamil Nadu

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Introduction

The Government of Tamil Nadu's ambitious initiative, *Illam Thedi Kalvi* (ITK) (or "Education at doorsteps" in English), is effectively tackling the post-Covid learning gap among primary and middle school pupils. Even after airing nonstop since December 2021, it hasn't garnered much national attention. Current research indicates that within four months of ITK's launch, 67% of the initial learning gap in rural Tamil Nadu vanished. This serves as a welcome change of pace amid a barrage of negative research on the pandemic's effects on education.The process through which a society passes down its values, knowledge, and skills from one generation to the next is called education.

In its 86th constitutional amendment of 2002, the Indian government established Article 21-A, which aims to give all children between the ages of 6 and 14 free and compulsory schooling. The program encourages self-respect, a humanitarian approach, and a spirit of social justice.The program was initiated in order to close the learning gap that had developed among children as a result of schools being closed during the lockdown caused by the pandemic, to make studying enjoyable, and to assist pupils in escaping the stressful home circumstances brought on by the pandemic. The goal of the program was to freely educate children at home, and the advantages of in-person instruction may outweigh those of online instruction.

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CM launches '*Illam Thedi Kalvi*' scheme

The Chief Minister M.K. Stalin declared that the DMK government was dedicated to advancing education for all segments of society at all levels, from elementary school to university. In his opinion all groups must have access to education, and the Tamilnadu government has taken steps to achieve this. The ITK plan was introduced by the Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin, in October 2021. The plan is designed to protect students from the disruptions caused by the pandemic. With the goal of promoting door-step learning, the government is attempting to assist kids in grades one through eight. The volunteers were recruited by the government to fulfil this function. Government school students could attend the neighbouring *Ilam Thedi Kalvi* Centre to be admitted either willingly or with the assistance of teachers who will assist them with the enrolling process. For just six months, classes were held after school hours at a public location or at the home of a volunteer. For the scheme's execution, the government has set aside Rs.200 crore. Over a million volunteers were essential in motivating parents to bring their kids to school.

The Tamil Nadu government's School Education Department introduced the TN Illam Thedi Kalvi Scheme 2021. The project, which was executed for six months, aimed to teach educational skills to youngsters who have been missing school since the lockdown was instituted in March 2020 to stop the Coronavirus from spreading. Teachers, volunteers, NGOs, and education experts were all involved in the program's implementation, which was expected to cost Rs 200 crore in the fiscal year. Volunteers regularly attended classes near scholars' houses after school hours, from 5 to 7 p.m., as part of the Scheme. More than one lakh volunteers were expected to join the Tamil Nadu *Illam Thedi Kalvi* Scheme, with a volunteer-to-student ratio of up to 1:20. Volunteers who were willing to work with the children for at least six hours each week, or part-time were taken.They taught mathematics, English, and Tamil; they communicated with youngsters in Tamil. Their minimum age was 17 years old and they had to participate willingly, without coercion.

Features:The plan was developed based on suggestions from UNESCO, the State Government's Economic Advisory Council, and educational experts.The primary advantage of the TN Illam Thedi Kalvi 2022 Scheme is that education was now physically provided by the state government. This eliminates the need for a computer, laptop, internet, etc. Every class and subject will have a volunteer allocated to it. They will spread knowledge by going door to door.

Eligibility: Since the program was introduced in Tamil Nadu, only state-native students were eligible to receive its benefits and attend government schools.Students must provide appropriate documentation of their educational background to demonstrate their eligibility for government school facilities and to continue their education.Since the program takes a comprehensive approach to protecting the future of Tamil Nadu state school kids enrolled in government schools, students from all segments of society are eligible.

"India's largest volunteer-based education program" is how the ITK describes itself. Every day, 200,000 female volunteers spent 90 minutes teaching more than 3.3 million pupils in 92,000 habitations. Students were taught a curriculum of fundamental skills in their own home and are divided into two cohorts: primary for classes 1–5 and upper primary for classes 6–8.

One of the main causes for the success of ITK that is most likely is Tamil Nadu's high gross enrolment ratio of 51%, which is twice the national average. However, the fact that it has effectively harnessed the community's strength is another element. The ITK initiative is led by volunteers who reside in the same community as the lessons they teach, allowing for the development of a local relationship on both sides. After a thorough screening procedure that included a psychometric test, they were shortlisted and given just Rs. 1,000 a month to pay their costs for developing

teaching and learning materials (TLMs). They persevere despite the fact that this quantity is frequently not provided on schedule.

Some women worked as contract instructors for the government, earning about Rs. 6,500 per month.. Although they are judged unlikely to succeed, their motivation and compliance levels were strong. The state government contributed to the motivation of these young volunteers as well; they awarded certificates of appreciation to teachers who perform well and recognize the top performers in public events. The ITK should also be credited to the school management committees (SMC). The state's education administration organized large restructuring sessions to revitalize Tamil Nadu's committees, which had been dormant in the majority of states prior to the implementation of ITK. SMCs checked the residences and histories of their volunteers.

Members of the committee also set up locations for the evening classes, which are primarily taught in village community halls. According to studies, poorer households had greater attendance rates. To raise awareness of ITK across the state's 92,000 hamlets, the authorities first enlisted 5,000 folk performers. By encouraging volunteers to come forward and contribute, the Chief Minister further popularized the idea and offered his personal support.

The ITK later was downsized and the program will now solely target priority blocks in districts, hilly locations, and areas with a large concentration of marginalized groups, according to officials. According to the sources, the program, which had offered remedial instruction to pupils in classes 1–8, was only to be used for elementary classes.

Conclusion

The Illam Thedi Kalvi plan (Education at doorsteps) is one of the significant changes to the education system brought about by the Dravidian model government. CM Stalin unveiled the plan on October 27, 2021, in a location called Mudaliarkuppam, which is 13. close to Marakkanam.Due to the Corona Pandemic, which kept pupils confined to their homes, it was a crucial period for the school education sector. The lockdown and the pandemic increased the learning gap, which may become a major issue in the future, according to international studies. In order to close the growing learning gap, CM Stalin implemented the Illam Thedi Kalvi program after realizing the issue.

During its meeting, the UN talked on the importance of the Illam Thedi Kalvi plan. The results of a survey called "Covid-19 Learning Loss and Recovery: Panel Data Evidence from India" from California University were made public online. According to the report, the Illam Thedi Kalvi program has been successful in closing the learning gap, and because of the noticeable improvements that have been observed in just six months from the scheme's introduction in Tamil Nadu, it is advised that India adopt it nationwide.

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Indigenous Governance and Cultural Continuity among the Malayalis of Kolli Hills

Ms. Lisa Rose N[1] and Mr. Joseph Rohith D[2]

Introduction

The Kolli hills also known as 'Kollimalai' is located in the Namakkal district of TamilNadu. Initially the kolli hills region was part of the Salem district.[1]The undulatingplains have ferruginous sandy soil, while the hilly area has a thin layer of dirt.[1] The total areacovers up to 28293 hectares. It is 19 kilometres long from east to west and 29 kilometres longfrom south to north. Of the entire land area, 44% is made up of reserve forests, 51.6% ismade up of cultivable land, and 5% is made up of residential areas.The main tribal group of the Kolli hills region are the Malayalis. According to Thurston, the term Malayali has been derived from the Tamil wordMalai meaning hill and al meaning person and is used to denote hill people. Etymologicallythe word is derived from 'Malai'- 'Hills' and 'ali' - inhabitants.[1]Religion and ritual occupy a central place in Malayali society. Sacred groves, deities such as Muni and Mariyamman, and seasonal festivals form a symbolic framework through which the community negotiates fertility, health, and prosperity. Myths, omens, and superstitions are woven into everyday decision-making, influencing agricultural practices, childbirth rituals, and healing traditions. Festivals and ceremonies serve not only as religious obligations but also as occasions for reaffirming collective identity and strengthening inter-household relationships.This research paper examines, the ethnographicalaspects of the Malayali tribe with various sources which argues that they form a coherent system of meaning and practice through which the Malayalis sustain both cultural continuity and collective identity in the face of social change.

Local Governance

The Malayalis, who were cut off from the plains, formed close bonds with oneanother, and village councils were essential to their governing and decision-making. Due tothe difficult terrain, cooperation was necessary for resource management, construction, andfarming, which promoted a supportive culture. In simple societies, the most importantcomponent is the social organization, the fundamental unit of the society and it plays an important role which includes socialstructures like family, Marriage, Kingship, Economy and political organization. Tamil Hinducustoms and regional hill-based spiritual influences are uniquely blended in the religiousactivities of the Malayalis.[1]The Kolli Hills Panchayat Union has fourteen revenue (Nadu) Villages.[1]The fourteen nadus in the region of Kolli hills namely *Vazhavarunnadu, Thinnurnadu, Selurnadu,Devabyrnadu, Valpurnadu, Ariyurnadu, Gundurnadu, Alaruurnadu, Gundaninadu, Thinpulginadu, Perakkarainadu, Citurarnadu, Edapulinnadu* and *Balinadu*.[1]

Every Nadu is separated into urs, or villages, under the leadership of Ur-goundan.The Ur-goundan is an elective office. Ur Goundan, Kutti Maniyam, Muppan, or Uran are theheadmen of each village,[1] whose position is inherited. In conjunction with a caste panchayat of Karakkarans,who are chosen clan chiefs, the Ur Goundan resolves caste conflicts. He is assisted byKarakkaran in causing conflict between the tribes. Karaikkaran are chosen from among theseveral clans in an Ur, and Periya pattakarans resolve conflicts after an appeal.

A Nadu is a collection of roughly ten or fifteen villages that are governed by anotherhereditary chieftain known as Pattakaran, Sadi Goundan, Nattan, or Nadu Goundan. Everysuch Pattakaran or chief has a Maniakaran to help him. In addition to summoning villagersand announcing weddings, the latter handles all other tasks. Each Nadu's Pattakaran servesas a kind of

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superior court where appeals against the Ur Goundars rulings may be filed.Currently, it seems that the Pattkaran's function is limited to ceremonial sovereignty. As aresult, a Pattakaran is the only individual in Nadu who rides a horse and carries an umbrella,and every Nadu resident bows down to him when they see him. A number of Nadus areoccasionally grouped under the Periya Pattakaran, an even higher authority. If he is referredto as Raja, a Mandiri (Minister) assists him. The Pattakaran (headman), is in charge of eachvillage and serves as the main decision-maker when it comes to social, religious, andadministrative matters.[1] An elder person with considerable knowledge and wisdom is usuallychosen as the, the Pattakaran is selected for their capacity to resolve conflicts and maintainpeace within the community. The Ur-goundarsand Karaikarans choices are thereforerenewed by Periya Pattakarar.[1]

A council of elderly people supports the Pattakaran which is called as the Panchayat.The Meetings of Panchayat take place in public areas like beneath big trees or next to villageshrines, which reflects how the Malayalis incorporate spiritual and ecological aspects when itcomes to the governance. In Malayali villages, the Panchayat system serves as the basementfor foundation of justice.The Panchayat also takes the lead in organising relief operations duringemergencies, such as crop failures or droughts. Redistributing food supplies, startingceremonies to invoke rain, or setting up trade with nearby villages.This system places more emphasis on harmony and reconciliation than punishment.Instead of imposing harsh fines, the goal of sanctions for social infractions is to restoreequilibrium. Fines, public apologies, or temporary removal from group activities are typicalforms of discipline. People who commit serious crimes maybe expelled from the community,although this is only done as a last option.Another distinctive feature of the community is that to conflict a settlement by swearing of an oath. With the conviction that lying willresult in divine vengeance, taking an oath in front of a deity is regarded as a legallyobligatory act.

Family Life

The Malayali clan values simple marriage system. Oolai Eduthal (engagement),Parisam (bridal fee), and marriage were the steps that preceded the wedding. "Oolai" refersto dried palm leaves.[1]Oolai Eduthal is the first process in marriagesystem.[1]When a prospective bride, usually a cross-cousin or distant relative, is identified, the groom's family sends a group of ten men, sometimes with relatives, to her house. The groom's father, if alive, is always present, while the groom himself does not attend, reflecting the collective nature of marriage arrangements. Even if the bride lives in the same village, the formal visit is required. On this day, the men wear dhotis and large white turbans that cover their hair completely, a practice believed by some to ward off bad omens. After seeing the girl, the bride's parents invite the visitors to share a meal; acceptance signifies agreement to the match, while refusal indicates disapproval.[1] If the meal is accepted, the family asks the visitors to return on an auspicious day within two or three weeks to finalize the bride price and conclude the negotiations.The second part is the Parisam (Bride-Price) which is a custom. Bride prices, both monetary and in-kind,are customarily given by Malayalis.A part of the bride-price is sent to the bride's house a week in advance of theactual wedding day. The cross-cousin marriage system known as Menarikam is used. Duringthe straightforward ritual of betrothal, the Ur Goundan must be present. When two peoplefrom different villages are involved, the Pattakaran's approval should be obtained. In theKollimalai, the Ur Goundan knots the thali after the bride-groom places it around the bride'sneck.A pair of flowers adorning the bride, are tossed into a well after the tali has been wrapped around the bride'sneck; It is a sign that they will fallin love if the flowers float together.[1]

Religion, Superstitions & Myths

The majority ofthe Malayali tribal population consists of Hindus; they have their own set of customs andpractices. Kolli hills is a landmark of the ancient temple dedicated to Lord Arappaleeswarar and the goddess Aramvalartha Nayaki.[1]Kali is revered as a village goddess along with Kongalayi and Nachi on the

Kollaimalais. Kongalayi has an image, while Nachi does not.[1] Maariyaayi, KaaliyaayiAmman, Ankalamman. Paderiaman, Saamundeeswari, Kannimaru,Minnadiyyan, Aynaaru, Vettaikaruppu and Ella Karuppu are also being worshippedby the Malayali tribes.[1]The gods Nachi and Pidari are said to guarantee idealharvests and good health. Each year during theTamil month of Chithirai, which falls between April and May, the village women adore themselves in whites and bring offerings that include Ragi and Paddy in order to please Pidari.

Malayali's believe in the existence of spirits. Three distinct kinds of Muni are known as Kolli Muni (who is in charge of the soil's fertility), Ur Cutti Muni (who wanders around the hamlet), and Ellai Muni (the border God).The fertile soil is a result of Kollai Muni's dominance over the arable area. The boundaries ofthe property are sprayed with the blood of a pig sacrificed if the yield declines. Usually,families do this action to increase the productivity of their agricultural property.[1] Whenworshipping Ellai Muni and Ur Cutti Muni, only pigs are offered as sacrifices. A Pūcāli orKurumban performs this specific rite. The practice is called pig piercing, or Panni Kutturatu.Nowadays, the new generation of Pūcāli refuses to practice the rite and Kurumban are allowed to execute in the absence of Pūcāli. Malayalis think Muni can take on both animal and humanforms. The former may converse and engage with the tribespeople and the latter vaguely defined animal-like outlines.Ifa person is affected by small pox, and if water is showered over Minnadiyandeity, his wife Maariyayi will be pleased which will result in the ill getting rid of the disease.The fever due to ill-health or fear of malevolent spirits is believed to be elided if the sameritual is observed in honour of the deity Maasimalayan.[1]A man honours the sun god on Tuesdays byreleasing a red cock if he has hemicrania's, or a headache on one side.The local priest performs certain rituals for the fore coming of the rain.The villagers make hand sized "vigneshwara" out of cow dung andoffer it to the rain god and it is interred in a manure hole. Once the rainfall occurs, they slaughter a pig to the shrine of "Ella Karuppu deity" and thePillaiyar gets Dugged out when it rains. They erect a little stone shrine outside of everysettlement which is capped with a stone slab under a tall tree, believing that this shrine would protect them from thunder bolts.

The Malayali tribes situate their engagement with sacred forests within a framework of mythological narratives and oral traditions; People should enter SFs only after having a bath; entry without footwear, should slaughter chickens and goats, 32 km away from the main deity. People are not allowed inside SFs for 21 days after attending a death ceremony; Young girls upon attending puberty are not allowed to enter SFs for 90 days and women during menstrual time frame are strictly prohibited and also wearing blouses are not allowed inside SFs;Pregnant women after their 5thmonth of gestation period, entry to SFs is restricted furthermore, pregnant women are allowed to enter SFs only after 108 days of her child birth.

Upon violating the traditional norms, certain punishments are issued by the village headmen.[1] Depending on the offense, a fine of between Rs. 100 and Rs. 5000 is assessed. The offender ought to serve finger millet porridge and pork to the villagers. The deity receives a fine in kind in the form of a light, bell, water storage containers, and silk cloth as an offering. Men and women who violate the law are thrashed with Clausena dentata (Willd.) Twigs, M. Roemer.[1]

Festivals & Music

In Malayali tribal community, festivals hold both administrative and religiousPurposes; they are occasions for social interaction and leadership.[1]Thesegatherings give the entire community a chance to unite, strengthen bonds and social ties, andalso to resolve conflict differences.[1]The planning of the festival is entirely done by a group headed by the Panchayatand the Pattakaran.[1]The Āṭi Perukku Viḻā is observed among theindigenous communities, encompassing participation from over 265villages in the region. This annual festival is held in the Tamil month of Āṭi (corresponding toJuly-August), specifically on the 17th, 18th, and 19thdays, with the Arappaleeswarar temple.On the first of Ani (June-July) first sowing, of the year takes place.[1] The headman of each village determines the day of the latter, andonly he is permitted to plant seeds on that day;

everyone else is prohibited from working ofany kind on that day for fear of penalty, and they are instead permitted to go hunting.Bull-baiting occurs on the Kollaimalais during Masi's Măriyayi festival (February-March).The Tamil Nadu state government contributed to the preservation and promotion of local heritage by organizing theVāḷvil Ōri Viḻā in August and the Koṭai Viḻā (Spring Festival) in April each year.[1]

Music revolves in every day part of Malayali life. Notably, songs were composed forevery occasion.

- Hymns were composed in the praise for their gods and goddess-Arappaleeswarar, Kongayai Amman, Kali Mariamman.
- Folk songs during Pongal (harvest) festival- Servai pattu, Andikulam Pattuand Komali Pattu.
- Songs for the two main phase of life, i.e.- birth and death- Talattu Pattu andOppari Pattu.
- Songs for agriculture- Oozhavu Ottuthal (Ploughing), Parambu adithal (Landleveling), Nattu Naduthal (Transplanting), Nellu Kuthuthal (Pounding)Kulavai iduthal and Kavu Pattu (Love and Romantic songs in the Forestareas).
- For dance - Kummi Pattu, Servai Pattu and Andikulam Pattu.
- Songs related to marriage ceremonies- played during bridal march to hervillage.
- Teasing songs- Naiandi pattu; Songs related to Kuravan, Kurathi- The hymnis mostly about Narikuravars and Tappa kuravars.[1]

Conclusion

The Malayali tribe of the Kolli Hills presents a compelling example of how governance, kinship, and religious practices are mutually reinforcing elements of a traditional society. The panchayat and Pattakaran systems provide not only political authority but also moral guidance, ensuring that disputes are resolved through reconciliation rather than coercion. Marriage alliances, ritual observances, and sacred forest taboos collectively maintain the balance between community welfare and ecological stewardship.On the other side festivals and music continue to function as vehicles for transmitting oral traditions, reaffirming shared values, and strengthening communal ties, even as external influences such as education, state intervention, and market integration reshape aspects of daily life. The resilience of these practices demonstrates the community's capacity to negotiate continuity amidst change. Documenting and analysing these traditions are vital in order to preservethe intangible cultural heritage.It also helps for deepening scholarly understanding of the dynamic interplay between society, ecology, and belief systems in terms of tribal contexts.

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Cultural Identity and Livelihood: A Case Study of the Eravallar Tribes in Anaimalai Hills

M. Geenenthiran[1] and Dr. R. Prakash[2]

Dialect:

The Eravallar community speaks a mixed dialect that has evolved from constant interaction with neighboring linguistic groups such as Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada. Although the foundation of their speech is rooted in Tamil, it carries noticeable phonetic and grammatical influences from Malayalam and Kannada, while also incorporating unique words of their own. This is most evident in kinship terms, where the Eravallar forms either modify Tamil words or replace them entirely with distinct expressions. For example, "Mother" is referred to as *Amme*, closely resembling Tamil but ending in a Malayalam-like tone, while "Father" is *Appan*, a shared form between Tamil and Malayalam. Words like *Achan* (brother) and *Angala* (younger brother) show a clear departure from Tamil, adopting either Malayalam roots or uniquely Eravallar innovations. Similarly, affectionate forms such as *Chinnammini* (little daughter) and *Periammini* (elder daughter) use the distinct suffix *–mmini*, which is not found in mainstream South Indian languages. Even terms for extended relations, such as *Perame* (elder father), *Sidthappanu* (uncle), *Achirappan* (father-in-law), and *Anjiramma* (mother-in-law), display creative adaptations that set their dialect apart. Thus, the Eravallar language stands as a linguistic mosaic born from Tamil, shaped by Malayalam and Kannada, and enriched with its own innovations reflecting both cultural assimilation and tribal distinctiveness[1].

Heritage and Contemporary Architectural Methods:

In earlier times, the Eravallar tribal community constructed their dwellings using locally available natural resources such as bamboo and reed grass. The process of building a house was not merely a functional activity but also a collaborative endeavor between the man and the woman of the household, symbolizing shared responsibility within the family. The framework of the structure was typically erected with long bamboo poles, which provided both flexibility and strength. Reed grass(*nanalpul)*,an abundant material in their environment, was skillfully used for roofing and walling, ensuring insulation against both heat and rain. The walls were reinforced by filling the interstices between the bamboo poles with mud, leaves, or other natural fillers, which provided stability while also protecting the inhabitants from wind and small animals.This method of construction reflected the Eravallar's deep knowledge of their natural surroundings and their ability to adapt to ecological conditions using sustainable practices. However, with the passage of time, modernization and state interventions have significantly transformed these traditional housing practices. In the present day, houses for the Eravallar people are largely constructed under Government and forest department schemes, often using concrete, bricks, and tin sheets. While these modern structures offer greater durability and resistance to natural elements, they also represent a gradual shift away from indigenous architectural knowledge and cultural identity tied to traditional house-building methods. Thus, the evolution of housing among the Eravallar tribe highlights both the resilience of their traditional ecological wisdom and the ongoing transition influenced by external policies and modern development programs.

Economic Activities of the Eravallar Community:

In earlier times, the Eravallar tribe sustained their livelihood primarily through the collection of natural produce from the forests and mountainous regions. They gathered a variety of wild fruits, tubers, and medicinal plants, which were later taken down to the plains and sold in nearby markets. Among the most notable produce were **Malai Nellikai** (wild hill gooseberry) and **Poosa Kottaikai,** both of which were highly valued for their nutritional and medicinal properties. In addition, they ventured into riverine and forested areas to collect items such as **Kannimangai** and **Kadukkai** (Terminalia chebula), which were commonly used in traditional medicine and trade. This practice not only served as their main source of income but also symbolized their deep connection with the forest ecosystem. The Eravallar people possessed an intimate knowledge of seasonal growth cycles, the medicinal qualities of plants, and sustainable methods of collection, which allowed them to coexist harmoniously with their natural surroundings. However, with the passage of time and the influence of modernization, their traditional occupation has undergone significant transformation. Today, the majority of the community no longer depends on forest produce as a primary means of livelihood. Instead, many members engage in **daily wage labour** in the plains, taking up agricultural work, construction, and other forms of manual labour to support their families[1].

Despite this shift, certain traditional practices have endured. For instance, in the evenings, members of the community continue to fish in the riverine villages using simple tools such as fishing poles. Fishing not only supplements their diet but also reflects their continued reliance on natural resources. Although wild fruits and tubers are still found in the hills even today, they are no longer sold in markets due to the absence of traders who once acted as intermediaries. As a result, much of this natural wealth remains unutilized for commercial purposes. This shift demonstrates how the Eravallar tribe has gradually moved away from a forest-based economy to a wage-based economy, shaped by both socio-economic pressures and reduced opportunities for traditional trade.

Spiritual Practices of the Eravallar Tribe:

Traditionally, the Eravallar tribal people did not practice the formal worship of a clan deity, a feature commonly observed among several other indigenous groups. Their spiritual worldview was rooted in nature

and ancestral reverence rather than in the organized worship of a singular clan god. However, with the passage of time and increasing interaction with mainstream society, significant changes have taken place in their religious practices. In contemporary times, many members of the Eravallar community have adopted the worship of Goddess Mariamman, a popular rural deity in South India, revered as a guardian against diseases, natural calamities, and misfortune.

Despite this shift, one deeply held belief unites the Eravallar people the conviction that their original clan deity resides within the Sathyamangalam forest region, an area that holds both spiritual and cultural significance for them. The forest, being central to their livelihood and identity, is perceived not merely as a physical space but also as a sacred domain where divine presence dwells[1].

Hereditary Naming Traditions of the Eravallars:

The names within the Eravallar community provide insight into their cultural identity and spiritual heritage. Some of the common traditional names include:

- Mariyappan
- Sadayan
- Kurukkalan
- Kurukkathal
- Karuppan
- Chinnakaruppan
- Vilakketharan

Each of these names carries cultural weight and historical significance. For instance, *Kurukkalan* is derived from the name of a revered deity in Kerala, signifying the tribe's strong spiritual connection with divine figures. Similarly, *Vilakketharan*, one of the oldest and most respected names within the community, reflects a traditional naming convention rooted in symbolism and ancestral heritage[1].

In earlier times, names were often chosen with religious and cultural intent, embodying reverence toward gods, spirits, or elements of nature. However, in the present day, naming practices among the Eravallar have shifted to align with broader societal influences. Parents increasingly prefer modern names that reflect the impact of Education, urbanization, and integration with mainstream culture. Despite this change, the preservation of older names such as *Vilakketharan* serves as a vital link to the community's ancestral roots and collective memory.

Matrimonial Practices:

In the Eravallar hill tribe, marriage begins with a formal request from the groom's family to the bride's household. The elders of the groom's side, speaking in their distinct tribal language, visit the bride's home to seek her family's consent. Symbolic expressions are exchanged, with the groom's elders declaring, *"We have come to pick a flower in the Nandavanam,"* to which the bride's family responds affirmatively, provided the bride herself agrees. The bride's consent is paramount, and no further steps are taken without it. Once her approval is secured, the arrangements for the marriage commence. On the seventh day, a unique ritual led by the groom's elder brother takes place. A ceremonial rug is spread at the groom's house upon which seven varieties of grains, including rice, corn, and the seed *KottaMuthu* (Ricinus seed) are placed, along with seven pieces of Pearl millet(Kambarisi)moss. These are tied across the groom's brother's back, after which the family proceeds in procession to the bride's home accompanied by traditional music. During the wedding, the groom's family encircles the bride's house seven times, after which both families gather in front of the house, seated on a rope tied across the entrance. The grains are then carefully inspected by the elders to ensure that the ritual requirements have been met. The central act of the ceremony is when the groom's brother places a ring on the bride's finger, symbolizing a binding promise once adorned, no one else may claim her hand, even if the marriage itself is delayed. The marriage ceremony concludes at the bride's residence, after which the couple is formally escorted to the groom's home. If any ritual shortcomings are found, the tribal council intervenes and orders appropriate reparations. Unlike many other tribes, the Eravallar community does not practice the tying of a *thali (wedding pendant):* instead, the ring exchange serves as the definitive marital bond. Interestingly, it is the bride's

family who bears the responsibility of providing her wedding attire, marking another cultural distinction. Together, these customs reflect a marriage system deeply rooted in symbolism, community participation, and respect for both tradition and the support of the bride[1].

Conclusion:

The Eravallar tribes are a small but distinct indigenous community of Tamil Nadu, primarily residing in the Anamalai Hills. They are traditionally forest dwellers who depended on gathering, hunting, and shifting cultivation for their livelihood. Despite modernization, they continue to preserve their unique language, customs, and cultural identity. Their deep bond with nature and traditional practices highlight the importance of protecting their heritage. Safeguarding their rights, Education, and livelihood is essential for their sustainable development and cultural survival

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Socio-Economic Impact of Tourism on Local Development in Tiruchirapalli: Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple

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Introduction

Religious tourism in India is a centuries-old tradition that continues to thrive in the modern era. Pilgrimage centres serve as focal points for spiritual, cultural, and economic exchanges. Among them, the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple in Srirangam, Tiruchirapalli, stands as an outstanding example. This temple, dedicated to Lord Ranganatha (a reclining form of Vishnu), is not only a sacred Vaishnavite shrine but also a UNESCO World Heritage site under the "Great Living Chola Temples."

The annual influx of millions of pilgrims and tourists transforms the temple town into a hub of economic activities, sustaining the livelihoods of thousands. Tiruchirapalli's identity as a tourism and cultural hub is significantly shaped by the temple. This paper explores how temple tourism contributes to local development and how its impacts can be managed for long-term sustainability.

Temples in India have historically been more than just centers of worship. They serve as hubs of culture, economy, and social interaction. The Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, one of the largest functioning Hindu temples in the world, attracts millions of pilgrims annually. Its religious significance, coupled with architectural grandeur, transforms the city

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of Tiruchirappalli into a major religious tourism destination in Tamil Nadu. Understanding the socio-economic impact of such temple tourism provides insights into how heritage sites can serve as engines of sustainable development.

Historical and Cultural Significance of the Temple

Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple at Srirangam, Tiruchirapalli, is one of the largest functioning temples in the world and a key center of Vaishnavism. With inscriptions dating back to the Chola, Pandya, Vijayanagara, and Nayak dynasties, it serves as a living repository of Tamil religious history. The temple is also celebrated for its Dravidian architectural style, adorned with towering gopurams and intricate sculptures.Culturally, the temple stands as a symbol of continuity of tradition and heritage. Annual festivals such as Vaikunta Ekadasi attract lakhs of devotees, reinforcing community bonds and preserving traditional art forms like music, dance, and temple rituals. These events also revive folk traditions and sustain cultural memory across generations.The temple's UNESCO World Heritage candidacy further highlights its global recognition. It has become a cultural landmark for Tamil identity and heritage preservation, drawing both pilgrims and scholars who seek to understand South Indian history, religion, and art.

Economic Impact of Temple Tourism

Tourism around Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple creates direct and indirect employment opportunities for the local population. Hotels, lodges, restaurants, transportation services, and local markets thrive due to the steady inflow of pilgrims and visitors throughout the year. This generates significant income for small traders, artisans, and service providers.Handicrafts, textiles, and religious souvenirs sold in the vicinity of the temple provide a livelihood for artisans and local entrepreneurs. The temple's prominence also supports traditional industries like bronze casting, silk weaving, and stone carving, which are deeply tied to temple culture.The multiplier effect of tourism stimulates ancillary businesses such as tour operators, guides, and local transport services. As a result, temple tourism strengthens Tiruchirapalli's position as a vibrant economic hub in Tamil Nadu, benefiting not only the city but also nearby rural areas.

Revenue Contribution

Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple generates significant revenue through pilgrim donations, hundi collections, and contributions from religious festivals. These funds are reinvested into temple maintenance, infrastructure development, and welfare schemes for devotees.The Tamil Nadu government also benefits from tourism-related taxes, transportation charges, and hospitality revenues. The increased footfall of domestic and international visitors strengthens the local economy and enhances the state's overall tourism earnings.Additionally, the temple's role in promoting cultural tourism indirectly boosts revenue for cultural programs, exhibitions, and heritage projects. In this way, temple tourism contributes to sustainable revenue streams at both local and state levels.

Social and Cultural Impact

Temple tourism fosters social cohesion by bringing together people of diverse backgrounds in shared religious and cultural practices. Pilgrimages encourage inter-regional interaction, creating a sense of unity among devotees from across India.The preservation of rituals, festivals, and temple arts also ensures the transmission of intangible cultural heritage to younger generations. Traditional performances such as Carnatic music concerts, Bharatanatyam recitals, and ritual dramas performed during festivals strengthen cultural identity.Moreover, temple tourism enhances civic pride among the local population. Communities living around the temple feel a deep sense of belonging and responsibility toward preserving their heritage, which fosters collective cultural identity and social harmony.

Measures for Sustainable Temple Tourism

To ensure sustainability, temple tourism must balance heritage preservation with economic growth. Infrastructure such as clean drinking water, sanitation, waste management, and eco-friendly transport facilities should be prioritized to handle large crowds without harming the environment.Heritage conservation programs, including restoration of temple structures and

digital documentation of inscriptions, are essential. Strict regulations on encroachments and commercialization within temple premises can help protect its sanctity. Awareness campaigns involving local communities, NGOs, and government agencies can promote responsible tourism. Encouraging eco-tourism models and community participation will ensure that economic benefits reach locals while safeguarding cultural and environmental resources.

Conclusion

Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple in Tiruchirapalli is not only a spiritual center but also a driver of socio-economic development. Its historical and cultural legacy enriches Tamil heritage, while temple tourism generates employment, revenue, and opportunities for local communities.The temple acts as a catalyst for social unity, cultural preservation, and civic pride. By sustaining traditional arts, crafts, and rituals, it strengthens the intangible heritage of Tamil Nadu.However, to maximize its positive impact, sustainable measures must be implemented to preserve its sanctity and ensure long-term benefits. Thus, the temple stands as a living example of how religion, culture, and economy intertwine to shape local development.

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The Socio-economic Impact of Small-Scale Sericulture on Rural Households in Tamil Nadu

Dinesh Kumar .S

Introduction

Silk production has been deeply embedded in the socio-economic fabric of South India for centuries. Tamil Nadu, along with Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, has been a major hub of mulberry cultivation and silk weaving. In recent decades, state-led initiatives and cooperative movements have expanded sericulture into small-scale household units. Unlike large weaving clusters, these decentralized units are typically managed by farming families who combine sericulture with agriculture or wage labor. Despite its potential, the sector's contribution to rural development has received limited scholarly attention.

This paper examines the socio-economic implications of small-scale sericulture in Tamil Nadu. By focusing on household-level impacts, the study explores how sericulture supplements incomes, alters gender roles within families, and influences migration trends. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for shaping targeted rural development policies and welfare

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schemes that address the vulnerabilities of small producers.

Sericulture and Household Welfare

Sericulture is one of the few rural industries that blends farming with non-farm income, offering vital livelihood support in Tamil Nadu. Small-scale units, often run alongside agriculture, provide crucial income during lean seasons, particularly for marginal farmers vulnerable to market and crop fluctuations. Each rearing cycle yields quick returns within 25–30 days, and studies by the Central Silk Board show sericulture generates higher returns per acre than many food crops. With its high employment elasticity—requiring up to 11–12 times more labor than traditional farming—it engages entire households, especially women, thus enhancing both income and gender participation.

Beyond earnings, sericulture improves social welfare: households in districts such as Kanchipuram, Erode, and Dharmapuri report better access to education, healthcare, and reduced reliance on informal credit compared to non-sericulture families. Yet, challenges remain. Fluctuating cocoon prices, lack of direct market access, poor infrastructure, and rising input costs reduce net gains. Dependence on middlemen and limited bargaining power exacerbate vulnerabilities, while younger generations increasingly view the activity as labor-intensive and less rewarding than urban jobs, threatening long-term sustainability.

Policy support through subsidies, training, and cooperatives has helped, but results are uneven. Strengthening cooperatives, modernizing infrastructure, and linking producers directly with markets—especially through digital platforms—can expand benefits. Thus, sericulture remains a key driver of resilience, social mobility, and livelihood diversification, but requires policy reorientation to reach its full potential.

Gender Roles and Labour Participation

Women form the backbone of small-scale sericulture in Tamil Nadu, contributing to every stage of production—from mulberry cultivation and silkworm rearing to cocoon harvesting and reeling. Their constant involvement ensures household productivity and visibly integrates them into the family economy, unlike many rural activities where women's work remains undervalued.

Women's earnings are often directed toward essentials such as education, healthcare, and daily expenses, enhancing their financial autonomy and decision-making power within families, thereby challenging patriarchal norms. Sericulture also provides steady, skill-based employment at home, reducing the need for women to migrate for work. At the community level, skills are passed down from mother to daughter, preserving traditional knowledge and reinforcing women's role as custodians of sericulture.

Yet, challenges persist. Women face wage disparities, limited access to training, new technologies, and credit, and their contributions are under-recognized in policy frameworks that often portray sericulture as male-led. Addressing these requires gender-sensitive measures: tailored training, women-centric cooperatives, improved market access, and digital literacy. Successful models from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh demonstrate the benefits of collective organization and fairer markets.

Ultimately, women in sericulture are not supplementary laborers but central agents of economic resilience and social transformation. Recognizing and empowering them is key to ensuring the long-term sustainability of Tamil Nadu's sericulture sector.

Migration, Seasonal Income, and Rural Stability

Rural Tamil Nadu has seen steady out-migration, especially of young men, due to declining agricultural viability, land fragmentation, and unpredictable farm incomes. While migration may provide short-term relief, it often results in family separation, social dislocation, and insecure urban employment. In this context, small-scale sericulture acts as a buffer, offering households supplementary income that reduces dependence on uncertain urban opportunities.

Unlike most crops, sericulture provides continuous though seasonal work through mulberry cultivation, silkworm rearing, cocoon harvesting, and reeling. This steadier cycle helps rural families manage essential expenses during lean months, reducing distress migration. Beyond economics, sericulture strengthens

family and community cohesion by keeping men and youth in villages, easing women's household burdens, and sustaining rural traditions.

However, this stabilizing role is constrained by fluctuating cocoon prices, dominance of middlemen, weak infrastructure, and inconsistent government support. Without fair pricing, transparent markets, and better access to modern equipment, the sector's potential remains undercut.

Policy interventions such as strengthening cooperatives, stabilizing prices, improving credit access, and investing in rural infrastructure are crucial. Linking producers directly to markets through digital platforms and value-added processing can further increase returns. Thus, sericulture is not merely a livelihood option but an instrument of demographic and social stability, enabling households to remain rooted in rural Tamil Nadu while participating in broader economic networks.

Household Coping Strategies and Income Diversification in Response to Seasonal Variability

In rural Tamil Nadu, households often face significant income fluctuations due to the seasonal nature of agriculture and small-scale economic activities. Small-scale sericulture plays a crucial role in **reducing vulnerability** by providing supplementary income during lean agricultural months, helping households manage essential expenses such as food, education, healthcare, and social obligations. By smoothing income throughout the year, sericulture acts as a financial buffer that prevents households from resorting to distress migration or high-interest informal loans.

Households adopt multiple **coping strategies** to deal with seasonal variability. Labor allocation is often adjusted among family members: women typically take on more sericulture tasks such as silkworm rearing and reeling, while men may combine agricultural work with market activities or seasonal migration. Some households also engage in small-scale allied activities such as poultry, dairy, or handicrafts, creating a diversified income portfolio that reduces dependency on a single source of livelihood.

Income diversification through sericulture also influences decision-making within households. Families can plan expenditures more effectively and invest in long-term goals, such as children's education or health improvements, because the risk of sudden income gaps is lower. In addition, households engaged in multiple economic activities are better able to cope with market shocks, crop failures, or adverse weather events, which are common in rural Tamil Nadu.

The adoption of these strategies underscores the resilience and adaptability of rural households. Sericulture, by providing a skill-based, locally managed source of income, empowers families to make proactive choices regarding labor, migration, and investment, enhancing overall livelihood security. Strengthening these coping mechanisms through training, cooperative marketing, and access to credit could further improve household resilience against seasonal and economic vulnerabilities.

Conclusion

Sericulture in Tamil Nadu extends beyond its role as a supplementary income source—it serves as a vital anchor for rural stability. By providing steady, skill-based, and family-centered employment, it reduces distress migration, strengthens household resilience, and preserves community cohesion. Yet, its full potential is limited by structural bottlenecks such as market fluctuations, exploitative intermediaries, and weak institutional support. Strengthening cooperatives, ensuring fair pricing, and investing in infrastructure can transform sericulture into a sustainable livelihood system. With the right policy interventions, sericulture can emerge not only as an engine of rural economic growth but also as a safeguard of Tamil Nadu's social fabric and demographic stability.

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Problems and Progress of Irula Tribal Women In Tamil Nadu

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Introduction

The word Irula is derived from the Tamil word “Irul” meaning darkness, and traditionally refers to ‘those who live in darkness.’ However, this perspective needs to be redefined. The Irulas are not destined to remain in darkness; with access to proper education and awareness, they have the potential to step into the light of empowerment, dignity, and progress. In Tamilnadu, the Irula Tribes welcome a girl child into the world with lots of hope and the promise of sharing duties and hard labour. The women of the Irula Tribe face hardship both within their homes and in the outside world. In India people often show deep devotion to goddesses, yet many struggle to offer the same respect and dignity to women in everyday life. Despite all of these they have bounced back and they have started to evolve. The Irula Tribe women welfare society (ITWWS) gave light upon the Irula Tribe women. The Irula women specialised in the field of herbal plants and medicines with their help they started to produce organic products. From using hay, dirty rags, dry leaves as the alternative for sanitary napkins to makers of sanitary napkins through the help of Irula Tribe women welfare society. The women of Irula Tribe have evolved from not knowing how to hold the pen to signing in a green ink pen. In Tamilnadu, nearly half of the Tribal population is still unable to read or write. Among those who are educated, women make a larger share than men, which reflects the positive impact of efforts to support Tribal women education. At the same time, more work is needed to ensure that the whole community has access to education.

Living Condition of Women

Once they are born, they are pushed into many cultural and traditional norms. Among the Irulas, tattooing holds special cultural significance, it is mandatory for the bride to get tattoos on her arms during the marriage ceremony, and it is also required for the female infant to get tattoos on her forehead at the naming ceremony. From as early as the age of ten, girls take on heavy family responsibilities, working alongside their mothers instead of fully experiencing childhood. At a young age, they tend to be more mature than boys.

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The main work of Irula women is to collect forest produce, working in farm lands, running the family, she carries the weight of endless work of men, and her efforts are seen in terms of money.

Irula women often struggle to live peaceful and happy lives. Many face violence and illtreatment within their marriages, often linked to alcoholism, polygamy, and extra-marital relationships. At home, domestic violence is a painful reality. Beyond this, they also face hardships in securing stable livelihoods and living with dignity, as environmental degradation and outside interference continue to affect their communities.

Tribal women frequently suffer from ongoing sexual violence and abuse at the hands of contractors, government officials, and police. Many are deceived with promises of jobs in the cities, only to be trapped by criminal groups who exploit and traffic them, leaving their lives shattered.

Menstrual taboos

Menstruation is often linked with feelings of shame, fear, anxiety, and even depression. In India, it continues to be treated as a taboo subject, where cultural and social beliefs act as barriers to open discussion and awareness. Although it is a natural biological process, it is surrounded by many misconceptions and restrictive practices. These challenges are even greater in rural areas, where menstrual hygiene remains a serious concern.

Among the Irulas, a special ceremony is observed when a girl reaches puberty. During her first menstruation, she is asked to stay outside the house and cannot enter again until her cycle ends. During this time, she is also restricted from eating with her fingers in the usual way. After about fifteen days, a "purity" ritual is held to welcome her back, marking this transition in her life.

Among the Irula tribe, many women and children are not fully aware of the biological organ linked to menstruation. In the absence of sanitary napkins, they often rely on hay, old rags, dry leaves, or cloth as alternatives. These clothes are usually washed and reused, but since they are dried in hidden places away from where men might see them, they often don't receive enough sunlight to properly kill germs, putting women's health at risk.

During this time, girls face many restrictions. They are not allowed to freely interact with male family members, and many even stop going to school. They are also kept away from temples, idols, and religious ceremonies. In addition, their diet is controlled, with spicy and non-vegetarian foods being denied to them.

Marriage among the Irulas

Attaining puberty is seen as the age for marriage. So, this girl is prepared for marriage. In many tribal communities, women are given more freedom in choosing their life partners, and cultural rules around chastity are less rigid. In these communities, premarital and extramarital relationships are not strictly restricted. Polygamy is also practiced among certain groups, and while it is culturally accepted, it often has complex effects on women's lives. Many tribal women are married at a very young age, sometimes even during childhood, which deeply influences their health, education, and overall well-being.

Among the Irulas, widow remarriage is a common and accepted practice. Often, it takes place when a man marries the widow of his elder brother. The community believes that no woman should be left alone after her husband's death. While there is no compulsion to marry her husband's brother, a widow may remarry any other Irula man from her village. If a woman faces difficulties or mistreatment from her husband's family, she can appeal to the village headman for separation. For many Irula women, customs and traditions are relying on male relatives for safety and security. This often limits their ability to make their own decisions and prevents them from experiencing true independence in their lives .

Pregnancy rituals

For the Irulas, pregnancy is seen as a joyful occasion and an important part of their cultural heritage. Expectant mothers are given special care and are never allowed to go alone into the forest or any other place, though they continue to handle their household chores until delivery. There is a strong belief that miscarriage can occur if a pregnant woman is not protected from evil spirits, so extra care is taken to safeguard her. Just

before childbirth, rituals of purification are carried out in the house, and these continue until both the mother and child undergo their own purity ceremony. On the ninth day after birth, the mother and newborn are warmly welcomed back into the home, marking a moment of celebration.

Health

For Irula women, their health is deeply connected to their social realities. Many are engaged in agricultural labor, rodent catching, or work that exposes them directly to infection. Their limited access to healthcare, compounded by poverty and illiteracy, makes early diagnosis and treatment rare. Social customs such as polygamy, tattooing, and permissive sexual practices further increase the risk of sexually transmitted infections, particularly among women. The study underlines the urgent need for targeted health interventions, education, and preventive care in these communities.

Ultimately, the findings not only document disease prevalence but also reveal how Irula women's marginal position socially, economically, and medically places them at the center of these vulnerabilities, demanding urgent attention.

Despite enduring numerous struggles, the women of the Irula tribe have demonstrated remarkable resilience, bouncing back with strength and achieving significant milestones, some of which are highlighted below.

Breaking Barriers: Irula Tribal Women As Panchayat President

A tribal Irula woman, E. Sangeetha (40), president of Anangur village panchayat in Gingee taluk. Sangeetha's election as Panchayat President is a turning point in the socio-political journey of the Irula tribal community. For generations, the Irulas of Tamil Nadu have been pushed to the margins, often excluded from governance and decision making. Women in particular have carried a double burden discriminated against both as tribals and as women in a deeply patriarchal society. In this context, Sangeetha's rise as a leader is a powerful symbol of dignity, empowerment, and change.

Her leadership not only amplifies the political voice of her community but also challenges gender barriers within it. As an elected representative, she is in a position to directly address issues that have long held Irula families back like, lack of education, unemployment, poverty, and inadequate access to healthcare and sanitation. Most importantly, her presence in governance ensures that the voices of tribal women, so often unheard, are finally brought forward.

She faced caste discrimination and protested at the Villupuram district collector's office against caste discrimination by the deputy president. She also boycotted the Gandhi Jayanthi Gram Sabha, demanding justice. Sangeetha said the couple insulted her with caste slurs, blocked her duties, and denied her the digital key needed for project fund approvals. Though the collector ordered the key to be given, abuses continued. Despite these struggles, Irula women leaders like Sangeetha continue to fight for their rightful space in local governance. Their resilience highlights both the challenges of caste oppression and the courage to demand justice and equality.

Sangeetha's journey sends a clear message that Irula women are not just survivors of systemic struggles, but agents of change. Her success encourages others to take on leadership and engage in public life, making her election both a personal achievement and an important step toward the gradual inclusion of tribal voices in grassroots democracy.

Irula Tribal Women In Medicine

S. Sreemathy, a young woman from the Irula tribal community in The Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, has made history as the first from her community to secure admission to an MBBS program. She earned her place at Tirunelveli Government Medical College after clearing NEET, breaking through the barriers that have long kept the Irulas away from higher education.

For generations, Irula families have lived with the weight of poverty, limited schooling, and little exposure to professional careers. Within this reality, Sreemathy's achievement shines as more than just a personal milestone; it is a moment of pride and hope for her entire community. Her success shows the power of

education to transform lives and challenge deeply rooted inequalities.

Sreemathy's journey is a source of inspiration, especially for young tribal girls, reminding them that with access, support, and determination, it is possible to rise above systemic barriers and dream bigger for the future.

First Irula Women To Enter Higher Education

Sangeetha Chinnasamy, a young woman from the Irula tribal community in Veeranamoor village, Villupuram district, Tamil Nadu, has created history as the first girl from her village to pursue higher education. By enrolling in a Bachelor of Science (Nursing) program, she has broken free from the cycle of poverty, illiteracy, and social exclusion that has long shaped the lives of Irula families.

For generations, Irula women have been confined to unskilled work and denied access to education because of economic struggles and cultural barriers. In this reality, Sangeetha's step into higher studies is more than just her personal victory; it is a powerful milestone of progress and empowerment for her entire community.

Her determination shows both her inner strength and the life changing impact education can bring. By choosing this path, Sangeetha has become a symbol of hope, inspiring other Irula girls to dream bigger and look beyond traditional limits. Her journey is a reminder that education is not just about personal growth, it is a doorway to equality, dignity, and upliftment for whole communities.

Makers of Sanitary Napkins

Project Kannamma, launched in August 2018, is a menstrual hygiene initiative that supports schoolgirls from underprivileged and tribal communities. Led by the Rotary Club of Madras North in partnership with the Irula Tribal Women's Welfare Society (ITWWS), the project provides free sanitary napkins to girls in government aided schools.

The idea for the initiative took shape after a heartbreaking incident in which a teenage girl, a talented state level carrom player, had to miss a championship match simply because she didn't have access to sanitary pads during her period. This moment highlighted the urgent need for change and became the driving force behind Project Kannamma.

Irula women from ITWWS make about 1,000 sanitary pads every day using machines designed by Arunachalam Muruganantham. These pads are crafted from natural materials like cotton and wood pulp, making them both biodegradable and affordable, sold at just ₹22 for a pack of six. What began with supporting 82 students in Uthandi has now expanded to reach more than 300 girls across several schools. By providing safe menstrual products, Project Kannamma not only helps reduce school absenteeism during periods but also challenges taboos, spreads awareness about menstrual health, and uplifts women.

At the same time, the initiative creates meaningful livelihoods for Irula women, giving them a steady source of income and a sense of empowerment, while making a real difference in the lives of girls and women in marginalized communities.

Conclusion

The journey of Irula tribal women reflects both deep rooted struggles and inspiring resilience. Bound by cultural restrictions, poverty, and systemic discrimination, they have faced marginalization in health, education, and livelihood. Yet, through the efforts of ITWWS and their own determination, Irula women are redefining their place in society. The Irula tribal women succeeded in breaking barriers in politics, medicine, and education, proving that empowerment is possible when opportunities meet courage. Their stories remind us that true progress lies not only in preserving culture but also in ensuring dignity, equality, and freedom for every woman.

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Social and Political Upward Mobilization of the Arundhadhiyar People in Tamil Nadu After Independence: A Historical Review

P. Nandakumar[1] and K Applerajan[2]

Introduction

The Arundhadhiyar community, one of the most marginalized and oppressed sections of Indian society, has a distinct and arduous history of struggle, particularly in Tamil Nadu. As one of the Dalit sub-castes, the Arundhadhiyars were historically subjected to severe social ostracism and economic exploitation. Their traditional role as manual scavengers and leather workers further entrenched their social position at the bottom of the caste hierarchy. However, post-independence, Tamil Nadu's socio-political landscape and its progressive reforms provided new avenues for the social and political upward mobility of the Arundhadhiyar community. This historical review aims to explore the social and political upward mobilization of the Arundhadhiyar people in Tamil Nadu after India's independence in 1947. Through a thematic analysis, this article examines key phases of mobilization, the role of Dravidian politics, affirmative action policies, and the efforts within the community to claim their rights. The article also discusses the ongoing challenges that limit full social and political integration despite the gains made over the decades.

The Arundhadhiyars: Historical Background

The Arundhadhiyars are part of the broader Dalit community but have traditionally occupied one of the lowest rungs within the Dalit social strata. Historically, their occupations were associated with leather work and

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manual scavenging, leading to extreme forms of untouchability and social exclusion. Prior to independence, their participation in public life was minimal, as they were denied access to education, temple entry, and even basic civil rights. In Tamil Nadu, the Arundhadhiyars were a sub-group of the Scheduled Castes (SCs), with a population estimated to be around 7-9% of the total SC population in the state. However, their lower socio-economic status compared to other Dalit groups, such as the Paraiyars and Pallar, limited their access to the benefits of Dalit mobilization efforts during the colonial period. Even within the Dalit community, they were seen as the most marginalized, often left out of broader Dalit politics and social movements.

Dravidian Movement and the Politics of Social Justice

The Dravidian Movement, which gained political momentum in the mid-20th century, played a significant role in the upward mobilization of Dalit communities, including the Arundhadhiyars. Under the leadership of figures like E.V. Ramasamy (Periyar) and later C.N. Annadurai, the movement emphasized anti-Brahminism, rationalism, and the abolition of caste-based inequalities. The Dravidian Movement's anti-caste stance indirectly benefitted the Arundhadhiyar community, as it created a socio-political environment that challenged traditional hierarchies and allowed marginalized communities to assert their rights. Periyar's Self-Respect Movement (1925) encouraged the rejection of caste-based discrimination and promoted inter-caste marriages, which provided the Arundhadhiyars with a platform to resist their systemic oppression. Despite the inclusive rhetoric of the Dravidian parties, the Arundhadhiyars struggled to secure political representation. Much of the early Dravidian politics was dominated by non-Brahmin upper castes and a few dominant Dalit groups like the Paraiyars. The Arundhadhiyars were often overlooked, as they lacked the socio-political capital to lobby for their own interests. However, the movement set the groundwork for later political activism within the Arundhadhiyar community.

Social Movements and Local Mobilization

From the 1980s onwards, there was a marked shift in how the Arundhadhiyars began to mobilize for their rights. Inspired by the broader Dalit movement across India, local leaders from the community started organizing to demand more equitable treatment and representation. These movements highlighted the specific issues faced by Arundhadhiyars, such as access to education, land ownership, and the abolition of manual scavenging. One of the most significant social movements for the Arundhadhiyar community was the campaign against manual scavenging. Organizations such as the Tamil Nadu Arundhadhiyar Welfare Association (TNAWA) were instrumental in raising awareness about the degrading practice of manual scavenging, which primarily affected Arundhadhiyar women. The enactment of the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993, was a major legal victory for the community, although implementation remained inconsistent. In rural Tamil Nadu, Arundhadhiyars faced significant challenges in accessing land and resources. Local movements, often led by community leaders, focused on securing land rights and ensuring that Arundhadhiyars were not excluded from welfare schemes aimed at rural development. Despite legal victories, the social stigma associated with manual scavenging and leather work continues to haunt the Arundhadhiyars. Even within Tamil Nadu's progressive political framework, social attitudes toward the community remain entrenched, limiting their upward mobility. Unlike the broader Dalit movements led by figures such as B.R. Ambedkar, the Arundhadhiyar community lacked a unifying leader or movement that could propel their cause onto the national stage. Localized movements, while impactful, struggled to coalesce into a broader political or social agenda that could bring about systemic change.

Rural Poverty and Regional Disparities

Tamil Nadu, a relatively economically advanced state in India, has achieved considerable progress in several fields, including education, healthcare, and industry. Nonetheless, underneath this veneer of progress exists the socio-economic fragility and

underdevelopment faced by some segments of its populace. Despite many humanitarian initiatives and political endeavors aimed at advancing social justice, significant portions of the population persist in experiencing poverty, caste-based discrimination, inequitable access to resources, and economic inequality. The economy of Tamil Nadu has experienced substantial structural transformations, transitioning from an agricultural foundation to a predominantly industrial and service-oriented economy. Notwithstanding this advancement, rural poverty and underdevelopment persist as substantial challenges. A significant segment of the population, particularly in rural regions, continues to rely on agriculture, characterized by poor productivity and minimal economic rewards. Agriculture, formerly a predominant sector in Tamil Nadu's economy, has witnessed a gradual reduction in its contribution to the state's GDP. Erratic monsoons, water shortages, and diminishing landholdings have undermined the feasibility of agriculture as a sustainable livelihood. A multitude of small and marginal farmers have challenges in fulfilling fundamental necessities, exacerbating pervasive rural poverty. Furthermore, rural areas of Tamil Nadu, like Ramanathapuram, Dharmapuri, and Villupuram, are among the most underdeveloped regarding infrastructure, healthcare services, and educational resources.

Caste-Based Inequalities and Social Exclusion

Caste-based discrimination persists as a deeply rooted problem in Tamil Nadu, considerably exacerbating the socio-economic disadvantage of underprivileged people. Despite the state's implementation of several affirmative action measures designed to elevate Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), the advantages of these initiatives have not been equitably allocated, resulting in significant portions of the Dalit community being socially and economically precarious. The caste system in Tamil Nadu significantly influences access to resources and economic possibilities. Historically, Dalits, particularly the Arundhadhiyar, Paraiyar, and Pallar groups, have been confined to the most menial occupations, including manual scavenging, leather production, and agricultural labor. Notwithstanding legislative safeguards and humanitarian initiatives, several communities persist in experiencing discrimination in work, education, and housing. Land ownership is a critical determinant of economic stability; nonetheless, a substantial proportion of Dalits remains either landless or reliant on small, marginal parcels of land. In the absence of fertile land, Dalit households frequently resort to low-wage, precarious employment, hence sustaining their socio-economic vulnerability. Caste-based untouchability practices continue in rural regions, with Dalits frequently confined to segregated zones within villages. This social marginalization restricts them access to common resources like as water, healthcare, and education, perpetuating cycles of poverty and underdevelopment. Despite the Dravidian Movement, notably the DMK and AIADMK, traditionally advocating for social justice and anti-caste discrimination, the most vulnerable castes have not always reaped equal benefits. The preeminent castes within the OBC (Other Backward Classes) group, like the Vanniyars and Thevars, have historically exercised greater political influence and access to state resources, resulting in less representation and negotiating ability for Dalit communities.

Gender Inequality and Women's Socio-Economic Vulnerability

Women in Tamil Nadu, especially among rural and underprivileged areas, have distinct socio-economic vulnerabilities. Gender inequality, patriarchal societal norms, and restricted access to school and work opportunities have hindered several women from fully engaging in the state's development process. Tamil Nadu has seen notable advancements in women's literacy rates; yet, educational gender gaps remain, especially in rural and underdeveloped regions. Girls from economically disadvantaged households and oppressed castes frequently discontinue their education owing to financial constraints, early marriage, or the necessity to participate in domestic labor. The deficiency in education results in restricted career

prospects for women, especially in the formal sector, characterized by enhanced job security, remuneration, and working conditions. Women in Tamil Nadu, particularly from marginalized areas, are overrepresented in the informal labor market, employed as agricultural laborers, domestic workers, or in low-wage, unregulated sectors. These positions provide minimal job security, healthcare benefits, or financial stability, rendering women more susceptible to economic fluctuations. Moreover, patriarchal traditions within homes sometimes result in women having less authority over financial decisions, therefore perpetuating their economic reliance. Gender-based violence, encompassing domestic violence and caste-related sexual violence, persists as a critical concern in Tamil Nadu, exacerbating women's social vulnerability. Marginalized women, especially Dalit women, face heightened risks of violence and exploitation, both within their communities and from dominant caste groups.

State Interventions and Their Limitations

The Tamil Nadu government has instituted many welfare programs designed to mitigate socio-economic vulnerabilities, encompassing free education, midday meals, housing initiatives, and healthcare subsidies. The state has also initiated measures to provide food security through programs like as the Public Distribution System (PDS), which guarantees access to discounted food grains for economically disadvantaged households. Although these projects have markedly enhanced the living circumstances of several impoverished and marginalized groups, their execution has sometimes been erratic, especially in distant or underdeveloped areas. Corruption, bureaucratic inefficiency, and insufficient understanding among beneficiaries frequently constrain the effectiveness and scope of these assistance programs. Affirmative action laws, especially caste-based reservations in education and employment, have been crucial in facilitating upward mobility for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Nonetheless, the advantages of these measures have not been equitably allocated among all Dalit sub-groups, resulting in the most disadvantaged communities, such as the Arundhadhiyars, experiencing restricted access to resources.

Political Representation and Leadership

One of the key aspects of the upward mobilization of the Arundhadhiyars was the gradual rise in their political representation, particularly after the 1990s. This period saw the emergence of Arundhadhiyar leaders who began to challenge their political marginalization and demand a more prominent role in state politics. The rise of the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) under Thol. Thirumavalavan in the 1990s brought a new level of political activism among Dalits, including the Arundhadhiyars. Although VCK was initially dominated by Paraiyar interests, its inclusive rhetoric provided an avenue for Arundhadhiyar participation. Over time, local Arundhadhiyar leaders gained representation in panchayats (village councils) and local government bodies. By the late 1990s and early 2000s, Arundhadhiyars began to secure positions in state politics, particularly through reserved seats in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly. While their presence in high-ranking political offices remained limited, this marked a shift from complete political invisibility to a more assertive role in Tamil Nadu's electoral politics. Despite the electoral gains made by the community, Arundhadhiyars continued to be politically marginalized. Larger Dalit groups such as the Paraiyars and Pallars wielded more significant influence within the Dalit political spectrum, leaving the Arundhadhiyars with limited bargaining power. The hierarchical structure within Dalit politics meant that the community's issues often took a backseat to broader Dalit concerns. Leadership Crisis: The lack of a prominent, charismatic leader from the Arundhadhiyar community has been a major barrier to their political mobilization. Unlike other Dalit groups that rallied around leaders like Ambedkar or Thirumavalavan, the Arundhadhiyars have not produced a leader who could unite the community and push for systemic changes at the state or national level.

Conclusion

The upward social and political mobilization of the Arundhadhiyar people in Tamil Nadu after

independence is a complex and ongoing process. While the Dravidian Movement and affirmative action policies provided the foundation for their upward mobility, the community has faced significant challenges in accessing these benefits fully. Notwithstanding Tamil Nadu's status as a developing state with a robust social welfare system, considerable socio-economic vulnerabilities and underdevelopment endure. Rural impoverishment, regional disparities, caste-based inequalities, and gender inequities persistently impact substantial segments of the population. Although governmental interventions have advanced in tackling certain concerns, systemic obstacles to fair growth persist, especially for the most vulnerable groups. Confronting these difficulties necessitates a more inclusive and focused development strategy that not only mitigates the symptoms of underdevelopment but also addresses the systemic imbalances that sustain socio-economic vulnerability. The caste-based inequalities within the Dalit community, the continued social stigma of manual scavenging, and the lack of strong political representation have hindered the complete upward mobilization of the Arundhadhiyars. However, the emergence of local leaders, grassroots movements, and the incremental political representation has created pathways for change. The ongoing struggle for land rights, education, and the abolition of manual scavenging remains central to the Arundhadhiyars' efforts to achieve social and political equality. Despite these challenges, the historical trajectory of the Arundhadhiyars post-independence reveals a resilient community gradually carving out a space for itself in Tamil Nadu's socio-political landscape.

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Tiruttani under the Karvetnagar Zamin – A Study

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Administration, Socio-Economic and Religious Aspects

Chittoor district was a part of Dravidian country. The earliest important settlers in Dravida appeared to have been the Kurumbas, a fierce race so called on account of their cruelty. Theywere said at first to have had no ruler, but dissensions among themselves led them to choose a king named Komandu Kurumba Prabhu, the first king of the Pallava dynasty. He dividedhis kingdom into 24 divisions or Kottamsand he built many forts at the headquarters,one of them is identified at Narayanavanam. Karvet Nagar Zamin,[2] an estate is known as Bommarasu's Country. During 8^{th}-9^{th} Century CE, SaluvaNarasaReddysmigrated from Pithapur in the delta of Godavari to Bommarasu's country.

SaluvaNarasa Reddy's family was appointed as the chief of the country, seshachalam (at present Tirupati) by Eastern Chalukya king Vimaladitya in the Saka year 852 (930 CE). After Vimaladitya reign, the

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ascendancy of the Cholas was established. SaluvaNarasa Reddy's grandson Venkatapati was dispossessed his territory. But his son Bhima recovered his patrimony in Saka year 898 (976 C.E). He developed Ratnapuram (at present KempulaPalayam) and constructed a Varaha Swamytemple tohonour the Chalukyas.

The Chera king Kirttivarmainvaded the Carnatic war in the saka year 930 (1008CE). Bhima sided with the invader empowered him toassume independence. Bhima's son Narasirmha extended his territory alongwiththree sacred places of Ghatikachalam (Sholinghur), Seshachalam (Tirupati) and Kanikachalam (Tiruttani).[3]

Someswara Deva, the western Chalukya king subjugated Narasimha's son Bhujanga and taken him as a prisoner to Kalyan. Bhujanga died in prison. Bhujanga's grandson recovered the lost estate in Saka year 999 (1077 CE). He was again curtailed to 24 villages during the reign of Raja Raja-II inSaka year 1115 (1230 CE). But the decaying Chola power enabled theSaluva family to regain its independence. It was strengthened by marryingNarasa, the daughter of,the founder of Vema Reddy dynasty of Kondavid, ProlayaReddy.

The Saluvas came under the rule of the Bijanagar Empire,continued to be a subject for two Centuries. This family was expelled by the progenitors of the Bommaraju Zamindar.

An Inscription from the Vijyaragava perumal temple at Tiruttani[4] belongs to Narayanaraju states that the temple was constructed by Narayanaraju. In this inscription Narayanaraju claims that he descended from KarikalaChola. Bommaraju was a Poligar during the early Carnatic wars. Bommaniju was a descendant of Narayanaraju.[5] Another inscription of Bommarajuin Telugu language was found at the same temple.The inscription records that he renewed the grant gifted to thetemple by his ancestor. During 17th-18th Century CE, GeddiMaharaju and Bopparaje, ancestors of this family belonging to a powerful Raju family in the north, set out attended to visit Rameswaram and other temples in the SouthIndia.

At their haltingin the village Maddigunta after visiting Tirupati,a gang of freebooters attempted to loot the village in the night-time. The Rajus attacked and utterly defeated the freebooters. Saluva Reddy, the then Poligar of this Zamin, enquired about the Raju's family and plans after came to understand the incident happened.

Maharaju soon became the Prime Minister of the Zamin and Saluva Reddy died, without leaving any issues. Saluva Reddy's wives committedSati after his death. Maharaju took possession of the Zamin and appointedBopparaju as his Prime minister. Since, the two families of Maharaju andBopparaju, by continuously inter-marrying have kept themselves aloof fromthe other Rajus.The Prime Minister's post hereditarily continued for manyyears in the Bopparaju'sheirs. It was confirmed from a petition to the Collectorin 1818 stating that the two families lived as. A united family andharmony of peace chased it as its abode.

In the year 1784, the Jahir was divided into fourteen separateestates and rented out. The British administration appointed Collectors tolook after the administration of the Jahirs. An agreement was made betweenthe Nawab and the British and a treaty was signed on July 12, 1792. Mohammed Ali, Nawab of Hyderabad invited Kalasti and Karvet Nagar to conquer and annex the territories of the neighbourhood.[6]On thebasis of the treaty the British were engaged to keep, up a military establishmenttowards the maintenance of which the Nawab was to pay nine lakhs per annum. It was further agreed that the British should collect the peshcush ofthe Poligars. Thus, Karvet Nagarzamindarscame under the British administration.[7]

The administration of Zamindars during 18th Century was poor in KarvetNagarZamin. The fraudulent activities of the officials lead to theloss of the revenue on its way to the treasury. In 1846, After attaching the Zamin, the civil court ordered its saleas there was a debt ofnine lakh rupees.The Collector was authorized to buy the Zamin. Meanwhile the Zamindar made compromise with his creditors, and the judge countermanded the sale. However,the Collector carried out the sale and

knocked the Zamin estatedown to Government for one lakh and sixty thousand Rupees.

The Jahirs changed control from Nawab to the British. They continued for many years and controlled the activities and taxation of theJahirs. Between 18thand 19th Centuries, therural society consisted of Mirasidars (Land lords) and farm labourers.In the British administration, Tiruttani was brought under thedistrict of North Arcot, when the Madras Presidency was formed to its sizeat 1910. In the year 1911, For administrative convenience, the British Government carved the new Chittoor district, by composing both Tamil and Telugu speaking regions. Hence Tiruttani taluk becameone of the taluks of Chittoor district. It was in Andhra Pradesh for about halfa century.

The population enriched with scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in KarvetNagarzamin. Beyond these, forward castes like Komati, Brahmin, Kamma, Kapu, Raju, Reddy and Velama also constitutea remarkable portion of the population. They are engaged in various occupations like cultivation, weaving, trade, pottery making, building construction and brick making. The artisan caste working in gold, brass, iron, stone, wood are called as Kammalas,Thattars, Karumars, Thatchars and Kalthachars. During the end of 19thCentury, an artisan known as the AgoorSthapathi, was the onlyperson who carried on a peculiar productionof cutting of goblets and tumblersout of a dark stone called MaddurSilai.

The KarvetNagarzamin was emphasized the people to worship the Hindu Gods. The hill temple for Lord Muruga at Tiruttani was constructed and developed by various kings. The Pallavas, the Telugu Cholas, Vijaya Nagar emperor had contributed their faith through construction and funding cash and kind to this temple. The temple is now under the control of Hindu Religious Charitable Endowments, Ministry of Tamil Nadu Government.

Conclusions

KarvetNagarZamin (Bommaraju country)was well established rulings under Saluva Reddy and Raju families.During 18th century centurythe zaminwas sold toBritish for the amount 1,60,000/-. TheSaluvas andRajus were constructed numerous temples at headquarters to impose the Hindu religious values to the people. British Government improved the cultivation and various trade works to its benefit. The socio-economic conditions of the people lived in Tiruttani under KarvetNagarzamin was enhanced gradually through the ages of Chalukya King Vimala Aditya, Saluva Redd and Raju famiies and then British. At present, the Tiruttani town is a remarkable place for pilgrimage.

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The Commercial Heritage of Tamil Muslims: A Historical Study

Dr. A. Abdul Azeez

The Commercial Heritage of Tamil Muslims

Trade is the ancestral profession of the Arabs and the noble occupation of the Prophet of Islam. Therefore, the Tamils who converted to Islam took great pride in continuing the tradition of trade that had been inherited from the Arabs. They also succeeded in operating as a trading community despite European intrusion. Let us examine the background of these successful individuals.

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Evidence of a Commercial Background

Key sources for understanding the society, culture, commerce, and religion of Tamil Muslims include historical descriptions from the 16th century onwards, literature encompassing poetry and biographies, notes from Western travelers, and archaeological evidence such as inscriptions and numismatics.

The Historical Context

Tamil Nadu and its commerce have unique characteristics. The political impact of the Mughals, who ruled India for over eight centuries, only penetrated the southern tip of India in the late 17thCentury. However, this influence was short-lived, as the British established their dominance in South India by the end of the 18thCentury. After India was unified under British rule, Muslims constituted only 7 per cent of the total population of the Madras Presidency in 1931. In other districts of Tamil Nadu, their number was just four per cent. It is within this Tamil context that we will explore the commercial contributions of the Muslims who were born, raised, and lived here.

Early Trade and Settlements

By the 8th or 9thCentury CE, Arab merchants and sailors had already settled on the Coromandel Coast. According to Susan Bayly, the number of Arab traders increased after this region began to play a significant role in the international textile trade, connecting South India with the commercial ports of West Asia and the Indonesian archipelago[1]. Tamil Muslim scholars state that Arab merchants brought horses to South India for sale and purchased pearls, cardamom, pepper, other spices, and textiles in return[2.] The 9th-century poet Manikkavasagar mentions the horse trade in Tamil Nadu in his work, *Thiruvasagam*.

In the 13th century, the Venetian traveller Marco Polo noted in his travelogues that Muslim merchants from Hormuz, Dhofar, Sohar, Aden, and other Arab nations brought horses by sea to Kayalpattinam, a major port on the southern Coromandel Coast. The kings of Tamil Nadu greatly favoured these horses. According to Marco Polo's account, 10,000 horses were imported annually.[3]

Like Marco Polo, the historian Wassaf also mentions the vibrant horse trade between the Arabs and South India and the immense wealth of the Pandyan kings[4].

The Age of Great Merchants

In the 15thCentury, when Kayal was a centre for the pearl trade, Niccolò de' Conti visited the city[5]. Besides pearls, the horse trade also flourished in Kayal and Keelakarai. It appears that rice was purchased in exchange for horses in Hormuz and then shipped to ports like Kayal[6]. Vasco da Gama noted that Muslims and Hindu Chettis resided in Kayal, trading in pearls, gems, and other goods. He also stated that the region was ruled by a powerful and wealthy Muslim leader. This Muslim chief, mentioned by Vasco da Gama as being in Kayal[7], collected taxes on pearls and administered justice for the Muslims without interference from the King of Quilon. However, it seems the King of Quilon held the full rights to the pearl diving industry and a share in the profits from the pearl trade.[8]

By the 15thCentury, Muslim traders from the Coromandel Coast were present in several kingdoms of Southeast Asia, where they held considerable influence[9]. In the 17th century, the King of Ramanathapuram (Ramnad) relied on coastal Muslims for maritime trade and financial administration.[10]

The growing importance of the British in Madras and the Dutch in Nagapattinam impacted the Coromandel trade and its Indian merchants. In the latter half of the 17th century, prominent Muslim merchants like Periya Thambi Maraikkayar, who had trade links with Bengal, Southeast Asia, and Sri Lanka, attempted to resist the growing dominance of the Europeans. Periya Thambi, who owned several ships, challenged and curtailed British influence with minor successes. He traded on his own behalf and for the King of Ramnad, wielding significant influence in the kingdom's political, administrative, financial, and judicial affairs.[11]

Tamil Muslim traders also held great sway in the Southeast Asian sultanates of Kedah, Jambi, and Bantam. The Sultan of Bantam even purchased ships from Coromandel merchants.[12]A Tamil Muslim

merchant named ChiththiLebbai controlled the entire tin trade of the Perak kingdom and maintained commercial ties with powerful Tamil Muslim merchants in Parangipettai (Porto Novo) and Cuddalore.[13]

Commerce in the Colonial Era

Records at Fort St. George show that the British, who gradually established themselves in Madras in the 17th century, made trade agreements with Periya Thambi Maraikkayar of Ramnad for the sale and transport of pepper and rice[14]. However, in the early 18th century, they failed in their attempts to persuade prominent Tamil Muslim traders from the southern Coromandel Coast, such as the famous merchant and shipowner Mahmud Naina of Parangipettai, to trade from British-held ports.[15]

In 1812, Muhammad Abdullah Basha travelled to Arabia, Egypt, and other West Asian countries, which resulted in substantial profits for his business. One of his sons, H. Muhammad Quddus Basha Sahib, worked as a commission agent and merchant from 1883. In 1890, along with his brother H. Muhammad Hadi Basha Sahib, he engaged in the profitable trade of indigo, tamarind, coffee, pepper, mica, and many other goods. He also served as an agent for general insurance companies, owned extensive lands and a diamond mine, and was a pioneer in the mica industry in the Madras Presidency[16]. For his loyalty to the British Empire, he received the title of 'Khan Bahadur.' He represented the Muslims of the Madras Presidency at the Delhi Durbar on December 12, 1911, highlighting his importance in the public life of the region.

The business network of Kasim Muhammad Maraikkayar was extensive. He used thirty boats for loading and unloading goods on the Ramnad coast and employed a thousand people year-round. Khan Bahadur Sharum Hameed Maraikkayar was the Ramnad representative for the British India Steam Navigation Company and exported cattle to Sri Lanka. Similarly, Khan Bahadur V. Hameed Sultan Maraikkayar was a prominent merchant and landowner in Thanjavur[17]. He also worked as a broker (*dubash*) for deck passengers, an interpreter, and a contractor, and served as an agent for the British India Steam Navigation Company.[18]

Sir Ahmad Thambi Maraikkayar was the agent for the British Navigation Company in Nagapattinam and was also involved in import-export activities from Madras.

N. Muhammad Mian Rawther Bahadur of Trichy started a factory in 1883 and later owned three factories in Sembattu, near Trichy.[19] Jamal Mohideen Rawther of Ramnad moved to Madras in the late 19thCentury and started a business there. His company exported raw and tanned hides and also acted as a commission agent for tanners across South India. After his father's death, his son Jamal Muhammad Rawther took over the business. Due to his wealth and business acumen, he was hailed as the "Prince of Commerce of South India."

Conclusion

When we analyse the development of commerce through the ages and the rise of the people behind it, based on historical evidence, it becomes clear that the Muslims of Tamil Nadu have not only preserved their ancestral tradition of trade but have also earned an indelible place in the commercial history of Tamil Nadu.

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A Historical Study of the Narikkuravar Under the Criminal Tribes Act in Colonial Tamil Nadu

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The Narikkuravar, a semi-nomadic indigenous community of Tamil Nadu, have long occupied a marginal position in South Indian society, shaped by a complex interplay of caste prejudice, economic exclusion and colonial governance. Historically engaged in hunting, bird trapping, bead-making and itinerant trade, the Narikkuravar maintained a distinctive cultural identity through their language, Vaagriboli, patrilineal clan structures and ritual practices. Their mobility, once integral to their economic survival and cultural autonomy, was recast as evidence of inherent criminality under British colonial rule.The enactment of the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) in 1871, and its extension to the Madras Presidency in 1911, marked a turning point in the state's engagement with nomadic and peripatetic groups. Implemented in Tamil Nadu from 1914, the Act institutionalized compulsory registration, surveillance, movement restrictions and forced settlements, targeting communities deemed "addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offences." The Narikkuravar were formally notified under the CTA, subjecting them to intense administrative control and eroding their traditional livelihoods.While the CTA was repealed in 1952, its replacement by the Habitual Offenders Act perpetuated the structural stigma attached to formerly *"criminalized"* communities. For the Narikkuravar, the legacy of colonial criminalization continues to shape contemporary experiences of poverty, social exclusion and limited political representation. The recent recognition of the Narikkuravar as a Scheduled Tribe in 2023 represents an important legal milestone, yet the socio-economic disparities they face underscore the persistence of historical injustices.Despite the extensive literature on the CTA's impact in South India, studies specifically focused on the Narikkuravar remain limited. This paper addresses this gap by reconstructing their experiences under the Act, tracing the continuities into the postcolonial period and highlighting the community's strategies of adaptation and cultural resilience. In doing so, it situates the Narikkuravar's history within broader discussions on colonial governance, state control and the enduring legacies of legal and social marginalization.

While sociological and NGO studies (e.g., Vanavil Trust, 2018) document aspects of Narikkuravar education, housing and infrastructure access, there is a critical gap in historically grounded, community-specific scholarship. Few works examine how the CTA

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shaped Narikkuravar socio-economic conditions, gender roles and intergenerational identity formation. Equally absent are analyses of their adaptive strategies, negotiations with local authorities, cultural resilience through Vaagriboli language preservation and partial continuities of occupational identity.

This study addresses these lacunae by combining archival research, oral histories and a postcolonial theoretical lens to reconstruct the Narikkuravar's lived experiences under the CTA. In doing so, it contributes to both the historiography of colonial legal regimes and the broader discourse on the Denotified Tribes of South India, foregrounding a community historically positioned at the intersection of state surveillance and social marginalization.

Historical Background of the Narikkuravar

The Narikkuravar are a semi-nomadic indigenous community of Tamil Nadu, believed to have migrated from Rajasthan, Gujaratand Maharashtra around four centuries ago. Their ethnonym, "*Narikkuravar*," meaning "Jackal People," reflects their traditional hunting of jackals, while the alternative name "*Kuruvikarar*" ("birdmen") denotes their expertise in bird trapping. They speak *Vaagriboli* (VaagriBooli), an unclassified Indo-Aryan language without a written script, which serves as a living repository of their oral traditions, collective memory, and migratory history.

Culturally, the Narikkuravar are organized into patrilineal, exogamous clans such as *Gujarato* and *Mevado*, which regulate kinship ties, ritual obligations, and social hierarchy. A prominent ritual practice is the *sami-mootai* ("God's bundle")a sacred cloth bundle containing animal blood from sacrificespassed down to the eldest son, symbolizing clan prestige and spiritual authority. Their attire, jewellery and distinct social customs further reinforce their cultural identity.Before colonial intervention, the Narikkuravar sustained themselves through hunting, taxidermy, medicinal plant collection, bead-makingand itinerant trade. Hunting of jackals, rare birds, hares and mongooses was central to their subsistence and cultural expression. They also practiced fortune-tellingoften with trained parrots (*kilijosiyam*)and sold amulets, animal teeth and other goods in barter or cash transactions with settled agrarian communities. Their mobility followed seasonal patterns, sometimes deliberately used to avoid state interference, demonstrating nomadism as both an economic strategy and a political choice.

British colonial officials, however, viewed this mobility as inherently suspicious. Ethnographic reports, often informed by upper-caste informants, reframed nomadic livelihoods as evidence of "*hereditary criminality*." Such descriptions were neither neutral nor purely observational; they were instruments of governance. By casting the Narikkuravar's self-sufficient mobility as a threat to order, colonial administrators justified their classification under the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA).This reframing was part of a broader colonial project of controltransforming independent, mobile communities into fixed, surveilled populations. The Narikkuravar's redefinition from skilled hunters and traders to "*born criminals*" under the CTA exemplifies how colonial knowledge production and legislation worked together to dismantle indigenous autonomy, impose sedentarization, and integrate nomadic groups into the colonial administrative and tax system.

The Criminal Tribes Act in the Madras Presidency

The Criminal Tribes Act (CTA), first enacted in 1871 for North India, was extended to the Madras Presidency in 1911 and formally implemented in 1914. While the stated aim of the Act was crime prevention, its enforcement in the south had a clear political dimension. It specifically targeted communities such as the *Kallars*, *Maravars*, *Koravas* and *Narikkuravars* groups whose mobility and resistance to colonial authority were perceived as threats to the established order. The 1911 version of the CTA was broader in scope than the original, covering all British India and addressing earlier administrative difficulties in its application. In Madras, its implementation was closely tied to suppressing communities accused of "stiff native resistance," illustrating how the Act served as a tool of political control as much as legal regulation.Under the

CTA, the classification of a community as "criminal" was a highly centralized process. If the local government suspected a tribe of habitual non-bailable offences, it reported to the Governor-General in Council. Upon approval, the community's name would be published in the Local Gazette, rendering the declaration conclusive and beyond judicial challenge. For the Narikkuravar, this designation reflected deep colonial suspicion toward nomadic groups, equating mobility with criminality. Once notified, they were compelled to reside in fixed settlements, subject to rehabilitation schemes that functioned more as mechanisms of control than genuine reform.

The Act's surveillance apparatus was extensive. Registration of all members, including thumb impressions, was mandatory; adult males reported weekly to local authorities, often undergoing multiple roll calls daily. Movement was tightly restricted, with travel requiring official passes. Forced settlementsmanaged at times by the Salvation Armycombined agricultural or industrial labour with constant supervision, functioning as semi-carceral spaces. Perhaps the most intrusive measure was the removal of children, sometimes as young as four, to reformatory schools, aiming to sever cultural transmission and replace it with colonial norms.In effect, the CTA in the Madras Presidency institutionalized the criminalization of nomadic communities. For the Narikkuravar, it marked the systematic dismantling of their economic independence, cultural mobility, and social autonomy, embedding a stigma that would persist long after the law's repeal.

Lived Experiences and Resistance under the CTA

For the Narikkuravar, the Criminal Tribes Act was not merely an administrative label but a daily reality of surveillance, disruption, and stigma. Oral histories within the community recall the profound upheavals of this periodloss of livelihood, forced relocation and the psychological burden of being branded "criminals by birth." Although the CTA was repealed in 1952, the stigma endured, shaping social attitudes and institutional behaviour well into the post-independence era.One of the most immediate effects was the destruction of their traditional economic base. Huntingcentral to the Narikkuravar's cultural identitywas progressively outlawed under colonial forest laws, while the CTA's settlement system curtailed the mobility essential for their itinerant trades. Forced to abandon age-old practices, many turned to bead-making, trinket production, and itinerant street vending. These new occupations offered survival but not economic security, and their continued movement for trade was often met with suspicion, police checks, and harassment. The Act's mobility restrictions also fractured social and kinship patterns. The settlement regime imposed a "fixed society" model alien to their traditions, breaking seasonal movement cycles and disrupting inter-clan relations. The separation of children into reformatory institutions was particularly devastating, severing intergenerational transmission of Vaagriboli language, oral histories, and clan rituals. This policy not only undermined family cohesion but also sought to erase cultural identity over time.

Social stigma compounded these structural constraints. The Narikkuravar's meat consumption specially jackal meat, taboo among dominant-caste Hindusreinforced caste-based exclusion, pushing them to the physical and social margins of villages. Denied entry into upper-caste neighbourhoods, excluded from common spaces, and rarely invited to public events, they were treated as perpetual outsiders.For women, the CTA brought both increased economic responsibility and heightened vulnerability. With men often required to report to police stations or confined to settlements, women assumed greater roles in trade and household management. In some cases, this expanded their agency; in others, it intensified their exposure to poverty, exploitation, and gendered violence.Ultimately, the lived experience of the CTA for the Narikkuravar was one of cultural dislocation, economic marginalization, and enduring prejudice. These colonial impositions embedded a legacy of exclusion that persisted beyond legal repeal, continuing to influence the community's social position in independent India.

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லால்பேட்டை: மத நல்லிணக்கத்தின் முகமாக திகழும் ஒரு இஸ்லாமிய நகரம் – ஓர் வரலாற்று ஆய்வு

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முன்னுரை

தமிழகத்தில் இஸ்லாமியர்கள் அதிகம் வாழும் ஊர்களில், பிரசித்தி பெற்றது லால்பேட்டை நகரம். சுற்றியுள்ள கிராமங்களில் ஏதேனும் பிரச்சனைகள் மூண்டால், பாதுகாப்பு கருதி லால்பேட்டையில் பேருந்துகளை நிறுத்திவிட்டு செல்லும் அளவிற்கு பாதுகாப்பான மத நல்லிணக்க நகரம். லால்கான் பேட்டை எவ்வாறு லால்பேட்டை என்று ஆனது இதன் ஆதி கால பெயர் என்ன மற்றும் எவ்வாறு இஸ்லாமிய இங்கு பரவியது என்பதை கண்டறிவது இவ்வாய்வின் நோக்கமாகும். இவ்வாய்விற்காக பல நேர்காணல்கள், ஆவணங்கள், அரசாணைகள் மற்றும் புத்தகங்களை பயன்படுத்தி வரலாற்று ஆய்வு முறை மூலம் இவ்வாய்வு கட்டுரை ஆராயப்பட்டுள்ளது.

லால்பேட்டை பேரூராட்சி:

தமிழ்நாட்டில் கடலூர் மாவட்டத்தில் காட்டுமன்னார்கோவில் வட்டத்தில் லால்பேட்டை பேரூராட்சி அமைந்துள்ளது. முதல் நிலை ஊராட்சியாக 1954ஆம் வருடம் துவங்கப்பட்டது. பின்பு 1971 ஆம் வருடம் முதல் நிலை பேரூராட்சியாக தரம் உயர்த்தப்பட்டு செயல்பட்டு வருகிறது . இப்ப பேரூராட்சியில் லால்பேட்டை கொல்லிமலை மேல்பாதி கொல்லி மலை கீழ்ப்பாதி என்று மூன்று வருவாய் கிராமங்கள் உள்ளன. பேரூராட்சியின் மொத்த பரப்பளவு 13.55 சதுர கிலோமீட்டர் ஆகும் மொத்த மக்கள் தொகை 2011ன் படி 16561 ஆகும். மொத்த மக்கள் தொகையில் 84% இஸ்லாமியர்கள் இங்கு உள்ளனர் .

லால்கான் பேட்டைக்கு முற்பட்ட காலம் :

விஜயாலய சோழனுக்கு பேரனாக பிறந்த சோழப்பேரரசின் முதலாம் பராந்தகச் சோழன் கிபி 907-956 ஆம் ஆண்டுகளில் ஆட்சி செய்த வீர நாராயணனின் மகன் ராஜதித்தன் தனது போர் படை வீரர்களைக் கொண்டு ஏரி ஒன்றை வெட்டினார். அதற்கு அவர் இட்ட பெயரை வீர நாராயணபுரம் ஏரி பின்னர் வீராணம் என்றானது. அந்த ஏரியின் கரையில் சிவனுக்காக ஒரு கோயில் கட்டப்பட்டுள்ளது மூலவர் சந்திரசேகரராக காட்சியளிக்கிறார். அதனாலேயே இவ்விடத்திற்கு சந்திரசேகரபுரம் என்ற பெயர் கிட்டியது பின்னர் இக்கோவில் காசி விஸ்வநாதர் கோவிலாக மாற்றப்பட்டது .

லால்கான் பேட்டை எனும் லால்பேட்டை :

இப்பகுதிக்கு லால்பேட்டை என்ற பெயர் வர காரணமாக இருந்தவர் லால்கான் பகதூர் ஆவார். அவுரங்கசீப்பின் மரணத்திற்குப் பிறகு அவரின் அமைச்சரவையில் அமைச்சர் பதவி வகித்த மீர் கமருதீன் கான் பகதூர் ஹைதராபாத் நிஜமாக பதவி ஏற்று கொண்டார் அவருக்குப் பின் நிஜாமுத் தவ்லா என்கிற நாசிர் ஜங்க் என்பவர் நிஜமாக பதவி ஏற்று கொள்கிறார். அவர் பிரெஞ்சுக்காரர்களுடன் நட்பு கொண்டிருந்தார் அதனாலேயே பிஞ்சுக்காரர்கள் நிஜாமின் இடங்களை தன் வசப்படுத்திக் கொண்டனர். அதனை மீட்பதற்காக நாசிர் ஜங்க் ஆற்காடு சுபேதாரராக இருந்த அன்வர் தின் கான் மற்றும் முகமது அலி வாலாஜாவிடம் கடிதம் மூலம் உதவி கேட்டார். அதனை இருவரும் நிராகரிக்கவே போர் மூண்டது போரில் அன்வர் தின் கான் கொல்லப்பட்டார். மேலும் இளவரசர் வாலாஜா நிஜாமிற்கு கட்டுப்பட மறுத்ததால் அவர் மீது போர் தொடங்கியது.

நாசிர் ஜங்கிற்கு ஆதரவாக பிரெஞ்சுப் படைகளும் அப்துல் நபி கான் தலைமையில் ஒரு படையும் பண்ருட்டி அடுத்த திருவடியில் வாலாஜா

[1]ஆய்வு வழிகாட்டி, பேராசிரியர், வரலாற்றுத்துறை, அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், அண்ணாமலை நகர்.
[2]முழு நேர முனைவர் பட்ட ஆய்வாளர், வரலாற்றுத்துறை, அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், அண்ணாமலை நகர்.

படையுடன் மோதின. வாலாஜாவின் படை வெற்றி பெற்றதால் பிரெஞ்சு படைகள் பாண்டிச்சேரியிலும் அப்துல் நபி காலின் படை சிதம்பரத்திலும் தஞ்சம் அடைந்தன. அது முதல் சிதம்பரம் பகுதி அப்துல் நபி கானின் கீழ் ஆட்சி செய்யப்பட்டது. அப்துல் நபி கான் ஹைதராபாத் திரும்பும் வேளையில் லால்கான் பகதூரை இப்பகுதியின் கவர்னராக நியமனம் செய்தார்.

லால்கான் சிதம்பரத்தில் இருந்த பொழுது கி. பி 1753-1756 ஆம் ஆண்டுகளில் லால்கான் மற்றும் நவாப் பள்ளிவாசல்களை கட்டினார். பின்பு அவர் தனது இருப்பை வீராணம் ஏரியின் கரையில் இருந்த சந்திரசேகர புரத்திற்கு மாற்றினார். சந்திரசேகர புரத்தின் புறநகர் பகுதியில் அவர் கட்டமைத்த நகரமே லால்கான் பேட்டை அதுவே காலப்போக்கில் லால்பேட்டையாக மருவியது.

லால்பேட்டை நகரம்:

லால்கான் வீராணம் ஏரியின் நீர் அனைவருக்கும் பயனளிக்கும் வகையில் கான்சாகிப் என்ற வாய்க்கால் ஒன்றை வெட்டினார். பின் தன் ஆளுமையை விரிவுபடுத்தவும் இஸ்லாமியர்களை குடியமர்த்தவும் லால்பேட்டை நகரை அவர் உருவாக்கினார். பின் அங்கு ஜாமியா பள்ளிவாசல் ஒன்றை கட்டினார். அப்ப பள்ளிவாசலை சுற்றி மக்கள் குடியமர்த்தப்பட்டனர். கிபி 1700க்கு பிறகு இந்நகரம் விரிவடைய ஆரம்பித்தது. இப்பகுதியை செழிப்பாக மாற்ற பலவித முயற்சிகள் லால்கான் மூலம் முன்னெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. தனது சகாக்களை துணைக்கு வைத்து இங்கு தங்கிப் பல சேவைகளை செய்யத் தொடங்கினார். அவர் தங்கி இருந்த இடமே 'கான் இருப்பு" ஆகும். அதுவே காலப்போக்கில் மருவி 'காங்கிருப்பு" என்றானது. இந்நகரை நிர்வாகிக்க குற்றேவலர்களை நியமனம் செய்தார். குற்றேவலர்கள் தங்கி இருந்த பகுதியே தற்போதைய கொத்தவால் தெரு ஆகும். மத நல்லிணக்கத்தை போற்றிய நகரத்தந்தை லால்கான் மாற்று மத மக்களையும் இந்நகரில் குடியமர்த்தினார்.

பெரிய பள்ளிவாசல்:

இந்நகரில் 15 பள்ளிவாசல்கள் உள்ளன. அதில் பழமையானது ஜாமியா பெரிய பள்ளிவாசல் ஆகும். இப்பள்ளி வாசல் 1767ஆம் ஆண்டு கட்டப்பட்டது. இப்பள்ளியை நிர்வாகிக்க வகையறா அடிப்படையில் முத்தவல்லி தேர்வு செய்யப்படுவார்கள். 9-கரைகாரர்கள் முத்தவல்லி தேர்வில் இடம்பெறுவார்கள். ஒவ்வொரு கரையிலும் மூன்று குடும்பத்தினர் வருவார்கள், அவர்கள் தங்களுக்குள் பேசி ஒரு குடும்பத்தை சேர்ந்தவரை முத்த வழியாக தேர்வு செய்வர். அவர்களின் பதவிக்காலம் இரண்டு வருடங்கள்.

மதரசா மன்பவுல் அன்வார்:

தமிழ்நாட்டில் பழமையான இரண்டாவது அரபுக்கல்லூரி லால்பேட்டையில் அமைந்துள்ள மதரசா மன்பவுல் அன்வார் அரபுக் கல்லூரி ஆகும். இது 1864ஆம் ஆண்டு அகமது ஷாவால் தொடங்கப்பட்டது பின்பு பல்வேறு அறிஞர்களால் பிரிவு செய்யப்பட்டு இன்றளவும் சிறப்பாக செயல்பட்டு வருகிறது இங்கு பயிலும் மாணவர்களுக்கு உணவு இங்குள்ள மக்களால் வழங்கப்படுகிறது அதாவது ஒரு குடும்பத்திற்கு ஒரு மாணவர் வீதம் 6 ஆண்டுகள் வரை தினசரி மூன்று வேலைகளும் உணவு வழங்கப்படுகிறது அது மட்டும் இன்றி அந்த மாணவர் படிப்பை முடித்தவுடன் பட்டமளிப்பு விழாவிற்கு வருகை தரும் மாணவரின் குடும்பத்தினருக்கும் உணவு வழங்க நிர்ணயிக்கப்பட்ட குடும்பத்தினரால் விருந்து வழங்கப்படுகிறது .

சமூகம் மற்றும் கலாச்சாரம்:

இஸ்லாமியர்கள் பெரும்பான்மையாக வாழும் இவ் ஊரில் மாற்று மதத்தினரும் உள்ளனர் ஊரின் தொடக்கமாக உள்ள சிதம்பரம் சாலையில் இந்துக்களும் திருவள்ளுவர் வீதியில் கிறிஸ்தவ மக்களும் வசிக்கின்றனர். லெப்பை முஸ்லிம்கள் பெரும்பளவில் உள்ளனர். தமிழ் மொழியே பிரதான மொழியாக உள்ளது. நெசவு, விவசாயம், வெற்றிலை கொடிக்கால் பிரதான தொழிலாகும். உள்ளூரிலேயே திருமணம் செய்து கொள்ளும் வழக்கம் உள்ளது. சாதாரண மற்றும் ஆடம்பரமான

திருமணங்கள் இங்கு நடைபெறுகின்றன. பெண் வீட்டிலேயே திருமணம் நடைபெறும் மாப்பிள்ளை வீட்டார் சீர்வரிசை கொடுத்து பெண்ணை திருமணம் செய்து கொண்டனர். திருமணத்திற்காக நாட்டப்பட்ட பந்தக்கால் திருமணம் முடிந்த 40 ஆம் நாள் வரை இருக்கும். திருமணம் முடிந்த பின் 40 நாள் வரை உறவினர்களால் மணமக்களுக்கு விருந்து பரிமாறப்படுகிறது.முன்பு திருமணங்கள் இரவில் பெண் வீட்டில் நடைபெற்றன, தற்பொழுது பகலில் திருமண மண்டபங்களில் நடைபெறுகின்றன . பரோட்டா என்ற உணவு வகை ஊரில் பிரசித்தம் பெற்றது. ஊரின் முக்கிய திருவிழாக்களாக ரம்ஜான், பக்ரீத், மிலாதி நபி, மதரசா மன்பவுல் அன்வார் ஆகியவை ஆகும்.

பொருளாதாரம் :

ஊர் மக்களின் பிரதான தொழிலாக விவசாயமே இருந்தது. அதுவும் வெற்றிலை விவசாயம் இங்கு பெயர் பெற்றது. லால்பேட்டை வெற்றிலை இப்பகுதியில் பிரசித்தம் பெற்றது. இது மட்டும் இன்றி நெல், வாழை, முருங்கை, கிழங்கு போன்றவை விவசாயம் செய்யப்படுகின்றன. ஆனால் காலப்போக்கில் வெளிநாட்டு மோகம் வெற்றிலை விவசாயத்தை படிப்படியாக அழிக்கத் தொடங்கியது. இன்று இங்குள்ள இளைஞர்கள் வெளிநாட்டிற்கு சென்று வேலை செய்கின்றனர். அரபு நாடுகள் சிங்கப்பூர், மலேசியா போன்ற நாடுகளில் இவர்கள் வேலை செய்கின்றனர். இதனால் ஊரில் இருந்த கூரை வீடுகள், ஓட்டு வீடுகள் மாடி வீடுகளாகவும், மாட மாளிகைகளாகவும் மாறிவிட்டன. இதன் மூலமாக அன்னிய செலாவணி அரசாங்கத்திற்கு கிடைக்கப்பெறுகிறது .

கல்வி:

கல்வியின் முக்கியத்துவம் அறிந்த இம்ம மக்கள் மார்க்க கல்வி போதிக்க மதரசா மன்பவுல் அன்வர் அரபுக் கல்லூரியை நிறுவினர். மேலும் பெண்களும் கல்வி கற்க வேண்டும் என எண்ணி பெண்கள் மதரசா, இருபாலரும் பயில தனித்தனியாக இமாம் கஜ்ஜாலி மெட்ரிக் மேல்நிலைப்பள்ளி, அரசு மேல்நிலைப்பள்ளி என இந்நகரம் கல்விக்கூடங்கள் நிறைந்து காணப்படுகின்றது. இந்நகரில் கல்வி அறிவு பெற்றவர்களில் ஆண்கள் 89.27% பெண்கள் 78.41% என மொத்த கல்வி அறிவு பெற்றவர்கள் 83.77% ஆகும்.

தொலைத்தொடர்பு வசதிகள் :

இவ் ஊர் மக்கள் அதிக அளவில் வெளிநாடுகளில் வசிப்பதால் ஊரில் நிகழும் நிகழ்வுகள் திருமணங்கள் மரணச்செய்திகள் உடனுக்குடன் தெரிந்துக்கொள்ள லால்பேட்டை டாட் காம் என்ற இணையதளம் 2004 ஆம் ஆண்டு லண்டனில் பணி செய்த இவ்வுரை சேர்ந்த ஃபத்தஹுத்தின் என்பவரால் தொடங்கப்பட்டது மற்றும் லால்பேட்டை எக்ஸ்பிரஸ் என்ற இணையதளம் நூருல் அமீன் என்பவரால் 29.6.2009 இல் தொடங்கப்பட்டது.

முடிவுரை:

இஸ்லாமியர்கள் பெரும்பான்மையாக வாழ்ந்தாலும் தன்னகத்தே பிற மதத்தினரும் மத நல்லிணக்கத்தோடு வாழும் ஊராக லால்பேட்டை உள்ளது. தனக்கென ஒரு தனித்துவமான சிறப்பான சமூக கட்டமைப்பையும் கலாச்சாரத்தையும் வலுவான பொருளாதாரத்தையும் இவர் கொண்டுள்ளது. குடிநீர் பற்றாக்குறையே இல்லாத அளவுக்கு அனைத்து வீடுகளுக்கும் 24 மணி நேரமும் குடிநீர் விநியோகம் செய்யப்படுகிறது என்பது தனிச்சிறப்பு. இதன் மத நல்லிணக்கத்தையும் தனித்துவமான கலாச்சாரத்தையும் காக்க வேண்டியது இவ்வூர் மக்கள் ஒவ்வொருவரின் தலையாயக் கடமையாகும்.

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Pollution in the Thamirabarani River: Challenges and Solutions

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Causes of Pollution

The Thamirabarani River faces pollution from multiple sources, and most of them are directly linked to human activities. The first and most prominent cause is the discharge of domestic waste. The river flows through towns such as Ambasamudram and Tirunelveli, where thousands of households release untreated sewage into its waters. In many areas, there is no proper underground drainage system, and waste is simply diverted into nearby canals, which eventually meet the river. Plastics, detergents, soaps, and food waste enter the water, changing its natural quality. What was once safe for drinking and bathing now contains harmful bacteria and chemicals.The second major cause is industrial effluents. With the growth of industries in the region, the river has become an easy dumping ground. Textile dyeing units release colored chemicals; paper mills discharge bleaching agents and sludge; sugar factories let out molasses-filled water. These substances are not biodegradable and can remain in the river for years. Industrial discharge often contains heavy metals such as lead, mercury, and chromium, which are dangerous to both human and animal health. Unfortunately, not all industries follow the rules laid down by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, and many secretly release untreated effluents at night to avoid detection.Another important factor is agricultural runoff. The Thamirabarani basin is home to intensive farming, especially of paddy, banana, and sugarcane. Farmers rely heavily on chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides to increase productivity. During irrigation, a large portion of these chemicals' seeps into canals and drainage channels, which carry them into the river. This leads to nutrient pollution, where excess nitrogen and phosphorus cause algal growth that suffocates fish and reduces oxygen levels.Illegal sand mining and encroachments have also worsened the river's health. Excessive sand mining destabilizes the riverbed, lowers groundwater tables, and reduces the river's ability to filter itself naturally. Meanwhile, people build houses, shops, and even small factories close to the riverbanks, narrowing its course and adding to waste inflow.Finally, population growth and urban expansion are placing enormous pressure on the river. As villages grow into towns and towns into cities, more waste is generated than the river can absorb. With no modern sewage treatment in place, the river has become the dumping ground for human progress. All these factors combined make pollution in the Thamirabarani a serious environmental crisis.

Types of Pollution:

The pollution affecting the Thamirabarani River is not of a single kind but appears in several interlinked forms. The most obvious is water pollution, where the quality of water is degraded by the entry of sewage,

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chemicals, and solid waste. Once considered clean enough to drink directly in rural areas, the river water now requires treatment before use.Chemical pollution is especially alarming because of the presence of industrial effluents. Factories release dyes, acids, and bleaching agents into the river, altering its pH level and making it acidic in some stretches. Heavy metals such as lead, cadmium, and mercury accumulate in the water and soil. Unlike organic matter, which decomposes over time, these metals persist for decades and slowly poison fish, crops, and even humans who consume them.Biological pollution is another serious concern. The discharge of untreated sewage brings bacteria, viruses, and parasites into the water. These microorganisms cause diseases like cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and hepatitis. For people living in villages along the river who still use it for bathing and drinking, this is a daily health risk.Solid waste pollution has also become highly visible in recent years. Plastics,bottles, wrappers, and non-biodegradable waste are often thrown directly into the river. During temple festivals or community events, offerings packed in plastic are floated in the river, adding to the problem. Over time, these plastics break down into microplastics, which enter the food chain through fish and other aquatic organisms.In some stretches, the river also suffers from nutrient pollution, caused by fertilizers and pesticides from agricultural runoff. This leads to eutrophication, where excess nutrients encourage the rapid growth of algae. Thick algal blooms cover the surface of the water, blocking sunlight and reducing oxygen levels. Fish and other aquatic life suffocate in these conditions, leading to mass deaths.Finally, there is also sediment and thermal pollution. Sand mining disturbs the natural sediments of the river, while some industries release warm water into the river, raising its temperature. These changes disrupt aquatic ecosystems, reducing biodiversity.Thus, the Thamirabarani suffers from a combination of chemical, biological, and physical pollution. Each type of pollution interacts with the others, making the overall impact far more destructive than individual pollutants alone.

Impact on Agriculture:

The Thamirabarani River has always been the backbone of agriculture in Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi districts. Its perennial flow made double cropping possible, and fertile alluvial soil enriched by the river ensured high productivity. However, the increasing pollution of the river has begun to show its impact on agriculture. Farmers who once proudly cultivated rice, sugarcane, and banana are now facing difficulties because polluted water affects soil health and crop yield. When industrial effluents and sewage mix with irrigation water, they carry harmful chemicals and salts into the fields. Over time, these chemicals accumulate in the soil, leading to salinity and reduced fertility.One of the major effects is the decline in paddy cultivation. Rice fields require standing water for long durations. When this water contains chemical residues or high levels of sewage, the roots of rice plants get damaged, resulting in stunted growth. Banana plantations too are sensitive to water quality. Farmers report that polluted water affects the color and size of bananas, reducing their market value. Sugarcane, though a hardy crop, shows reduced sugar content when irrigated with polluted water.Another hidden danger is the bioaccumulation of chemicals in crops. Fertilizers and pesticides washed into the river re-enter the fields through irrigation. These residues remain in the edible parts of crops, which means consumers indirectly ingest harmful substances. Over time, this affects not just farmers but the general population.The economic impact on farmers is significant. Declining yields and poor-quality produce mean lower incomes. Farmers are forced to spend more money on additional fertilizers and soil treatments to maintain productivity, pushing them into debt. The once prosperous agriculture of Tirunelveli now faces the risk of decline if the river continues to be polluted. Thus, pollution in the Thamirabarani is not just an environmental issue but also a direct threat to the agricultural economy of South Tamil Nadu.

Impact on Human Health and Society:

Pollution in the Thamirabarani River also has a direct impact on human health. In many villages along its banks, people still depend on the river for drinking, bathing, and washing clothes. The presence of untreated sewage introduces harmful bacteria and viruses into the water. Diseases like typhoid, cholera, and dysentery

have become common in rural areas, especially during the rainy season when sewage flow into the river increases. Children are particularly vulnerable, and poor families often struggle to afford proper medical treatment.Industrial pollution has created another set of health problems. Heavy metals and chemicals discharged by textile and paper industries slowly enter the food chain. Fish and other aquatic organisms absorb these pollutants, and when humans consume them, toxins accumulate in their bodies. Long-term exposure to such chemicals has been linked to skin diseases, respiratory problems, kidney damage, and even cancer. The poor and marginalized communities, who cannot afford treated water, are the worst affected.Apart from physical health, river pollution also impacts social and cultural life. The Thamirabarani is not just a river but also a sacred symbol. Temples such as the Papanasanathar Temple are closely associated with the river, and rituals like Aadi Perukku involve offering thanks to its waters. When people see plastics, sewage, and chemical foam floating on a river they once worshipped, it creates a sense of cultural loss and disappointment. Fishermen too are affected, as declining fish stocks reduce their livelihood opportunities. Many families who depended on fishing have been forced to seek alternate jobs.Thus, pollution in the Thamirabarani is not merely an ecological problem but also a public health crisis and a social issue. It directly affects the health, economy, and traditions of the people who live by its banks.

Government Measures and Community Initiatives:

Recognizing the seriousness of the problem, the Tamil Nadu government has introduced several measures to control pollution in the Thamirabarani. The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) monitors industries located near the river and sets guidelines for the treatment of effluents. In principle, industries are required to install Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs) before releasing wastewater into the river. Similarly, municipal authorities are expected to set up Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) to prevent domestic waste from entering the river. A few towns have built such plants, but their coverage is limited, and many function below capacity.Community participation has also begun to play an important role. Several NGOs and environmental groups in Tirunelveli have started awareness campaigns about the dangers of river pollution. School and college students regularly organize clean-up drives along the banks, removing plastics and solid waste. Farmers' associations have started promoting organic farming practices and encouraging a shift away from chemical fertilizers and pesticides.There are also spiritual and cultural movements associated with river conservation. Temples along the river sometimes organize theerthavari (river worship rituals) combined with cleanliness campaigns. These efforts, though small, remind people of the river's sacred value and their duty to protect it.Despite these measures, challenges remain. Industries continue to release effluents, sometimes secretly at night to avoid detection. Many sewage treatment plants are either incomplete or not functioning properly. Sand mining continues illegally in several places, disturbing the riverbed. For government measures to succeed, strict enforcement of laws is essential. At the same time, without public awareness and participation, even strong laws cannot protect the river. The combination of government action and community responsibility is the only way to save the Thamirabarani from further decline.

Solutions:

Saving the Thamirabarani River from pollution is not just an environmental necessity but also a moral and social responsibility. As the lifeline of Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi districts, the river sustains agriculture, drinking water, industries, and religious traditions. Therefore, finding practical solutions is the need of the hour. The most important step is the strict regulation of industrial effluents. Factories must be compelled to treat their wastewater in effluent treatment plants before releasing it into the river. Continuous monitoring by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board with heavy penalties for violations will discourage polluters. Installing real-time monitoring systems can help track pollution levels and catch offenders quickly.Another critical solution is proper sewage management. Many municipalities along the river discharge untreated sewage directly into the water. Expanding sewage

treatment plants, maintaining existing infrastructure, and covering smaller towns and villages are essential. Decentralized treatment systems can also be set up in villages, where treated water can be reused for irrigation instead of being dumped into the river.Agriculture, being both dependent on and a contributor to pollution, requires sustainable reforms. Farmers should be encouraged to adopt organic and eco-friendly practices, such as using cow dung manure, vermicompost, and biofertilizers instead of chemical fertilizers. Drip irrigation and controlled use of pesticides will also reduce harmful runoff into the river. Government schemes that subsidize organic farming and awareness programs for farmers will make this transition easier.Equally important is community participation. Citizens must realize that protecting the Thamirabarani is also protecting their own future. Avoiding plastic waste, not dumping garbage into the river, and joining community clean-up drives are small but impactful steps. Schools and colleges should include river conservation projects in their curriculum to instil environmental responsibility in the younger generation. Religious leaders and temple authorities can also spread awareness by linking cleanliness of the river with cultural and spiritual duties.Technology can also play a role. Introducing modern water quality testing devices, using GIS mapping to track pollution hotspots, and creating apps for public reporting of pollution incidents can bring accountability and transparency. Encouraging research institutions and universities in Tirunelveli to work on river restoration projects will provide long-term scientific solutions.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the Thamirabarani is not just a river; it is the heart of South Tamil Nadu. It carries the heritage of generations, nurtures thousands of acres of farmland, and provides water to lakhs of people. However, unchecked pollution threatens to destroy this precious lifeline. Through a combination of government regulation, community action, eco-friendly farming, and modern technology, the river can be restored to its original purity. The responsibility lies not only with the authorities but with every individual who depends on its waters. If immediate and consistent action is taken, the Thamirabarani can continue to flow as a source of prosperity, culture, and life for centuries to come.

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The role of London Missionary Society missionaries in shaping education and social change in Salem

K. Suganya[1] and Sakthisri[2]

Introduction

The London Missionary Society (LMS) played a pivotal role in shaping the educational and social landscape of the Salem region during the nineteenth century. Beginning in 1824, the missionaries faced immense challenges, including resistance from local people, cultural barriers, and financial difficulties. Yet, through their persistence, they established schools, industrial training centres, healthcare institutions, and settlements that not only spread Christianity but also laid the foundation for modern education and social reform in Salem. This paper highlights the contributions of key missionaries such as Rev. Henry Crips, Rev. George Walton, Rev. J.M. Lechler, and their successors, whose collective efforts transformed Salem into a centre of learning and humanitarian activity.

Rev. Henry Crips: The Beginning of Educational Endeavours

Rev. Henry Crips, a young missionary of twenty-four, arrived in Salem in 1827 alongwith his wife Eliza Steffy.He immediately began evangelistic and educational work,preaching Christian doctrine and moral values across the town and surrounding villages.One of his innovative approaches was delivering weekly sermons at Shevapet market, attracting large crowds.

Crips received valuable support from two Indian Christians from Bangalore, Isaac David and Melchizedec, who assisted in both evangelism and education. On 15 November 1827, he opened a school inside Salem Fort, appointing Melchizedec as its first teacher. On the recommendation of Salem's Collector, Mr. D. Cockburn, Crips was entrusted with five existing schools, which he reorganized and strengthened. He further established five new primary schools, providing instruction in English, Persian, Marathi, Telugu, and Tamil.This multilingual approach widened access to education for children from diverse backgrounds.

Rev. George Walton: Humanitarian and Social Reformer

Rev. George Walton, an Anglo-Indian from Bellary, succeeded Crips and consolidated missionary work in Salem. Fluent in Tamil, he gained the confidence of the local population. Under his leadership, the mission expanded to include hospitals and boarding homes.

During the famine of 1833, Walton provided food for nearly 500 people daily, earning widespread respect. In 1834, he created a Christian settlement within the mission compound, where families were required to send their children to school. Walton also pioneered female education by opening the first girls' school in Salem in 1832.

Despite initial resistance from parents, who demanded wages or compensation for sending their daughters, Walton managed to sustain the school. By 1835, he had also established an adult education school for both men and women, with early records showing seven male and nine female students. Through these initiatives, Walton ensured that education reached both genders and different age groups, strengthening the foundations laid by Crips.

Rev. J.M. Lechler: Industrial and Educational Visionary

Rev. J.M. Lechler, a German missionary, arrived in Salem in 1840 at the age of twenty-one and served until 1861. With a command of Tamil and prior experience in Tirunelveli, he quickly recognized unemployment as a major challenge in Salem. Nearly ninety young men lacked work, which prompted Lechler to establish an Industrial School.Here, students were trained in carpentry, tailoring, brickmaking,

Vellalar College for Women, Thindal, Erode.

blacksmithing, and silk weaving.

To strengthen this initiative, Lechler invited German craftsmen Carl Rahm and Boesinger from the Basel Mission to serve as instructors. The school enabled many young men to become self-reliant, boosted local trade in Shevapet, and even expanded into iron and steel exports.

Lechler also initiated Christian settlements Mudalur ("first village"), Arulur ("village of grace"), and Samathanapuram ("village of peace") where families combined agriculture, education, and worship. Boarding schools, day schools, and orphan asylums were also established. By 1858, the mission operated 22 schools, significantly expanding education in Salem and Dharmapuri. His sudden death in 1861 ended a remarkable career, but his educational, industrial, and social initiatives continued to influence Salem for decades.

The Next Generation of Missionaries

Following Lechler's death, new missionaries arrived on 11 September 1861: Rev. Good Mabbs, William Edward Morris, and Rev. Maurice Philips. While Attur and Dharmapuri had been strong centres, Tirupattur emerged as a key station.

Before their arrival, Rev. Campbell of Bangalore had been temporarily in charge of the Salem mission. During his time, he closed the Industrial School, sold much of the mission land, and shut down the boys' and girls' homes.The remaining girls were transferred to Mrs. Lechler's school in Yercaud. After taking charge, Rev. Mabbs concentrated on the development of day schools in the Salem region. He believed that day schools were more effective than boarding homes, as they reached children of different castes at lower expense

Rev. Mabbs focused on day schools, believing they were more inclusive and cost-effective than boarding schools. In 1864, he established an Anglo-Vernacular School with 25 scholars. Though cholera claimed his life within a few years, his emphasis on accessible education left a lasting mark.

Rev. Philips raised the standard of the boys' school to matriculation level, preparing students for university examinations. He also opened a Free Public Reading Room in Bazaar Street in 1870–71, offering newspapers and books, thus fostering a culture of literacy.

Rev. G.O. Newport supported the high school during financial crises, personally funding its needs. His leadership strengthened ties between the mission and the government.

Growth of High Schools and Industrial Education

By the 1880s, Salem's high schools had gained a reputation for academic excellence. Under Rev. William Robinson and Rev. Arthur Dignum, the school expanded its facilities. In 1888, Lord Connemara, the Governor of Madras, visited the institution and praised its standards. Examination results were impressive: in 1885, 13 of 16 candidates passed; in 1886, 21 of 24 succeeded, raising the school's prestige.

Industrial School and Institution Building

To further vocational training, Rev. Dignum established a Second Industrial School in 1897, named "The Lechler Institution." Supported by government grants and European donations, the school specialized in carpentry and related skills. Its products, including furniture and gymnastic apparatus, were supplied to both mission and government schools, as well as to the Public Works Department, Salem jail, and the District Forest Office. The revenue also supported mission infrastructure such as the High School Hall and YMCA building.

Conclusion

The missionaries of the London Missionary Society in Salem faced enormous resistance, poverty, and epidemics. Yet, through their perseverance, they established a network of schools, industrial institutions, and settlements that transformed education in the region. From Crips's multilingual schools and Walton's pioneering girls' education to Lechler's Industrial School and the later high school expansions, the mission consistently combined evangelism with social service. By the early twentieth century, Salem had developed

into a hub of modern education, with mission schools producing students who could compete in university examinations. The legacy of these missionaries lies not only in their religious work but also in their enduring contribution to social upliftment and equal access to education in colonial Tamil Nadu.

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Wires in the Hills: The History of the Nilgiris Telegraph Office (1860s - 20th Century)

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The Nilgiris district was also known as the "Blue Mountains," formes a significant part of South India's history and the colonial Madras Presidency. The plateau, which rose steeply from the Tamil plains, was regarded by the British as a strategic and climatic refuge. From the 1820s, Ootacamund has developed as a hill station, serving as a rehabilitation site for soldiers and officials, and later it was used as a seasonal administrative capital. The Wellington cantonment strengthenedits importance as a military refuge. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Nilgiris had become acentral point in the Presidency's administrative geography, attracting governors, high-ranking civil servants, missionaries, and a growing European planter community.[1]

Reliable communication was crucial and more important for the Britishers, as traditional methods remained slow and vulnerable to the terrain. The introduction of the electric telegraph in the 1850s overcame these barriers;it allowed instantaneous communication between the hills and the Presidency headquarters. The Nilgiris also became a laboratory of colonial modernity, where innovations in infrastructure were tested against the backdrop of rugged hills, dense forests, and seasonal monsoons.

The Nilgiris Telegraph Office was formsas a part of the broader colonial project to master geography through communication. By tracing its establishment, expansion, and eventual decline, this paper focuses on the intersection of technology, empire, and society in the making of modern South India. Against this backdrop of administrative centrality and climatic refuge, the arrival of the electric telegraph in the mid-nineteenth century introduced a radically new dimension of connectivity.

The Arrival of Telegraphy in the Nilgiris

The Electric Telegraph Department was formally established in India in 1854 under the supervision of Dr.

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William O'Shaughnessy, and from its beginning, it was visualizedas both a civil and a military utility. During 1855–56, trunk linesconnectedMadras with Calcutta, Bombay, and important outpostslikeSecunderabad and Bangalore;and helped in combining the three Presidencies capitals into a single communication network which served both commercial and strategic ends.[1]Telegraph was remarkable for its speed and connected thousands of miles of line laid across diverse terrain, which reflected the urgency with which the East India Company and later the British Crown pursued rapid communication following the revolt of 1857.[1]

The Nilgiris, was a site of colonial settlement, seasonal governance, and strategic cantonment, were integrated into this network within the first decade of the telegraph's expansion. Government officials of the Madras Presidency routinely traveled to the cool climate of Ootacamund during the summer season, and the telegraph allowed them to maintain reliable, almost instantaneous communication with the Secretariat in Madras. This continuity ensured that administrative affairs could proceed without disruption despite the seasonal relocation of officials.[1]The Wellington cantonment served as a critical military outpost, and later it underscored the necessity of rapid communications so that the army could immediately access to orders, intelligence, and logistical instructions, both for local defense and for coordination with broader strategic operations.[1]The telegraph lines that penetrated the Ghat roads into the plateau were far more than instruments of local convenience. Telegraph were connected to key Nilgiris settlements including Ootacamund,Coonoor, Kotagiri, and Gudalur and they connected not only to the Madras Presidency headquarters but also to nearby commercial and military centers such as Coimbatore, Mysore, and Bangalore. These connections effectively created a**hierarchical network:**[1]

- **Primary trunk lines** connected from Madras to Coimbatore and Bangalore, linking the major Presidency and military centers.
- **Secondary lines** branched from these trunk lines into the Nilgiris plateau, reaching Ootacamund, Coonoor, Kotagiri, and Gudalur.
- **Local links** connected smaller settlements and cantonments within the plateau to the secondary lines, ensuring even the most remote locations could relay messages swiftly[1]

These multi-tiered networks allowed messages from the highlands to reach central authorities in hours rather than days. It integrated administrative offices, cantonments, and commercial hubs into a single communication circuit, and it reinforced the strategic and bureaucratic reach of the colonial state. By connecting the Nilgiris to the broader network, the telegraph transformed these highland settlements into vital nodes of administrative, commercial, and military significance.[1]

Establishment of Telegraph Offices

The establishment of telegraph offices in the Nilgiris marked a decisive step in transforming the plateau into an administrative and military hub of the Madras Presidency. The earliest offices were located at Ootacamund, the district headquarters and summer seat of government, and at Coonoor, which served as a principal gateway to the hills, where the ghat road and later the railway were terminated.[1] A third vital office was set up at the Wellington cantonment, where the military had concentrated a large garrison and training facilities.

In Ootacamund, the telegraph office was housed close to the main post office, reinforcing the close institutional ties between the postal and telegraph systems that characterized the colonial communication network. At Coonoor, the office played a dual role by serving both the European residents and the rapidly growing planter community that relied on telegrams for market prices, shipping schedules, and estate management. Wellington's office, in contrast, was primarily geared toward military correspondence, enabling officers to transmit strategic orders and intelligence reports to Madras, Bangalore, and beyond.[1]

The presence of these offices also meant that by the late nineteenth century, the Nilgiris was effectively wired into both regional and imperial communication circuits. Official correspondence, commercial telegrams, and personal messages alike flowed through these nodes, making them essential parts of the district's daily life. It also faced frequent interruptions due to monsoon storms, landslides, and the fragility of overhead wires, the offices became indispensable, but the records in gazetteers and administration reports reported its constant use and periodic expansion with additional staff and improved instruments.[1]

Women and the Telegraph Office

Among the earliest *documented* women to hold the title of Telegraph Mistress in the Nilgiris was **Mrs. Ida McLeish,** who retired from Ootacamund on 1 May 1912 after fifty years of service. Local accounts describe her as "the only Telegraph Mistress in the country," suggesting both the rarity of such appointments and her unique role in the colonial communications network. Her long tenure underscores the fact that the Nilgiris not only served as a technical and administrative node but also as one of the first sites in India where women were formally integrated into the Telegraph Department. Mrs. McLeish's career highlights how telegraph offices in the Nilgiris helped in opening government technical service to women decades before their wider entry into other branches of colonial administration.[1] The retirement of Mrs. McLeish in 1912 marked a turning point in the **social history of telegraphy in South India.** It illustrated the social dimensions of the Nilgiris Telegraph Office, and the decades of the 1870s–1890s also witnessed major institutional expansion and deepening of operations across the district.

Operations and Expansion

The Wellington cantonment was established as a regimental headquarters in the Nilgiris, district which heavily relied on telegraphic communication for both military and administrative purposes. The cantonment served as one of the most important hill garrisons in the Madras Presidency, and the telegraph ensured the rapid relay of orders, coordination of troop movements, and transmission of intelligence to command centers in Madras and Bangalore. During emergencies like famines, cholera outbreaks, or local disturbances .The wires were allowed immediate communication with civil and military authorities in the plains. The *Proceedings of the Madras Government* in 1875 recorded that "the telegraph affords an indispensable medium by which the Secretariat, temporarily removed to Ootacamund, may communicate daily with the Presidency capital" it shows that Telegraph lines were used for both the day-to-day routine of cantonment life and broader strategic operations.[1]

The commercial community of the Nilgiris was quickly recognized the utility of the new medium. Particularly those Planters, who manage coffee and later tea estates, adopted telegraphy as a crucial business tool. Telegrams allowed them to correspond instantly with brokers in Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta, and even with London firms that dominated the export trade. The *Madras District Gazetteer: Nilgiris* recorded in 1908 that "Coonoor and Ootacamund were daily scenes of considerable commercial telegraphic traffic, particularly during the seasons of coffee harvest and dispatch" This integration of the hill economy into global markets fundamentally altered its tempo, replacing weeks of uncertainty with instantaneous decision-making. It became a vital artery for the plantation economy.

By the 1880s, civilian reliance on telegraphy had grown steadily. Telegraph service became central not only for matters of state and commerce but also for the common matters of daily life. Births, deaths, marriages, and medical emergencies were communicated rapidly across longdistances, and it allowed families to respond in ways previously impossible. Missionary societies used telegrams to coordinate famine relief and medical aid, while schools in Ootacamund and Coonoor employed them to notify guardians about student illnesses or examinations. Oral traditions collected later in the twentieth century recall that "the arrival of a telegram was usually accompanied by dread, for in most homes it presaged bad news" By the close of the nineteenth century, the telegraph had become woven into the fabric of Nilgiris society, symbolizing both the anxieties and conveniences of modern communication.[1]

Key Incidents in the History of the Nilgiris Telegraph Office

Several significant incidents marked the history of the Nilgiris Telegraph Office, highlighting its durability and strategic importance. In the 1880s, torrential monsoons and landslides repeatedly disrupted the Mettupalayam to Coonoor line, with records noting that entire stretches of wire were swept away and forced linemen to trek through elephant-infested forests to restore service within hours. These turn of the century brought a new phase, as the telegraph was integrated with the Nilgiri Mountain Railway (1899–1908), creating one of the first coordinated train telegraph signal systems in South India, which revolutionized safety and facilitated the plantation economy's exports of coffee and tea. During the Second World War, the Wellington office assumed as a central role in transmitting military intelligence and orders, it connected hill cantonments directly with Bangalore and Madras.[1]

Thesemilestones determined onstruggles with the district's environment, which shaped both the daily functioning and long-term sustainability of the telegraph system.

Engineering and Environmental Challenges

The Nilgirisfaced some of the most severe environmental challenges for telegraphic infrastructure in the Madras Presidency. The steep slope of the ghats, combined with heavy cloud burst, and which was frequently resulted in landslides that uprooted poles andsnapped wires. Entire stretches of the line from Mettupalayam to Coonoorwere aggregated within of 28 days during the monsoon months. These interruptions not only disrupted civilian and commercial traffic but also undermined military readiness, necessitating the constant deployment of repair crews.[1]

Wildlife further complicated the problem. Reports in the *Survey of India Records* describe elephants rubbing against poles, pulling them down, or even carrying those short distances.[1] Engineers experimented with iron poles, deeper foundations, and protective fencing, but the combination of dense forest cover and free-ranging herds made damage a recurring issue. Transporting replacement poles, wires, and insulators up steep escarpments often required days of labor, bullock carts, and coolie gangs, these challenges produced a culture of improvisation and technical durability among local linemen. A Nilgiris Telegraph Superintendent's note of 1889 recorded that "linemen, armed with nothing more than an axe and splicing tool, have been known to trek ten miles through elephant country to restore a circuit within hours". Such accounts underscore both the fragility of colonial infrastructure and the ingenuity of the workers who sustained it.[1]

Telegraphy and the Nilgiris Mountain Railway

The construction of the Nilgiris Mountain Railway (NMR), begun in the 1890s and completed to Ootacamund by 1908, revolutionized communications in the region of Ootacamund. Telegraph lines were laid along the railway alignment, drastically reducing maintenance costs and facilitating quicker repairs. Railway stations were equipped with telegraph facilities, and many functioned as small exchanges, serving passengers, traders, and officialsrecorded that "the laying of telegraph lines alongside the railway has ensured both economy of supervision and rapidity of repair" [1]

Theconnectionbetween rail and telegraph was evident in multiple spheres. Train schedules, safety signals, and shunting operations were coordinated telegraphically it significantly reduced accidents and delays. The flow of coffee and tea exports was streamlined, as estate owners could dispatch consignments with precise timing. During military operations, particularly troop transfers to Wellington cantonment, the combined rail-telegraph system reduced logistical bottlenecks and enhanced security by binding the Nilgiris more tightly into the Presidency's communication grid, the railway transformed the district from a relatively isolated enclave into a critical infrastructural artery of both empire and commerce.

The 20th Century: Continuities and Decline

The early twentieth century saw the Nilgiris telegraph offices retain their significance even as new technologies emerged. During the First World War, the district functioned as a recuperation and training ground

for soldiers, with the telegraph facilitating communication of medical transfers, supply orders, and intelligence between hill stations and command centers in Madras and Bangalore. The Second World War expanded these roles that the Nilgiris hosted military hospitals, training schools, and rest camps, all of which depended on telegraphy for swift coordination.

Civilian and commercial use also persisted through the interwar years. Planters relied on telegrams to track commodity prices during the volatile 1920s and 1930s, while ordinary residents used the medium for social and emergency communication. By the mid-twentieth century, the expansion of telephone exchanges in Ootacamund and Coonoor, coupled with more efficient postal services, gradually eroded the telegraph's dominance. After Independence, the system was absorbed into the Posts and Telegraphs Department of India, but by the 1970s and 1980s, traffic had dwindled to a fraction of its colonial era peak.[1]

The eventual closure of the telegram service in 2013 by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited marked the symbolic end of an era. In the Nilgiris, older residents remembered with nostalgia the anxious wait for telegrams sometimes joyful, sometimes tragic. Oral accounts describe telegrams as "cultural artifacts of modernity" that outlasted their utility.[1]

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A History Of Subbhaiah Fabric. The Second Skin of Nigeria

P. Ragulranjith[1] and R. Prakash[2]

Introduction

Since ancient times, the weaving industry has functioned in many countries, not only India. Africa is considered the place where the first humans originated. Weaving was also practiced in Africa. In 1864, British zoologist Philip Sclater, predicted that there should have been a large terrain merged to Africa's East part of Madagascar, Australia's Western part and the Kanyakumari in India's southern end, all were collectively named the Lemuria continent. But none of the scholars have been able to say exactly which period it may belong to.[1]

If the landmass had extended to Africa, trade must have flourished. Since ancient times trade from India has been done, especially in Greece and Rome. Similarly in Africa, trade has been done by the Indian traders who went in search of the abundant natural resources available in Africa. Textile trade in particular has improved a good relationship between India and Africa.

Early Textile Trade Between India And Africa

The fabrics made in Gujarat were discovered on the island of Socotra in Yemen in the 4th century B.C. It highlights a good trade and textile-based relationship between East Africa and India at that time. In the early 18^{th} and 19^{th} centuries,brides of West Africa, Gold Coast and Ghana wore gowns made from India.[2] Many Indians who went to Africa from India for trade stayed in Africa. Apart from establishing a habitat for themselves there, they became the reason for the development of good trade relations with India and Africa. Thus, Indians became an important trade bridge in the export of African goods such as cotton, tea and coffee, and in the import of manufactured goods such as textile, rice and pulses and grains. Often completed goods were exported from India. In particular, textile exports play an important role. Africa's people mass dressed up from India's manufactures. The quality and design of the Indian cloth played an important role in the culture of the African people.[3]

Moreover, diverse men such as craftsmen, artists and pilgrims set up their habitats in Africa. Thus, Indian attributes such as commercial products and culture have been accompanied by African culture.

Madras Checks or Bleeding Madras

Fabrics known as Madras Checks were first made in the then Madarasapattanam. It was first prepared as white and blue lungis in pitlooms. Later, it was a good reception and trade in the East and Western countries through the British East India Company. It has also been well received in African countries. There these items were called Injiri [Real India]. It is a type of cloth worn by the inhabitants of Kalabari people, a small group of Ijo people in Nigeria, especially women after childbirth or to the family of the deceased after a death wore this cloth.5 These types of fabrics are dyed to yarn for weaving from dyes extracted from vegetables, fruits and flowers. These fabrics were calledGeorge cloth, Guinea cloth and Bleeding Madras. It is a type of fabric that has several checks contained within it weaving in handloom at 60 × 40 inches. These are based on the maximum of blue, white and red. These clothes were called Real Madras Hand Kerchief by British merchants. This is because it can be cut into three square handkerchiefs with 8 meters and 36 inches wide. Exporters have used this strategy to avoid duty on bundles of cloth entering London. Hence the name RMHK is believed to derive from this phenomenon. The fabric called MadrasChecks has now become a Nigeria's cultural cloth which is exported from India for more than 400 years.6

The popularity of these fabrics peaked in the 1960s. This is because M.P.Nachimuthu, who was the head of the Chennai Co-Optex at the time, was well aware of the demand for these clothes. These fabrics were woven from the pitlooms in Tamil Nadu. Thus, the

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livelihood of the weavers strengthened. By this, weavers improved their livelihood.Understanding the need for these clothes abroad, M.P.Nachimuthu thought it was spreading around the world. The need for these clothes was very popular in the United States, Europe and Africa. In 1960, he was elected chairman of the Sales Development Committee for Handloom Clothes in Southeast Asian Countries, which was established by the Tamil Nadu government. Hereby, Southeast Asian countries like Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Laos rolled out a red carpet and greeted India's Bleeding Madras cloth trade.7

The reason for fabric acceptance of this in many countries is that it is hand – woven. The dyes used in it are based on natural materials. Also, the specialty of the cloth is that when these clothes are put in the water, its old color changes and gives new color. The trade of this type of fabrics reached its peak, when M.P.Nachimuthu was the president of Co-Optex up to 1969. Later, the numbers of these fabrics produced in Tamil Nadu began to decline gradually after 1969-1970. In the 1970s, the production of these clothes went to Andhra Pradesh.8

Introducing the Subbhaiah Pattern In Chennimalai

In Chennimalai, Erode district of Tamil Nadu, Subbhaiah, a type of weaving fabric, is still seen as a way of life for the poor weavers of Chennimalai. It can be said as a renaissance for the Chennimalai weavers. Even today there are many families in Chennimalai who survive by weaving this type of fabric.

As mentioned earlier, Indians who went to Africa for commerce not only set up their livelihood but also set up a textile business and made good profit. However, since the 1970s, the sales of the domestically produced textile products of textile companies in Nigeria have begun to decline. This is because textile interventions of many countries other headed to Nigeria.9 This is why Nigerian merchants of Indian origin sought to find their textile production and business towards Tamil Nadu. The main reason for the quality of these clothes exported to Nigeria was M.P.Nachimuthu when he served as the leader of the Co-Optex.

At first the Indian merchants in Nigeria asked the textile businessmen in Bombay and then consulting the Bombay merchants took a look at the cloth and considered the design puzzled where could be done. The reason is that the fabric belongs to the Nigerian dress with good thick threads. So, they came to Chennimalai because this kind of cloth can only be woven in handlooms that can be done with thick yarns. Because at that time the quality of blankets made of thick yarn in Chennimalai, especially Chentex, had reached its peak. So, they visited Chentex. M.P.Nachimuthu, the then Chairman of Chentex, agreed to wove this cloth.[10]

Highlights of Subbhaiah Pattern

Weavers consider this type of weaving to be similar to sculptural work. This variety was woven entirely with whitethread at the time of its introduction in Chennimalai. White yarn was used for both Warp and Weft. Not even a single drop of this should not be dirty. It can only be woven half a meter per day. Only four pieces of singles can be weaved in a week. It is called the "Korvairagam or Udukkairagam". The reason is that the fabric is complete only when the shuttle is drawn by hand on both sides of the fabric. But that's not easy, because its subtlety lies in where it needs to warp and where it needs to weft.[11] 25 rupees was paid to a one piece of single that period. This wage was considered huge in olden days. Moreover, it was greatly helpful to improve the livelihood of the weavers. This wage helped a lot to cover basic needs and other of the poor weaver's expenses during those days.[12]

Difficulties of Subbhaiah Pattern

Weaving this cloth is not an easy task. When it was introduced, it was one that could only be woven on a handloom. But it is also impossible to weave it in all kinds of handlooms. The loom should be replaced according to weaving the cloth. Even if it is changed, the weaver must do it at his own expense. The looms are void when there is no order for this cloth. There was no help from the Government to convert the looms. Therefore, other handloom co-operative societies in Chennimalai were reluctant to take the order for this cloth. But the Chentex staff accepted this as a challenge.[13]

Modification of Subbhaiah Pattern

R. Natesan was responsible for designing and dyeing these types of cloths, which were only made in

Chentex at that time. He was one of the most important and significant members in Chentex at that time. He is able to accurately predict how much yarn needs to weave a cloth, and how many tramples in the looms will come up with the design and size of the cloth. Therefore, M.P.Nachimuthu had entrusted him with the responsibility of designing and dyeing. Due to some reasons, there was no possibility of weaving this cloth after R. Natesan resigned from Chentex. Hence, Chentex does not weave this type of fabric.[14]

Two years later, R. Natesan, who understood the business benefits of weaving this cloth, approached the merchants who had previously visited Chentex from Mumbai. The merchants understood the talent of Chennimalai weavers and gave them the order for that type of fabric again. R. Natesan brought some changes in their looms to simplify it because it was difficult to weave this type. Later in 1973, the beginning of the Subbhaiah variety production was launched in the Pallipalayam. Then in 1982, the production resumed in Chennimalai. This type of fabric has undergone various evolutions in the present era.

In the early days, these fabrics, which are only weaved with the cotton yarn, due to the evolution in the days later these are prepared with a variety of yarns such as Acrylic, Polyester and Viscose. The yarn called Viscose is a kind of thread that is prepared after grinding Bamboo bands. Currently woven Subbhaiah type has thread size of 2/180 and lace thread size of 0.5 micron.[15]

This fabric is currently being manufactured personally. Apart from that, Chenco-optex, one of the ChennimalaiWeaver's co-operative societies, weaves more than 500 handlooms. Currently, four or five pieces of singles per day can be woven. 122 rupees per piece for a single is currently paid. Currently woven fabrics are woven with 4 or 5tramples. Even now, its specialty is that, the border has to be joined by hand to complete the weaving.[16] Thus, R. Natesan, who brought about a reformation in this type of fabric that could go to Nigeria and improved the lives of the weavers of Chennimalai, was fondly called "Subbhaiah Natesan" by the weavers.

Conclusion

Subbhaiah pattern has enhanced the livelihood of the Chennimalai handloom weavers and Chennimalai's Subbhaiah fabric is considered as Nigeria's second skin by weavers but the Subbhaiah fabric slowly leaned over by the growth of the machines by the spell of the time. Currently, this fabric is prepared in Powerloom and Autolooms due to the increase in the use of Polyester thread. However, it is still difficult to prepare this cloth in Powerloom and Autoloom with a cotton yarn.[17] This affects the livelihood of weavers who can rely on handloom weaving. Also, the art of weaving these types of cloth is crushed by machinery. Therefore, the Department of Handloom and the Government must support the trade for these clothes and give a respectful wage for the art of weaving. It is also recommended to improve the livelihood of the handloom weavers by the State and Central Governments.

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PROF. G. THANGAVELU ENDOWEMENT PRIZE

Tamil Nadu's Learning Centres of Antiquity: The Contributions of Buddhist and Jain Monastic Institutions (3rd to 9th Centuries CE)

Vishak Ratheesh Nai

Introduction

Between the 3rd and 9th centuries CE, Tamil Nadu was home to several Buddhist as well as Jaina institutions and one of the important centres for intellectual and cultural history. Being a Rajagopal centre for philosophy, morals, literature and science, it was observed that these monastic institutes had become important centers of creations. Unlike purely religious centres, Buddhist viharas and Jain monasteries had evolved into academic and pedagogical spaces that shaped Tamil Nadu's scholastic traditions. The introduction sets the stage for examining how these institutions developed, flourished and influenced the Tamil society. It discusses their origin, role in knowledge transmission and the way their decline signaled a major turning point in the Tamil cultural history. Their legacy is discernible in inscriptions, literary works and the transmission of knowledge across South and Southeast Asia (Zvelebil, 1992; Gopal, 2000).

Historical Background

Spread of Buddhism and Jainism in Tamil Nadu

Buddhism and Jainism had spread into Tamil Nadu from Northern India through missionary efforts, cultural interactions and the support of political patrons. The Buddhist tradition attributes the earliest organized propagation to the reign of Emperor Ashoka (3rd century BCE), who is said to have dispatched missionaries including his son Mahinda and daughter Sanghamitta-to Sri Lanka, with routes passing through the Tamil regions (Thapar 2002). Archaeological and Epigraphical findings in the coastal Tamil Nadu suggest that the Buddhist monks and traders had moved southwards in this period, establishing early contacts and laying the foundation for later institutional growth (Gokhale, 1992).

Jainism, however found an earlier and deeper foothold in the Tamil society, as it had resonated strongly with the region's longstanding traditions of asceticism and renunciation.

Literary traditions such as the Sangam corpus contain references to Samanars (Jain ascetics), indicating the presence of Jain communities in the early centuries CE (Zvelebil, 1992). Jain monks had traveled extensively across Tamilakam, establishing hermitages (pallis) in cave shelters, many of which bear Brahmi inscriptions recording donations from the local chieftains and merchants (Mahadevan, 2003).

The spread of both religions was closely intertwined with the rise of mercantile networks in the Tamil region. Merchant guilds (Manigramam and Ananattu) had often patronized the Jain and Buddhist institutions, which provided ethical frameworks conducive to commercial activity- emphasizing honesty, non-violence (ahimsa), and social harmony (Dundas, 2002). The geography of Tamil Nadu, particularly its long coastline and strategic ports such as Kaveripattinam in turn facilitated the transmission of religious ideas through maritime exchange. From these ports, Tamil Buddhist and Jain monks contributed to the religious and cultural flow across the Indian Ocean, particularly to Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia (Ray, 1994). By the early medieval period, Tamil Nadu had become a vibrant centre for Jain scholasticism and Buddhist learning, with monastic institutions functioning not merely as religious establishments but also as hubs of intellectual and cultural activity. This trans-regional influence demonstrates the embeddedness of Tamil Nadu within wider networks of Indian Ocean trade and religious circulation (Chakravarti, 1997).

Independent Researcher

Patronage and Royal Support

The expansion of these monastic centers was largely sustained by the patronage of ruling dynasties like the Pandyas, Cheras and Pallavas. Inscriptions from Madurai, Tirunelveli and Kanchipuram mention royal endowments of land, revenue and villages to support monks and their educational pursuits. Merchants and local elites has also provided patronage, ensuring these centres remained active hubs of cultural and intellectual life (NilakantaSastri, 1955).

It is pertinent that such patronage highlights how monastic institutions were regarded not merely as religious centers but also as vital social and cultural foundations. For the rulers, supporting these establishments served both to legitimize their authority and to uphold moral order in society.

Monastic Institutions as Centres of Learning

Buddhist Viharas

Buddhist viharas in Tamil Nadu, though initially intended as residential establishments for monks, gradually evolved into vibrant intellectual hubs that attracted both monastics and lay learners. Excavations and historical records suggest that these viharas were not isolated institutions but rather integral components of urban and trade networks, serving religious, educational and cultural functions (Sivaramamurti, 1974; Huntington, 1985). Sites such as Kanchipuram, a city renowned for its pluralistic learning traditions had hosted Buddhist viharas alongside Hindu temples and Jain pallis. Xuanzang, the Chinese pilgrim who had visited South India in the 7th century CE, recorded the presence of several Buddhist establishments at Kanchipuram, noting their role in preserving and disseminating Mahayana doctrines (Beal, 1884/1969). Similarly, Nagapattinam, a key port town on the Coromandel Coast, emerged as a major centre of Buddhist activity from the Pallava through the Chola periods. Inscriptions and bronze sculptures unearthed in Nagapattinam indicate sustained royal patronage, particularly by the Cholas, who facilitated contacts with Southeast Asian polities where Buddhism had thrived (Subbarayalu, 2001).

At Kodumanal and other inland trade sites, archaeological findings including inscriptions in early Brahmi and structural remains of monasteries-point to the integration of the Buddhist viharas within mercantile and artisanal settlements (Gokhale, 1992). These centres became nodes of exchange, where Buddhist monks had not only practiced spiritual disciplines but also taught secular subjects. The curriculum had extended beyond canonical texts to include grammar, logic (hetuvidya), linguistics, astronomy and medicine suggesting that the viharas mirrored the cosmopolitan scholarly environment of other pan-Indian Buddhist universities like Nalanda and Vallabhi (Huntington, 1985; Gombrich, 2006).

The interdisciplinary nature of the Buddhist education in Tamil Nadu is evident in the creation of didactic and ethical works in Tamil, where the Buddhist philosophical concepts had found their way into secular literature. This is evident in the influence of Buddhist thought on Tamil classics such as Manimekalai, a Buddhist epic that portrays a young woman renouncing worldly life to embrace the path of compassion and wisdom (Zvelebil, 1973). Thus, Buddhist viharas in Tamil Nadu had functioned not merely as monastic dwellings but as institutions of higher learning, where spiritual practice was integrated with rigorous scholarship, enabling intellectual exchanges that linked South India to the wider Buddhist networks of Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia.

Jain Monasteries

Jain monasteries, often referred to as pallis, were instrumental in shaping the religious and intellectual landscape of Tamil Nadu from the early historic period into the medieval age. These institutions had functioned not only as residences for monks but also as centres of rigorous scriptural education and community engagement. Inscriptions across Tamil Nadu particularly in cave sites like Sittanavasal, Kazhugumalai, Tirumalai and Vallimalai-points to the widespread presence of Jain monks and the support they had received from local chieftains, merchant guilds and lay devotees (Mahadevan, 2003; Champakalakshmi, 2011).

Jain monks were deeply involved in Tamil literary production. Their influence is evident in works such as the Tolkappiyam commentaries, which bear traces of the Jain scholastic thought and in Jain contributions to

the Sangam corpus, where ascetic ideals and ethical themes are woven into Tamil poetry (Ayyangar, 1987; Zvelebil, 1992). The didactic Tamil classics, most notably Silappadikaram and Tirukkural, reflect strong Jain philosophical undertones, particularly in their emphasis on justice, morality, non-violence (ahimsa), and renunciation (Pillai, 1975; De Clercq. 2009). The Jain poet IlangoAdigal, traditionally credited with authoring the Silappadikaram, embodies the dynamic interplay between Jain spiritual thought and Tamil literary heritage.

Beyond literature, Jain monasteries were also centres of scholarly training in secular subjects. Jain teachers had contributed significantly to the development of logic (tarkaśāstra), mathematics, medicine and Tamil grammar, often integrating these studies with their ethical worldview (Dundas, 2002). Their intellectual discipline emphasized rational inquiry and debate, placing them in dialogue with both the Hindu and Buddhist scholars of the time. For example, epigraphical records from the Pallava and Pandya periods mention land grants to Jain monasteries specifically for maintaining schools and feeding students, underscoring the educational role of these institutions (Subbarayalu, 2001).

In Tamil Nadu, Jain education had a profound influence on ethical thought, emphasizing the core principles of asceticism, non-violence and compassion for all living beings. Ethical literature in Tamil has strong resonance with the local communities in India and a moral essence (Chakravarti, 1997). The Tamil Nadu Jain frescoes (Sittanavasal) depicting ascetic ideals and symbolic motifs of renunciation show how even the visual culture of Jainism is a synthesis of art, ethics and education (Coomaraswamy, 1956). Jain pallis had functioned not only as places of worship but also as centers of learning, where scriptural study, intellectual training, literary expression and ethical values were cultivated. These had not merely contributed to the Tamil intellectual history in the domain of religion, but also influenced the larger trajectory of Tamil literature, philosophy and identity.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

These monastic institutions covered many subjects. It included -

Philosophy and Ethics: focused on the discourse of Abhidharma and Jain metaphysics.

Logic and Grammar: help students develop reasoning and debating skills.

Medicine: Work on Ayurveda and Siddha that often uses local knowledge.

Literature: Literature involved the spreading of ethical treatises, epic poetry and didactic texts.

Involvement of debates and discussion in pedagogy made it oral and dialogical. It helped nurture the need to think critically, with intellectual rigour and taste and style (Gombrich, 2006).

Cultural and Literary Contributions

Influence on Tamil Literature

The Buddhist and Jaina philosophical traditions had exerted an in depth influence on Tamil literature. The principles of Jainism-such as non-violence, truthfulness and compassion -are distinctly reflected in Tiruvalluvar'sTirukkural. At around the same time, IlangoAdigal, a Jain monk, wrote the Silappadikaram, one of the great Tamil epics, which put Buddhist and Jain values in Tamil thought (Parthasarathy, 1990). These works illustrate the role of monastic institutions in preserving and shaping the Tamil literature, while their ethical teachings convey universal values that transcend the religious boundaries

Contribution to Ethical Literature

The Naladiyar and Palamoli's (Patigenkilkanakku) footing strong emphasises on the principle of moderation and also convey the messages critical of caste and monarchy. The ethical writings of Jainism and Buddhism thus played a pivotal role in fostering secular values within Tamil intellectual tradition. This has become part of its cultural consciousness (Zvelebil 1973).

Archaeological and Epigraphic Evidence

The archaeological remains and inscriptions serve as vital sources of evidence for reconstructing the educational practices and cultural contributions of Buddhist and Jain institutions. Rock-cut caves at Sittannavasal, Kazhugumalai and Anamalai contain Jain inscriptions that mention the donations made by the

rulers and merchants to sustain educational activities (Subramanian, 1966). At Kanchipuram and Nagapattinam, Buddhist inscriptions mention teachers, students and endowments for maintaining monastic schools (Heras, 1937).

Artistic representations, exemplified by the murals at Sittannavasal, underscore the significant aesthetic contributions of the Jain centers.

Decline of Monastic Institutions

The waning of the Buddhist and Jain institutions began in the 9th century, coinciding with the rise of the Bhakti movements. Shaiva and Vaishnava saints, celebrated as Nayanmars and Alvars had inspired large-scale popular devotion. Their emphasis on personal devotion to the Hindu deities had shifted the patronage away from monastic traditions (Peterson, 1989). The inclusive and emotionally resonant appeal of the Bhakti movement gradually eclipsed the more scholastic traditions of Buddhism and Jainism. By the Chola period, numerous viharas and pallis had either been abandoned, integrated into Hindu temple networks or significantly diminished in influence.

Legacy and Impact

Despite their decline, the intellectual and cultural legacies of these institutions had endured. Their emphasis on ethical conduct, rational inquiry, and non-violence still continued to shape the Tamil Hindu traditions and enrich the wider cultural values of South India. Tamil ethical literature, rooted in Jain and Buddhist contributions, became a foundation for moral and philosophical discourse in the region (Champakalakshmi, 2011). Moreover, their role in fostering cultural pluralism demonstrated the region's capacity for the religious coexistence. Tamil Nadu's rich educational traditions namely interweaving ethics, philosophy and literature are deeply indebted to the foundational scholastic contributions of the Buddhist and Jain centers

Conclusion

The monasteries in Tamil Nadu had played a vital role in shaping its history from the 3rd to the 9th century. In Tamil Nadu, the Buddhist temples had functioned not only as places of worship but also as vibrant centers of learning, where disciplines such as literature, philosophy, logic, medicine, grammar and astronomy were studied under one umbrella. They had believed that learning should be done the "right" way so they would feel spiritually fulfilled and at peace. Their literary works embody a moral code that emphasizes compassion, non-violence, justice and an innate sense of honesty and fairness. Remarkably, this ethical framework continues to guide the lives of Tamils even today, hese institutions had sought to reach broader communities, providing ethical guidance that influenced both the social initiatives and professional life. Tamil scholars ensured that their knowledge and teachings had engaged with other Asian traditions, while preserving their own distinct identity and adapting it across diverse regions. By the 9th century, many institutions founded on justice and ethics had fallen into decline, yet the core values they championed such as compassion and philosophy had remained firmly rooted in Tamil culture.

The ancient monastic institutions of Tamil Nadu exemplify the Tamil people's ability to make significant contributions to both Indian and broader Asian traditions, even as they deepened and enriched their own cultural legacy.

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Ethnography of the Malayali Tribes in the Eastern Ghats of TamilNadu

Dr. C. Kannan

Tribes-Meaning

The term *tribe* commonly signifies a group of people speaking a common language, observing uniform rules of social organization and working together for a common purpose. The other typical characteristics of tribe include a common name, a contiguous territory, a relatively uniform culture or way of life and a tradition of common descent.

The word *tribe* has been used all through this thesis to address a special social group of persons speaking a distinctive language and possessing a distinctive culture that differentiates it from other tribes. The tribes lead a life of isolation with minimum contact with the other groups. Further, poor communication facilities in the hilly region where they live also retards better interaction between them. In short, the term *tribe* was applied to people who were considered primitive and lived in backward areas. Various terms are used to describe them. Sir Herbert Risley Lacey, V. Elwin and A.V. Thakkar called them as *Aboriginals*, Sir Baines considered them as *Hill Tribes*, Grison regards them as *Wilder Aboriginals*, White Shoobert called them as *Aborigines*, Sir Tallens, Sedwick, Martin and Hutton have called them as *Primitive Tribes*and Baines called them as *Jungle People* or *Forest Tribes.*

Malayali Tribe

The word 'Malayali' as their nomenclature there is no direct connection between the Malayalis of Tamil Nadu and Malaiyalis of Kerela State either ethnically or linguistically. In short, the ethnic word Malaiyali stands for "the inhabitant of the hill" in Tamil Malai means *'hill*' or '*mountain*' aali means '*the inhabitant'* or

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'*Owner*'. Further, they are not the native inhabitants like the Todas, Kodas, Kattunaickas, Irulas, on the contrary, the origins and migration to the hills are shrouded in mystery. According to story they are migrated from the scared city of Kanchipuram to the hill areas, when parts of Southern India were under Muslim rule. The Malayali speak Tamil among themselves and with other communities.

Ethnography

The word *Malai* denotes inhabitant of the hills. The Malayali are a Tamil speaking people who migrated from the plains to the hills in recent times.

According to Thurston, the term *Malayali* has been derived from the words *Malai* meaning *hill* and *al-* meaning *person* and is used to denote people who lived on the hills. Etymologically the word is derived from *Malai-* Hills and *ali-* inhabitants. The Government of India accorded the status of scheduled tribes to the Malayali. The Malayali people claimed themselves as Malayali Goundans, while members of other communities refer them by different names like *Malayalis, Karalar, Goundars, Malai Jatikar* and *Kanchipuram Gounders.*

Physical Structure

Appearance wise they are short in stature but possess sturdily built body and are dark-brown in complexion. Their hairs are black and straight. Shape of the nose varies from flat to medium with slight depression at the root. Many individuals have receding chin and thick lips. The tribes have a dialect of their own which is akin to the Tamil language. The dialect possesses a number of old Tamil words

Legend: Nattukattu

According to legend, *Nattukattu* the Malayalis originally belonged to the Vellala caste of cultivators and emigrated from the sacred city of Kanchipuram to the hills, when Muhammadan rule was dominant in Southern Indian, they left Kanchipuram.They took with them, three brothers of who the eldest came to the Sherveroys hills, the second to the Pachamalai and the youngest to the Kolli hills. The Malayali community predominantly lives in the hills of Tamil Nadu. The Malayali settlements are formed in the districts of South Arcot, North Arcot, Salem, Namakkal, Tiruchirappalli and Dharmapuri. In North Arcot district, they are living in the hills of Jawathu, Elagiri and Pudur Nadu. In South Arcot district, they are found in Kalrayans. In Salem district they are living in the hills of Yercaud (Sherveroys), Kolli hills in Namakkal district, Pachamalai in Tiruchirappalli district and in Dharmapuri district they inhabit the Sithori hills.The Malayali emigrated from Kanchipuram. They took with them, three brothers of whom the eldest came to the Sherveroy hills and Kalrayan hills the second to the Pachamalai and the youngest to the Kolli hills.

Origin and Migration

The origin and migration of the Malayalis to the hills are shrouded in mystery. The legends *Nattukattu* say that some warriors belonging to *Karalar* community hailing from Kanchipuram came to Kalrayan hills subjugated the native's and established their settlement.

According to *Nattukattu* the Malayalis originally belonged to the Vellala caste of cultivators and emigrated from the sacred city of Kanchipuram to the hills, when Muhammadan rule was dominant in Southern Indian, they left Kanchipuram. They took with them, three brothers of who the eldest came to the Sherveroys hills, the second to the Pachamalai and the youngest to the Kolli hills.

According to another version, the exhortation by the Malayali deity Kariraman, prompted emigrants from Kanchipuram to shift to the hilly region. Another version states that a priest of Kanchipuram, who happened to be the brother of the King, quarreled with the king, left the place and entered the Pachamalai regions with his three sons and daughters. These regions were ruled by Vedans and the Vellalans who resisted the new comers. But the invader defeated the natives and established their settlement.

They gave their sister in marriage to a Tottiyan stranger in exchange for providing food. A curious custom that prevails in this region testifies to this story. Thus, the women of the Pachamalai Malayalis put aside a portion of each meal in honour of their Vedar ancestor before serving their husbands and the same custom is followed in marriages too. During the marriage function, the Malayali women wear a comb, which is said to have been a characteristic ornament of the

Vedars. A sword and an arrow placed in the marriage function and remember the hunting habits of the Vedars.

According to Francis, the editor of the South *Arcot District Manual*, that the Jawathu hills were inhabited by Vedans and that the Malayalis killed the men and wedded the women. Even today during marriages function, a gun is fired in the air to represent the death of the Vedan husband. The Malayalis termed themselves as Karaikkat Vellalas. The Malayalis of South Arcot call themselves as Kongu Vellalas. All the branches of the community living in different places agree that they are Vellalans, who emigrated from Kanchipuram, bringing with them their God Kariramman.

Another point should be recorded here. In the wedding of Kalrayan in South Arcot, the priest who performs the marriage utter the word Kanchi as just before the *tali* is tied. It shows that the migration occurred from Kanchipuram. The Malayali of the Shervaroy call them Kanchimandalam Malayalis. Many called themselves as *Vellala* and *Karalan*. *Malakkaran* and *Mala Nayakkan* are also used as synonyms for Malayali. This Tribes as a social group speaking a distinctive language and possessing a distinctive culture differ from other tribes.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the Malayalis. Many of them are employed in coffee plantations in the Shervaroy hills. Formerly they were good hunters but at present there is not much scope for hunting on account of forest reservation. They snare small animals and hunt wild pigs. On the whole, they are good cultivators. Terrace cultivation is common in the dry lands. They are cultivating both dry and wet crops. The Malayalis grow fruits such as plantain and oranges and collect forest produce

Settlements

The Malayali settlements are known by the term *Ooru* and they are scattered all over the district. Their chief settlements are as follows.

Sl. No	Name of the Settlements	District
1.	Pachamalai	Salem
2.	Kolli Hills	Namakkal
3.	Kalrayan Hills	Salem
4.	Shervaroy Hills	Salem
5.	Jawathu Hills	Thiruvannamalai
6.	Sitheri Hills	Dharmapuri
7.	Aranuthumali	Salem
8.	Kalrayan Hills	Vilupuram
9.	Pachamalai	Tiruchirappalli
10.	Pothamalai	Salem

The Malayalis are placed as the twenty fifth number in the list of Scheduled Tribes. The hilly area forms part of Baramahal region, which is the continuation of the Mysore plateau. The Baramahal is full of hills such as the Jawathu hills, the Shervaroys, the Kalrayans, the Pachamalai and the Kolli hills for the Malayali Tribes.

Conclusion

There are some who believe that the Malayalis are the Keralities. Because of some customs are similar to those of the Keralities. For example, the Kolli hills girls wear clothes of white cotton tied across their breast like the Keralities while few other Malayalis prefer tattooing. The Kolli Malayalis follow the customs and preventing tattooed persons from entering their house.After examining all the views. One can arrive at the logical conclusion that the Malayalis are not natives of these hills and they came from Kanchipuram and became a tribe of cultivators, woodmen and shepherds. Even though they are scatted, they follow similar customs and traditional habits and have common administrative, socio-economic and religious system of life.

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Lifestyle of the Tribal People of Kundiyanatham Village Panchayat

S. Manju[1] and Dr. S.Ramesh[2]

Location

Kalvarayan Hills is a big mountain range situated in the Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu. It is located in the districts such as Salem and Kallakurichi. The height of this hill ranges from 2000 to 3000 feet tall. Kalvarayan Hills is found filled with beauty in a way which attracts tourists. The people who live in Kalvarayan Hills mostly belong to the tribal community.[4]

These tribal people create their habitat in the mountain slope and the place is called Mundiyanatham. Mundiyanatham has been formed as a place which is newly formed and called Natham. This name has evolved as Kundiyanatham overtime. At present, the tribal people live in 187 villages which come under 15 Panchayats in Kalvarayan Hills. Kundiyanatham is under the Assembly constituency of Sankarapuram and the Lok Sabha constituency of Kallakurichi. As per the Census of India 2011, the total population of this Panchayat is 2942 people of which males account for 1,495 and females account for 1,447. The schedule tribes population of this Panchayat is 2,653 people of which males account for 1,336 and females account for 1,317.[5]

Tribes of Kalvarayan Hills

The history of the tribal people of Kalvarayan Hills start along with the Jagirdars till the period of Krishna Devaraya who was the emperor of Vijayanagar Empire. The emperor Krishna Devaraya gave power to his tribal people Kurumbar. But he levied many taxes on them. The Kurumba men migrated from Kanchipuram and settled in Kalvarayan Hills and married Kurumba Goundar women who had a hunting profession. The community of Karalar and Kurumbar are presently called Malayali. Then they call themselves as 'Goundar'.[6]

Lifestyle of the Tribal people of Kundiyanatham

Location

The tribal people set up their habitat in the mountain slopes and low lying regions. They are convenient to save themselves from rain and wind. Each place is situated near the shore of the river. The tamarind trees, coconut trees and big forest trees are found grown all around the place. They destroy the natural forest and form the land they need. They set up the small huts as their houses. They built their houses using bamboo and forest sticks. They covered the roof with grass. Now tile roofed houses and storied houses are found here.[7]

They have built the houses standing opposite to each other. Most of the houses are built facing south northern and north southern direction. They have also built the raised platform in front of the hut. There is no

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house without those raised platforms. They are used to keep firewood and vessels. A decorative vessel used to preserve paddy, wheat, etc. is definitely kept on the sides of opposite of the raised platform. They are made of bamboo and sand.

They clean their house using cow dung. They sprinkle the cow dung outside the house every morning and draw Kolam. Women do all the household works. The chief core of them is cooking. They use wooden mortar to clean the grains like foxtail millet and ragi. They have a tool made of wood in order to grind the millets.[8] They majorly have the mud vessels. They also use brass pitchers, glass and plates. They like to use Aluminum vessels and silver vessels. They also use dry grass mats and date palm leaves mats. They lit lamp in their houses during the evenings and made the lamps burn all the night. Now they use electricity and electrical devices like electric lights, fan and television.

Food

Finger millet, foxtail millet, Ragi and corn are the important varieties of grains they consume. They prepare porridge and gruel using these millets. They cook paddy rice food during the important days. Now they take the ration rice foods majorly. They use tubers by boiling them or adding them in curries. They also use coconuts and mangoes for cooking. They get provisions from the town areas. They eat wild boar and rabbit by hunting them. They also eat birds, fishes and dry fishes. The important non vegetarian foods are goat and hen. They eat pork during the important festival days. They add the fruits like mango, jackfruit and banana to their diet. They also use milk and milk based products like curd and buttermilk. They have the habit of consuming betel leaves, areca nuts and tobacco. The habit of consuming alcohol is also found in them.[9]

Clothes and Ornaments

The clothes and ornaments worn by the tribal people becomes the yardstick which showcases the economy of them. Men wears towel on them. They wear the dhotis of 4 or 8 cubits as a turban on their heads. Women divide their saree into two and put around one around the waist and wear another part in the upper part. They considered wearing the saree along with blouse as a communal crime in the early stages. But at present, women wear saree and a blouse and men wear dhoti, shirt and pant. The changes in their clothing are found as they have contact with the town people and transportation facilities.

The tribal people don't make their mangalsutra using gold but brass. They also use important ornaments like earrings and nose pins made only of brass. They tie the black beads and brass balls in their mangalsutra rope. They use mirror to comb their hair and wear flower and bindi. Women mostly love to wear rubber and glass bangles. They wear toe rings made of silver. They also use rubber and plastic slippers.10

Nowadays women are wearing ornaments like mangalsutra, ear rings and nose pins made of gold, toe ring, ring and anklet made of silver. Men wear waist cord, bracelet and anklet made of silver. Men also wear wristwatch. In course of time, their clothing and ornaments change according to the evolution of time.

Occupation

The tribal people are hard workers. Tribal women don't like the men who don't work hard. As they cleared the forests and do agricultural jobs by creating farmlands, they are called agriculturalists and farmers. When there is no agricultural work during some months in a year, they do the work of cutting down the trees in the forest. Apart from these, they also do some other works like hunting, cutting firewood, collecting honey and fishing. They consider sowing in the forest land and reaping as the chief occupation.11

Cutting down the forest grass and renovating the huts is one of their important occupations. They cut down the bamboo trees and orchid trees and sell them in the villages. They cut down the trees for the merchants and get their wage for the work. They maintain the goats and cows by creating shelters for them. They also involve in the occupation of raising up the goats, cows, hens and pigs. They make rope using the wild creepers, baskets, mats and household things using the wooden

materials and sell them in their market place. At present, the tribal people mainly do the forest works related to agriculture. The wage for men is around 300 to 400 rupees and the wage for women per day is 150 to 200 rupees. They don't get these works everyday. They could earn only during the days they work. As this work is a rain fed yields, they go to the other states for survival. They go to the states like Karnataka and Kerala and earn money.[12]

Worship

The temple festivals of the tribal people of Kalvarayan Hills are held in the Tamil months of Chithirai and Vaikasi. The tribal people of Kundiyanatham panchayat organize the festivals together for the dieties like Kariyaraman, Andiyappan, Kumarasamy, Tirthamalayar, Annamalayar and Unnamalai Amman. The tribal people from various places reach the Kariyaraman temple in Kariyakovil for the festival. They worship by dragging the temple car and prepare Pongal for Kariyaramar. After that, the turmeric bathing ceremony is held. The festival of Andiyappan temple in Melparikam is held in the month of Chithirai and Vaikasi. The worship of the family deity is also done here. They keep Pongal for Unnamalai Amman temple too which is near to it. They cook using the grains brought by the tribal people here and serve Andiyappan. The folk events like Koothu, Kummi and Kolattam are performed here during the night time. Naturally they also have the habit of celebrating the festivals in the waxing moon days.

The tribal people living in the places like Kundiyanatham, Kodunthurai, Kalpudai, Paranginatham and Vellimalai take part in Andiyappan temple festival in Melparikam. They do the worship of God on Fridays at their houses. They celebrate this festival by cooking Pongal and worshipping God in Amman temples of the places during the Aadi month. They also worship folk deities in these times. But the habit of praying and offering food to God during the New moon day and full moon day is not found among them. They celebrate Pongal festival in a grand manner.[13]

Conclusion

The tribal people of Kundiyanatham village panchayat have their own life style in the society. Various changes could be seen in their food, clothes, ornaments, occupation and social rituals. The lifestyle of these people underwent a change due to the relationship of the people living in the plain. They have started to live a modern life according to the new era.

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"Traditional Social and Economic Conditions of the Kota Tribes of Nilgiris"

M. Nithya[1], and. K. Reena[2]

Introduction

"The Kotas are also known as *paankui makka* (people of the ancient race). The Kota tribe lives in the Nilgiris, and their language, known as Ko-v Ma-nt (or kv mnt), is closely related to that of neighboring groups." The Kotas today live and work in the modern rural and urban cash economy, having earlier participated in a complicated system of products and service trade. They engage in traditional agriculture activities, raising crops including vegetables, tea, and coffee, as well as keeping skills in woodwork, pottery, blacksmithing, and other crafts.

Men and women both hold advanced degrees and work in a variety of fields, including government services, law, Engineering, and Medicine. The study of social and cultural life in the Kota describes stressing historical occurrences, deities, pathways, and family residences. Kotas perform a traditional funeral in their village, using double reed instruments like Kotas, Tabuk, and cylindrical drums for open-air instrumental music.

Historical And Social Relationships

The ancestors of Kota and Todas may have invaded the Nilgiris massif around 500 BCE and isolated themselves. The Kurumba people were driven from higher elevations to lower elevations where malaria-carrying insects were common as a result of a Kota migration from Kolli male in Karnataka.

The Kotas and their Toda neighbours, who grew buffalo and traded services for their milk, hides, and meat, established a symbiotic economic connection. They also engaged in trade with the Irula and Kurumba neighbours, using Kurumbas as village Guards and Sorcerers. The Kotas, who are thought to be natives, were settled in the Nilgiris to serve their surrounding community. These ancient customs are progressively being forgotten, and there is no internal drive to keep them alive.

Kota Tribal Settlements And Beliefs

The Kotas are a community of approximately 100 to 300 individuals who reside in several villages with 25 to 65 dwellings grouped in rows called "Ke-rs". These communities are known as Ko-ka-l, which translates to "Kota-leg". A cow guided the kotas through the Nilgiris, determining the settlement pattern. Me-na-r, Kolme-I, Kurgo-j, Ticga-r, porga-r, Kina-r, and Kala-c are the seven Kota villages listed chronologically. The newer Kota houses are made of whitewashed cement and brick with gabled roofs, and the room layout has changed. Traditional Kota houses have a front room with a raised platform, a kitchen with a wood burner, and a bathing area in the back. Kota views a settlement. "Kill Keri, Nadukeri, and Melkeri, or lower, center, and upper streets are the three streets at Kotagiri.

Kota Language

The Kota language, also known as ko-v Ma-nt, is a Dravidian language spoken by the Kota. It is closely connected to Toda and has strong linguistic ties to Tamil and Malayalam. Since they have historically had communication with strangers in languages other than their own, all Kotas also speak Badaga and Tamil. While the Kotas speak a hybrid of Tamil and Kannada. The Kota tribal language and the ancient Kannada dialect related to Toda have 2500 native speakers. In the Kota language, the settlement of Kota is referred to as Kokkal.

Religion Of The Kota Tribes In Nilgiris

The smithy served as the focal point of Kota's culture and religion. Aynor is also divided into great or Dodaynor or little or kunaynor, a father deity, and Amnor, a mother goddess, who are the main deities. In

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some villages, the father god is also referred to as "Kamaticvara" or " Kamatraya". Despite the existence of two male gods, there was only one female goddess. The cow is a sacred animal of the Kota. Their gods do not have human manifestation; Lord Aynor, who represents fire, and Lord Amanor, who represents a bow and arrow, are their main gods. Their rituals are different from those of other tribes.

Kota Culture

The Kota tribe are skilled craftspeople; they are masters of pottery and Terracotta art. The Kotas are also skilled carpenters, rope and umbrella manufacturers, gold and silver smiths, blacksmiths, and good smiths. The women perform household chores, work in the fields, bring water, gather wood for the fire, manufacture baskets, and create earthenware. Only a few families currently make a living using these skills.

The mayor of Kota works in agriculture and grows foods such as potatoes, wheat, Samai, amaranth, korali mustard, and onions. Fine, curved double reed instruments, rifle butts were manufactured by Kota artists for some ceremonial occasion. The "kik" basket that the Kota women manufacture is a musical instrument, the kol, tabatk, dobar, kinvar, and kob, made from the hides of goats and oxen. Their long, curved kob horns were once made of buffalo horn.

Kota Society

“The Kota people live in seven nuclear villages called Kokkal or Kotagiri, located between the Toda and Badaga settlements in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.” Three exogamous clans lived in villages, each in "Kerr or Kerri"; each clan had a street, and each clan had a strict no-marriage policy; however, outside marriages were permitted with any clan. There was no social hierarchy.

Festivals of the Kotas

The "Aiyanoor Ammanoor" is a week-long festival celebrated by the Kota tribe of the Nilgiris. The Aiyanoor Ammanoor festival started on December 23 in Kokkal village. The villagers go and collect mud to make mud pots. Once the mud pots are made, they open their temple, then look in the mud pots and serve food for the whole village. After prayers are over in the temple, the men and women dance separately, representing the day and night, wearing their traditional clothes. The festival ends with these dances. The pot-making ceremony is held once every two years.

Primary Economic Activity

Agriculture is the major occupation in most of the kotas. They grow potatoes, ragi, and vegetables. They also run private dairies and sell the milk to cooperative societies. They all had a talent in arts, and Kota proved to be an artist, blacksmith, musician, hunter, potter, rope and umbrella maker.

Kota Inhabitations

The Kotas live in seven villages: Kotagiri, Kil Kotagiri, Todanad, Sholur, Kethi, and Kunda. They live in small, close-knit communities, and at Kotagiri, their hamlet is made up of isolated homes and streets lined with rows of huts. The huts include separate living and sleeping quarters and are constructed of mud, brick, or stone. The roofs are covered in thatch or tiles. The floor is elevated above the ground, and there is a porch in front with seats on either side. Some of the huts have carvings on the doorposts that were created by woodworkers on the plains. Breaks claims that Kurguli is the oldest Kota settlement.

Caste System of The Kota Tribe

The Kota tribes do not have castes, but instead are split into Kilker, Naduker, Pibberker, Aker, and Korker Vor Gager keris. Since they are considered to be members of the same family. The Kotas favour getting married in their local community. They regularly marry daughters of the mother's brother and daughters of the father, two different cross-cousin unions. The Kota tribal council, also known as koot or kut, upholds community customs. Gotgarn (pittakar), the village headman, governs Kota. The Gotgarn from Menar served as the village's chief. The village kut handles local decisions on Kota cultural needs, even if ordinary justice is handled by the Indian judicial system.

Marriage And Family among the Kotas

The Kotas favour intermarriage between close cross relatives. The classifications of parallel cousins

are used, and Kotas are typically prohibited from marrying anyone who was born in their natural kin. When a husband passes away, widows are permitted to continue living in his house, and divorce is not taboo. The father continues to have custody of the kids. They are also famous for their court venereal illness, which is an embarrassment to young men who have never had it.

Position of Kota Women

In comparison to other traditional Indian communities, women had more influence over who they married and participated in various economic pursuits. They were entitled to a divorce. "Additionally, some women worked in ceramics. *Pembucol* refers to women who became possessed while listening to flute music, and they were consulted on major village decisions." Women also played a specialized role in homework, social activities, and farming.

Medicine, Death, And Afterlife

For diseases including broken bones, diarrhea, boils, and fatigue, the Kotas have traditional cures. However, because of changes in the Nilgiris ecosystem, many plants utilised in Kota medicine are now harder to find. Allopathic medicines enjoy the faith of Kotas since it is linked to Kotas in the Davaar. Music is played during funerals exclusively and is referred to as dukkol (sad songs). Ker kol badness melodies or dav kol funeral or death tunes. Due to cost and disinclination to emphasize death-related rituals, villages are ceasing to practice them or only commemorating them in extreme circumstances, such as after a priest dies.

Conclusion

"The Kotas are a Scheduled Tribe in the Nilgiris with a strong traditional lifestyle. Despite their poor socioeconomic status, they continue to maintain their customs and social relationships." They live and work in rural and Urban Cash economies, focusing on traditional agriculture and Crafts. Kotas speak the Dravidian language, identify as Hindus, and worship Smithy.

They celebrate religious occasions with prayers and Forges, and follow burial Customs like dry and green funerals. Kotas are a small, close-knit group of skilled craftsmen, carpenters, and goldsmiths in Seven Villages. They prefer marriage within their Community and have a tribal Council for Customs and Cultural needs. The Kotas, Nilgiris region group, have a unique Social Structure, practice Hindu deities, medicine, and funerals.

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Philanthropy and Cultural Patronage: A Historical Study of the Seithur Zamindars

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Before the Poligari system which was introduced by the Nayaks the chieftains ruled over small territories. The ruling classes were either rooted or subjugated. 'Those who surrendered and accepted their authority were accommodated into Poligari system.[1] The hierarchy of the political setup under Vijayanagar rule was Emperor, Nayaks, Poligars. This arrangement worked well and proved to be more effective and efficient that prevented external changes and internal chaos. "In the Vijayanagara system what the Nayaks of Madurai, Thanjavur and Senji were to the Emperor, the Poligars to the Nayaks.[1]

SeithurZamindari is a compact block of 8 villages lying in the extreme south-west corner of the Ramanathapuram District, twelve miles south of Srivilliputhur.[1]It has a long succession of Zamindars for about four hundred years, ChinnayaThevar,(1557-1585) founder of SeithurZamindari caused for a long reign by his descendants on hereditary basis. To begin with Poligars had ruled Palayams when the Tamil country was ruled by the Nayaks. But, soon after the British came to power, the Poligari system was abolished and in its place Zamindari system was established. Therefore, the name Poligar hitherto called came to be called Zamindar in the British rule. This paper analyses the philanthropic activities of SeithurZamindars for the cultural development and patronage to the Tamil literature.

Zamindars of Seithur were pious and kind hearted. They had close contact with the people. They shared pleasure and pain with the people. The affinity of Zamindars with the people earned them a great respect among them. There was no account that any of the Zamindars was cruel tyrannical. They extended philanthropic activities in the field of agriculture, education, health, Literature and other public measures.

Agriculture

SeithurPoligars as well as zamindars took much care in agricultural development. As land revenue was main of the state in those days the Poligars brought many waste lands into cultivation and created many new villages. They provided irrigation facilities by digging wells, constructing tanks and dams. Besides they repaired the dams and tanks which were in ruined condition.

AlagappaThevar (1746-1756) built a tank and created a village in his name. MuthusamyThevar constructed a tank and created a village namely Muthusamiapuram. SundaradasThevar (1879-1895) formed two new villages - Ammaiappaporam after the name of the local deity and Sundararajapuram after his own name. He repaired the Chinnayakottai tank at a cost of Rs.12000/-.[1]SundaradosThevar, before his death, executed a will in favour of his thick friend Nagayaswami Thumbuchi Nayyakar, the zamindar of Periyur, Madurai District to manage the estate during Sevuga PandiaThevar's infancy. During his time the wet lands were irrigated by 39 tanks.[1]SevugaPandiaThevar surveyed the lands and dug wells for drinking water purposes. He repaired the tanks and cleaned wells so as to improve the irrigation facilities.[1]

Education

Philanthropic activity of SevugaPandiaThevar in the field of education was considerable one. Having received Western education he showed much interest to impart education among the people. He caused for the foundation of school in Rajapalayam. He donated Rs.12000/- for the school for the construction of buildings.[1]Now this School is called "***Seithur Sevuga Pandia Higher Secondary School,***"run by Tamilnadu Government. This School consists 7.5 acres land.[1] The Primary school was started by SevugaPandiaThevarat

Pudupalayam area of Rajapalayam town. He donated five acres of land for a school at Seithur.[1] Two primary schools at Seithur also received land donations from SevugaPandiaThevar.[1]

Religion

The Zamindars of Seithur were pious and religious minded. They constructed many temples and donated lands for the temples. MuthusamyThuraiThevar (1780-1800) built Vishnu temple at Ramalingapuram. They are now in ruins.[1] SevugaPandiaThevar (1800-1828) renewed the car festival in Devadanam temple which was stopped for some years. Moreover he renovated ruined temples and provided facilities for pilgrimage to Sathuragiri and other sacred places. In his days VelappaDesigaswamigal of the Thiruvaduthurai mutt visited the Devadanam temple.[1] Lands were donated by the Zamindarin favour of the mutt as inam for its maintenance. MuthusamyThuraiThevar (1828-1879) created a Teppakulam at Seithur. Many temples were renovated by him. He constructed Brahmin quarters near the Siva Temple at Seithur.[1] A choultry was opened at Madavarivilagam on outskirts of Srivilliputtur and Brahmin travellers were fed every day. SundaradasThevar celebrated temple festivals periodically. He formed a village in the name of Ammaiappan. PeriyurZamindar constructed the Subramania temple at Nagamalai.[1] SevugapandiaThevar period was a memorable and remarkable one for the religious activities at Seithur. SevugaPandiaThevar contributed electric lights to the SankaranainarKoil in the year 1934.[1] Healso contributed many acres of lands to the local deities worshiped by various communities in Seithur. His land contributions are as follows:[1]

TABLE: 1

S.No	Temple	Donation	Community
1	Karuppasamy Temple	Land donation	Maravar
2	Solaimalai and Patrakali Amman Temple	1.73 Hectre	Nadar
3	Ekkaladevi Amman Temple	0.95 Hectre	Maravar
4	MadhaPudhiaswamyKoil	1.4 Acres	Public
5	VanaRakkiamman Temple	1.70 Hectre	Public
6	SanthanaBalakrishnan Temple at Mettupatti	Land donation	Yadava
7	MuthalammanKoil	Land donation	Public

Music

UptoSundaradasThevar there is no evidence from sources material that the previous zamindars patronised music. They are believed to have patronised music since they built many temples etc. SundaradosThevar, a Tamil scholar and poet loved music also. He encouraged for the growth of music. For example, he found out the latent genius of MuthiyaBagavathar even in 9th or 10th year. Zamindar extended him his patronage for music. Later, "MuthiyaBagavathar attained eminence as a vocal musician even during the time of that Zamindar."[1]

Sevuga Pandia Thevar son of Sundaradas Thevarwas a learned scholar. He was very fond of music. He himself was the player of Canjira. He encouraged music and patronised musicians. Muthiya Bagavathar, Subbajah Bagavathar and Pudukottai Mamundia Pillai, Varkalai Krishna Bagavathar a rising musician, disciple of Muthiya Bagavathar received patronage from SevugaPandia Thevar.[1]

Health

As far as the measures taken by SeithurZamindars for taking care of health of the concerned the people took measures for the welfare of the people, of which health was given due consideration. Sevuga Pandia Thevar provided a hospital at Seithur with efficient doctor and other staff to look after the health of the people. Doctor Narayana Iyer and Venkatachala Mudaliar served in the Seithur hospital.[1] After a longtime the hospital came under the control of the government as result of the efforts taken by PahaneriUdaiappapillai who was the then President of Ramnad District Board. Now this hospital of Seithur is called SevugaPandia government hospital which is run by the government.

Patron of Literature

The Period of Zamindars marked the growth of Tamil literature, zamindars patronised the poets and caused for the literary growth. Some of the zamindars themselves were Tamil scholars and poets. Chinnaya Thevar tookefforts for Seraisthalapuranam, translation work from Sanskrit to Tamil by Ponnayira Kavirayar, was published. "It is one of the standard works of Tamil literature, Thanigaipuranan, Kalathipuranam and other eminent works".[1]Sundaradas Thevar, brother of SundarapandiaThevar composed famous work called "Annam Vedu Dhootu".[1]

Sankaramoorthy Kavirayar composed a pastoral drama known as "Patprabandam", in honour of MuthusamyThevar.[1]RamaswamiKavirayar of Muhavur, patronised by Muthusamy Thevar served as a tutor toSundaradasThevar, latter's son.SundaradosThevar, composed many "Sahithyams", in praise of god.He reprinted the book "Seraisthalapuranam, in 1893.[1] It was released by Ramaswamy Kavirayar. Sevuga Pandia Thevar was a lover of literature and numerous poets flocked to his Zamindari. The notable poets who received his patronage were as follows:[1]

Table: 2

S.No.	Poets	Specialization
1	Thiruvenkadam Narayana Sastrigal	Drama
2	Thirumalai Sasthrigal	Drama
3	Madavar Vizhagam Muthaiah Bagavadhar	Musicians
4	Subbaiah Bagavadhar	Musicians
5	PuttukottaiMamundia Pillai	Musicians
6	Srivilliputtur R.Narasimhaachariar alias SubbuIyengar	Prose
7	Muhavur M.Ramaswamy Kavirayar	Prose
8	Meenakshi Sundara Kavirayar	Prose
9	Rajapalayam Sundara Moorthy Kavirayar	Prose
10	M.R.Arunachala Kavirayar	Prose
11	M.R.KandasamyKavirayar, Muhavur	Prose
12	GanapathiKavirayar	Prose
13	AppavuKavirayar	Prose

Some of the publication brought out in book form by Zamindar is***Pillai Tamil*** (Sung on DavamperraNayaki) ***NadhiVilasam*** (written by GanapathiKaviraayar)and ***Patprabandam*** (written by SankaramoorthyKavirayar).[1] M.R. ArunachalaKavirayar wrote "Serai Devan PerraNayaki." His brother M.R.KandasamyKavirayar was the editor of VivekaBanu, a Tamil Journal.[1]

Conclusion

The reign of the SeithurZamindars represents a significant epoch in the socio-cultural history of Tamil Nadu. Their governance extended far beyond the conventional role of landlords, as they emerged as benevolent patrons of agriculture, education, religion, health, music, and literature. Through the construction of irrigation systems, the establishment of schools and hospitals, the renovation of temples, and the patronage of poets and musicians, they fostered both material prosperity and cultural enrichment. Their deep-rooted piety and humanitarian spirit enabled them to remain closely connected with the people, earning trust and admiration across generations. In essence, the SeithurZamindars embodied a model of enlightened leadership—combining authority with compassion, tradition with progress, and governance with philanthropy—thus leaving behind an enduring legacy that continues to illuminate the cultural heritage of Tamil society.

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Colonial Influence on Science And Technology in Kongu Region (1857-1947)

A. Kannan[1] and R. Shangameswaran[2]

Introduction

Kongu Nadu refers broadly to the western Tamil region covering districts like Coimbatore, Salem, Erode, Tiruppur, and parts of Nilgiris. During the British period, this region transformed from a largely agrarian society into one of the industrial and educational hubs of South India[1]. Its fertile land, river systems (Noyyal, Bhavani, and Amaravathi), and cotton-growing capacity made it significant for colonial economic and technological activities.

Agriculture and Irrigation Technology

Traditional irrigation tanks (eri) and canals were maintained, but modern canals were introduced under the Public Works Department[3]. The Bhavani Sagar Dam project was planned during the late British period (completed after Independence in 1955)[4]. Agricultural science began spreading through Agricultural Colleges (e.g., Coimbatore Agricultural College, 1906, later Tamil Nadu Agricultural University)[5]. Scientific research focused on improving cotton, millets, and paddy varieties to support British textile industries.

Textile and Industrial Development

Coimbatore became known as the "Manchester of South India" during this period. The British introduced mechanized spinning and weaving mills—early mills in Coimbatore include Lakshmi Mills, founded in 1910[7]. The growth of textile machinery industries laid the foundation for modern industrial Coimbatore. Local weavers adapted to power looms and dyeing technologies under colonial influence. Development of industrial co-operatives for handloom workers was also encouraged.

Transport and Communication

The Podanur railway junction (established 1862) became a major hub connecting Coimbatore with Madras (Chennai), Kerala, and Mysore. Railways boosted cotton trade, agriculture exports, and migration of skilled workers. Telegraph lines and postal systems were extended across the Kongu region for administrative and commercial purposes[10]. The introduction of motor transport in the 1920s improved rural–urban connectivity.

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Education and Scientific Institutions

British missionary and government schools introduced modern science education. The Government Arts College, Coimbatore (1875), offered science courses[11]. The Agricultural College and Research Institute (1906) in Coimbatore became a center of agricultural research and technology transfer. Western medicine spread through mission hospitals in Salem, Erode, and Coimbatore (CSI mission hospitals)[12].

Medicine and Public Health

The spread of allopathic medicine reduced reliance on indigenous Siddha and Ayurveda, though these continued in parallel. Vaccination programs against smallpox and plague were enforced by colonial medical officers. Sanitation and drainage works in urban areas of Salem and Coimbatore were modernized[13].

Local Innovations and Social Impacts

The industrial climate encouraged entrepreneurship among Kongu Vellala Gounder and Chettiar communities[14]. Growth of engineering skills among artisans—many small machine shops in Coimbatore later became large engineering industries. The influence of the Swadeshi Movement (1905 onwards) led to the revival of indigenous spinning, weaving, and local technologies alongside British science. The rise of industrial cooperatives and technological self-reliance movements was notable. Coimbatore became a center for nationalist leaders who promoted indigenous industries. [15] By 1947, the Kongu region had a strong educational base in science and agriculture[16]. A fast-growing industrial ecosystem (mills, foundries, and machine tools) improved transport and irrigation infrastructure[17].

Conclusion

Between 1857 and 1947, the Kongu region of Tamil Nadu witnessed a transformation from a traditional agrarian society into a rising industrial and educational hub. British initiatives in railways, irrigation, and education, combined with local entrepreneurship, laid the foundation for Coimbatore's later reputation as an industrial and technological center of South India.

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Kulapathi A.P.C. Veerabahu: A Visionary Pioneer in Rural Education and Social Upliftment

K. Guru Suriya

Introduction

Few people in contemporary Tamil Nadu's history have had as significant and enduring an influence on community development and rural education as Kulapathi A.P.C. Veerabahu. A.P.C. Veerabahu was born at a time when many people in Tamil Nadu's southern districts, particularly those living in rural and marginalized areas, could only dream of having access to high-quality education. He went on to become a transformative figure who devoted his life to using education to uplift society. Understanding that education is a tool for empowerment rather than just literacy, he devoted his life to creating institutions that would offer the impoverished, inclusive, accessible, and value-based education.

Veerabahu's goal as the creator of the A.P.C. institutions in Thoothukudi District went much beyond only erecting classrooms and buildings. His goals were to develop responsible citizens who were dedicated to the principles of discipline, service, and nation-building; to provide chances for first-generation students; and to advance gender equality in education. This essay aims to examine Kulapathi A.P.C. Veerabahu's life, ideology, and contributions, following his development from an ardent supporter of education to a trailblazing social reformer. The purpose of the article is to demonstrate how one man's vision changed the educational and social landscape of an entire region by analyzing his educational endeavors, community outreach activities, and lasting legacy.

Early Life of Kulapathi A.P.C. Veerabahu

Born on August 5, 1915, Kulapathi A.P.C. Veerabahu came from an aristocratic and charitable family in Thoothukudi that was well-known for its honesty, loyalty, and patriotism. Veerabahu was his birth name, and he was lovingly referred to as "Vembu." Later, he was taken in by his uncle and became A.P.C. Veerabahu, continuing his long history of social service. At a time when most rural households did not prioritize education, he started his elementary education at T.S. Middle School in Thoothukudi. Encouraged by his adoptive father, A.P. Chockalingam Chettiyar, he pursued his high school education at Caldwell High School, where his leadership abilities and empathy for the poor started to emerge. His peers referred to him as "Sivamani" because of his insight and leadership.

He went on to study economics at Loyola College in Madras after first attending M.D.T. Hindu College in Tirunelveli. He became very interested in education as a means of bringing about social change as a result of being influenced by nationalist ideas and intellectuals. His attitude of service, simplicity, and the uplift of the poor was influenced by his adoration for Mahatma Gandhi.An economist, educationist, and social reformer, A.P.C. Veerabahu was well-known for his organizational abilities, spiritual dedication, and patriotism. His dedication to philanthropic and educational endeavors was further reinforced by his marriage to Mahalakshmi Ammal.

He eventually became a pioneer in establishing educational institutions in and around Thoothukudi with the goal of enhancing literacy and empowering future generations, motivated by Gandhian principles and influenced by Jesuit educators. His legacy as a "Thondar Thilagam" and "Porulathara Methai"—a selfless social servant and an economics scholar—was firmly established by his early life.

Educational Contributions of Kulapathi A.P.C. Veerabahu

The educational environment of Thoothukudi was revolutionized by the visionary educationist Kulapathi A.P.C. Veerabahu. He took it upon himself to provide high-quality education to the underprivileged and rural residents of his village during a period when advanced education was only available in larger towns like Madurai or Tirunelveli. According to him, education should empower people and strengthen communities by

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fusing traditional values with contemporary knowledge. Motivated by this idea, he developed a number of innovative schools under the V.O.C. Educational Trust, which was founded in 1947 with the goal of educating all people, regardless of gender, caste, or creed.

Major Institutions Founded

V.O. Chidambaram College (1951) – A college established for the economically backward, which has now grown into a premier institution with UG, PG, and research programs across multiple disciplines.

V.O.C. College of Education (1955) – Started to train quality teachers for rural Tamil Nadu. It was affiliated first with Madras University and later Madurai Kamaraj University, offering B.Ed., M.Ed., M.Phil., and Ph.D. programs.

A.P.C. Mahalakshmi College for Women (1973) – Created to promote women's education, offering a wide range of undergraduate, postgraduate, and research programs.

Subbiah Vidyalayam Boys' Higher Secondary School – Originally founded by Subbiah Nadar and later managed by the VOC Trust, it became a model school for the community.

Despite bureaucratic hurdles and financial constraints during the 1950s and 60s, Veerabahu persisted through community support, personal sacrifice, and unwavering commitment to his mission. He also helped in the **construction of hostels**, **libraries**, and **laboratories**, ensuring that students from rural areas had access to the facilities they needed.

A Model Educationist

Veerabahu was deeply inspired by Gandhian ideals and Jesuit values of service. His educational model emphasized discipline, service, social responsibility, and spiritual grounding. His institutions became centers of academic excellence, character formation, and community development.Today, his work continues through the efforts of the VOC Educational Society, and the thousands of students who have passed through its portals, carrying his vision forward.

Conclusion

Kulapathi A.P.C. Veerabahu is a brilliant illustration of how one person's vision and commitment can change the social and educational landscape of an entire region. Veerabahu emerged as a pathfinder who not only established institutions but also ingrained in them a culture of service, discipline, and inclusivity during a period when rural populations, particularly in southern Tamil Nadu, had little access to high-quality education. His impact extends beyond the tangible buildings he constructed to include the lives he transformed by empowering first-generation students, advocating for women's education, and raising civic-minded individuals. Veerabahu established a solid foundation for future generations with his compassion, leadership, and steadfast faith in the transformative potential of education.

Today, the institutions he established continue to flourish, reflecting his ideals and continuing his mission. His life is a testament to the fact that education is not merely about imparting knowledge but about transforming society. Kulapathi A.P.C. Veerabahu will forever be remembered as a visionary pioneer who proved that true change begins with service, and that education, when rooted in values, can uplift an entire community.

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Mohammedan Literacy in Madras City: An Analysis of the 1871 Educational Census

Dr. T. Abdul Khadar[1] and Mr. A. Samsudeen Thoufic[2]

Introduction

Sir Thomas Munro's minutes of 1822 initiated special attention for Muslim schools each in a Collectorate of Madras City, which was earlier recommended by the Madras School Book Society.[1]From that time, emphasis given to introduce schooling for Muslims in Madras City. This was followed by Macaulay's Minutes of Education which made appointments of the Director of Public Instruction.In the minutes, we could find that the traditional Madrasas were not open to secular and Western education. The educational interest among the Muslims was scattered and confined to a few regions where their majority existed.[1]

Woods despatch insisted on expanding the education in the field of arts, science, and philosophy and European knowledge and agreed not to completely shut down the study of Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian literature, which were classical languages of India. To govern the country, the leaders needed to access historical documents, including Hindu and Mohammedan law. So, they allowed the existence of traditional schoolings. The teachers and professors also encouragedto teach these languages, and they were directed not to teach anything related to Hindi or Mohammedan religions to maintain the principle of religious neutrality. This paved the way for the improvement of vernacular languages of India and secular education.

Non-inclusion of religious beliefs and institutions run by denominations of Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsis, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, or any others may be affiliated to the universities. This practice was adopted from England, where institutions in immediate connection with the Church of England will receive certificates of degrees from London University.[1] Even the degree of Mohammedan Madrassas may be awarded by colleges affiliated to the respective universities. Initially the participation of Mohammedan was slower yet increasing. Irrespective of ages, learned Mohammedans have devoted themselves to teaching, with little other remuneration which was not frequent but occasional to support their basic livelihood.[1]

The system of grantsin aid was introduced with the direction of strict non-religious, secular instruction. Funds introduced by government for imparting a good secular education for schools with existing local management include private patrons, voluntary subscribers or the trustees of endowments. These schools shall be subject to Government inspection and agree to any conditions which may be laid down for the regulation of such grants. The increasing desire of Mohammedan population to acquire European knowledge has given as much satisfaction. But with respect to Madras comparing Bengal little has been done by Government to promote the education of the mass of the people especially Mohammedans. But on the other hand educational efforts of Christian missionaries have been more successful among the tamil population than in any other part of India.[1]

Historical Background: Muslim Schooling before 1871

Presence of Scholars highlights the rise of literates. In this context, in 1822, Sir Thomas Munro's educational census highlights out of 305 schools in Madras city, 143 male scholars and with no female scholars present. Out of 10 charity run schools only 10 male scholars and private run schools has 1690 male scholars present (data recorded only in Madras Census).[1]

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Madras School Book society recommends 700 rupees per month for each 2 principal schools at Collectorate level for both Hindu and Muslim. Sir Thomas Munro on 10th March 1826 in his report he considered the recommendations. The Mohammedan population not above one-twentieth of Hindu population and it will be sufficient to establish one Mohammedan school in each Collectorate, except Arcot and few Collectorate where the proportion of the Mohammedan population is greater. The total expenses expected for this planis 300 rupees for 20 CollectorateMohammedan schools. He concluded his minutes by recommending the setup of Department of Public Instruction which was later executed in 1855. The primary object is to improve the education of the people. He also allowed 700 rupees per month for teachers and expense of press. Under this Madras School Book society was effectively functioned and its earliest publication was printed in 1820. Their object is to prepare, publish and supply works of cheap or gratuitous works useful in schools and seminaries of learning. With this publishings normal schools, ordinary schools and native schools were largely benefitted.[1]

In 1838, Minutes of Lord Auckland and Elphinstone shows inVepery, Blacktown, St.Thome, there were 778 Boys and 357 Girls under Instruction. But was no reference of Mohammedans. In 1848, out of 1300 pupils in Madras city, 120 were Muslim pupils. In 1849, 1300 pupils in annual examinations no fewer than 106 were Muslims. Free Church Schools reached assured success. In 1850 out of 1800 pupils 326 were Mohammedans. In. 1852 out of 2245 pupils, 340 were Muslims. By 1853 out of 2520 pupils, 327 were Muslims. This shows a gradual increase in Muslim education.[1]

Traditional Schools:Pyalls and Maktab

Even before the colonial government started grant in aid system, the Pyalls (They were indigenous vernacular schools that provided basic literacy) and Maktabs (Muslim elementary school) provided greater contributions for Mohammedan Education. Over 41% of Madras male pupils were enrolled in pyall schools.It acted as a parallel pathway for Muslim education. Pyall schools offered only the basics of literacy and numeracy. Colonial Inspectors noted that "only few subjects are taught in a pyall school, whatever its character": reading, writing, arithmetic, and memorisation of classical versus especially in Muslim Maktabs the emphasis was Quranic recitation and Arabic/Persian literacies where needed for religious and clerical work.[1]

The 1871 census refers Muslim pyall schools as the backbone of Muslim elementary instruction: small, locally run, andritualised. It has distinct characteristics from others. They have different fee customs. No regular monthly fee was charged.Instead, pupils gave gifts whenever a teacher began a new chapter of koran and small donations at each Islamic festivals like Muharram, Ramzan, Bakrid etc. When a child completed a Koran, the teacher received a generous present. It may be a new cloth, shawls or a silk cloak. Muslim pyall schools were funded entirely by voluntary gifts and Muslim teachers were part of religious ceremonies in their pupils' homes. With this they also earned Rupees 15-30 per month.[1]

When we look into the distribution of Mohammedanpyall schools it was not evenly distributed across eight divisions. Especially second divisions including all three wards has no pyall schools. Likewise,third and eighth division of South ward has no pyall schools for Mohammedans. And even these pyall schools distributed unevenly in other wards rarely imparted the Anglo-vernacular education or vocational skills. When we look into seventh division of south ward, "Thousands of Mussulman dwell in the deepest misery and ignorance, with none to care for them. Even missionary societies have passed by the people." In second division of North Ward and eighth division of South Ward, the report highlights the Muslims were very deficient in education.

Mohammedan pyall count from both male and female

Division	Ward	School Type	No. of Schools	Males	Females
8th Division	—	High Standard	Nil	-	-

4th Division	—	Vernacular	3	47	5
5th Division	North Ward	Vernacular	1	8	0
1st Division	East Ward	Pyall	1	15	0
1st Division	West Ward	Pyall	2	51	2
2nd Division	All (North, South, Centre)	Pyall	Nil	0	0
3rd Division	North Ward	Pyall	13	298	22
3rd Division	South Ward	Pyall	Nil	0	0
4th Division	—	Pyall	3	47	5
5th Division	North Ward	Pyall	1	8	0
5th Division	South Ward	Pyall	2	17	2
6th Division	North & South	Pyall	Nil	0	0
7th Division	North Ward	Pyall	3	32	0
7th Division	South Ward	Pyall	1	11	0
7th Division	Centre Ward	Pyall	16	444	9
8th Division	North Ward	Pyall	8	86	3
8th Division	South Ward	Pyall	Nil	0	0
Total	—	Only pyall	51	1009	43

Source:Table IV Madras Town Census 1871.[1]

Analysis on Spatial inequality

In this general report for the year 1870–71, J. Townshend Fowler, Inspector of Normal Schools and the Presidency Division, recorded that there were 506 schools functioning in his jurisdiction, has total enrolment of 23,026 pupils. The following distribution among total pupils reflects the social composition of colonial Madras:315 were Europeans, 2,735 were East Indians, and 1,450 were Native Christians. Hindus hold large enrolment with 17,662 students, while Muslims accounted just 864 pupils since being second in population.This shows the educational participation of different communities in 1870s highlighting the domination of Hindu enrolment and limited representation of Muslims in Madras Educational Institutions. And it even highlights only five percent of Madras population was native Christians have better educational records comparing to Muslim community who were the second largest in population.[1]

Missionary and native Contribution to Mohammedanliteracy

Under free Church Mission schools, in June 1835 Saint Andrew's School was established and Rev. J. Anderson was sent from Scotland. He reached Madras by 1837. Under his collective efforts first branch started at Armenian Street on 3rdApril 1837, second at Kancheepuram 1839 and third another branch school in March 1841was opened chiefly for the benefit of the Mohammedan in Triplicane, where they were densely populated and wholly untouched. This shows the contribution of missionary schools for the instruction of Mohammedans in Madras CityThe founding of Patcheappah's marks an era in the history of education and it was the first example of intelligent native gentlemen of various castes combining to aid the cause of popular instruction. But in 1871 census, no clear reference of Mohammedans participation in Patcheaiyappa schools in Madras and Kancheepuram. But the data shows the great benefits flows to Hindus. In English and Anglo Vernacular Schools, census 1871 shows no Muslim including both male and female were under instruction. And no schools for Muslim Community under this category in all eight divisions of madras city except the reference on the Mylapore Anglo-Vernacular School in the same district is an institution intended solely for Mohammedan boys.

The Anglo-Vernacular School at Mylapore was established specifically for Muslim boys and functioned as a feeder institution to the Madrasa-i-Azam, though it did not send a large number of pupils to it. Contemporary observers suggested that a more effective arrangement would be to transfer the higher classes directly to the Madrasa, while focusing on expanding enrolment at the lower levels in Mylapore. Such a measure, it was argued, could potentially double the number of boys in attendance and produce greater benefits for the community.Roman Catholic Mission

(Irish) clearly stated the secular character of enrolment sin schools. It was always open to Heathens, Mussulmans and Protestants and even they weren't compelled to learn catechism or to conform in any way to religious practices. Government acknowledged that some Muslim schools survived on small endowments. Especially in nearby districts, Rs 20-1467 annually granted for Arabic/Persian teaching in Madras, Muslim schools ran on voluntary contributions.[1]

Gender Analysis

According to Madras Town Census, 1871 the total population of Madras City is 401,515. Male and 386,681 females.Under Caste based population census, Mohammedans were 50,964 in which Sunnis were 86.2%, Shias were 8.3% and Wahabees were 5.5%. Among them the Muslim Scholars were 1147 male and no female scholars. In the year of 1871, 42,984 males between five and 15 years of age. Of these 19,643 are under tuition. Which is 45.7 percent. In Madras one male in every ten is at school. When it comes to women 203883 population, 5112 girls are under instruction. Which is 2.5%It is very handful. Mohammedan female instruction has not yet begun. [Hindu and Mohammedan girls are married when thirteen years old and there are 30348 girls in Madras between five and 12 able to attend school.[1]

Madrasa-i-Azamduring 1870s

There are no less than 16 higher class schools having strength of 4358 pupils. Some of the important institutions likePatcheappah's high school having 409 pupils is the largest, and few others like school department of Presidency College, Free Church Mission central school, Doveton College and Madrasa-i-Azam. The great progress in outcome of pass percentage was high in Patcheappah's and Sydapet Rate School. Under Madras government institutions, Madrasa-i-Azam having 234 pupils is an important school for improving Mohammedan literacy. The curriculum of the Madrasa-i-Azam in 1870–71 included instruction in English, English Dictation, Tamil, Tamil Dictation, Algebra, Arithmetic, Euclid (Geometry), History, and Geography, reflecting a combination of vernacular training and modern subjects introduced under colonial education policy. Butstruggling to render its efficiency. This is because the teachers are not well-qualified, and students are required to study two different vernacular languages which makes learning more difficult.[1]In the Matriculation and fine arts examination 1870, Madrasa-i-Azam has two students passed from second class grade out of 158 others. Later, Madrasa-i-Azam showed very little progress due to inefficiency of teachers. Because of this, the school was downgraded to the level of a Middle-class school, and the most advanced students were moved to Presidency college.The several classes of the community to which the candidates are noted in which Mohammedans under matriculation examination 26 were examined out of it six only passed and under first arts examination four were examined and no one is passed. The educational policy of government with respect to Mohammedans has been the subject of much discussion this year, the fact that a Mohammedan has for the first time in the history of this presidency taken the degree of Bachelor of Arts.[1]

Fees Structure

The 1870-71 Department of Public Instruction data shows fees schedule for two principle Muslim institutions such as Madrasa such as Madrasa-i-Azam and Mylapore Anglo Vernacular School. At the Madrasa-i-Azam fees differed with seniority. Pupils from fifth to sixth classes paid one rupee each and those in the third and fourth classes were charged 12 Annas, and in first and second classes paid eight Annas. But in contrast, the Mylapore Anglo-Vernacular School shows no fees for fifth and sixth classes, while for first class it is four Annas, six Annas for second and third classes, and eight Annas for the fourth class. As a result, Madrasa-i-Azam has costlier fee structure comparing to Mysore Anglo-Vernacular school.[1]

Conclusion

The Educational Census 1871 shows the state of Mohammedan literacy in Madras City. It highlighted historical progress in literacy, including the missionary contributions. Even though the data seems nominal, the progress in literacy was considerable. At the grassroots level, pyall schools were prominent to Muslim literacy. The functioning of these schools relied on voluntary

donations. Since donations weren't regular, the efficient functioning was limited and couldn't adopt the modern curriculum or vocational training, which restricted Mohammedans from getting into colonial jobs. Disparity in literacy could be seen among Hindus, Christians, and Muslims, where the latter faced a huge setback proportional to its population. Female literacy was far less compared to male. These setbacks weren't permanent. Constant educational policies focusing on government institutions like Madarsa-i-Azam and with broader social investments, progress in Mohammedan literacy was constantly achieved. In 1882, when the Hunter Commission report was published, it clearly showed the sign of improvement. Thus, studying Mohammedan literacy is complex, as it requires an understanding of the structural barriers that confronted Muslim education in nineteenth-century India.

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14. Ibid., p.73
15. Madras Administration Report for 1870-71 (Madras: Government Press, 1872), p.177
16. Madras Administration report for 1871-72 (Madras: Government Press, 1873), p.165
17. Report on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency, 1870-71 (Madras: Government Press, 1872), p.63

The Impact of Kavikko Abdul Rahman's Poems on Modern Society: Promoting Equality, Motivation, and Social Change

G. Ranganathan

Introduction:

"Kavikko" Abdul Rahman (1937-2017) was a prominent Tamil poet and writer, known for his work in the Vanambadi literary movement. Born on November 9, 1937, in a highly orthodox Muslim family in Madurai, closely related to the Arcot Nawab[i]. Rahman served as a professor for 29 years at Islamiah College, Vaniyambadi,[ii] and later became a full-time writer, opting for voluntary retirement to devote his time to literature. He is also known for incorporating Sufism into Tamil poetry, translating Urdu and Hindi poems into Tamil, and his neoclassical style. He was known as "Kavikko" (emperor among poets).A member of the Vanambadi literary movement, he wrote poetry and translations, introduced Sufism to Tamil poetry, translated Urdu and Hindi poems into Tamil, used imagery and symbolism in his poetry, and self-identified as a neo-classicist. He won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1999 for his poetry book "Aalaapanai." In 1989, he

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received the "Kalaimamani" title from the Tamil Nadu government. Received the "Agni Akshara" award in 1992. He was the Chairman of the Waqf Board of Tamil Nadu in 2009. Member of the Tamil Language Promotion Board of the Central Institute of Classical Tamil, India. Furthermore, his poems emphasize ideas of humanity and equality, such as treating all human beings equally, love and compassion, and humanism itself. His poems provide youth with self-confidence, courage, and a drive for social change. His poems call for social change, such as fighting injustice, speaking out for justice, and creating a peaceful, just society. His poems make people think and motivate them to bring about social change. Therefore, his poems are useful for contemporary culture. Kavikko Abdul Rahman was a progressive thinker and social activist. His poems express his concerns regarding social problems. This research article examines how his poems benefit contemporary society.[iii] He states that poetry is his life and existence. He feels the pen as the sixth finger of his hand. 'The blood and flesh that flow through this sixth finger are his writings,' he says. (Paal Veethi)[iv].

Awareness of social issues

Caste and religious discrimination

Though called "Aran," you are the one who grants boons. Though praised as "Hari," You respond with "Yes." Though addressed as "Karthan," You are the meaning. Though called "Allah," Who else is there but You? Kavikko Abdul Rahman created many poems against caste and religious discrimination (Aiyaram Thirunamambadi p.31). His poems emphasize humanism and equality. Although he belonged to a specific religion, he deeply emphasized the idea that all humans are one family. In his poems, he pointed out that caste and religious discrimination are foolish acts that divide people into groups. Some key concepts in his poems include Religious Harmony: He often mentioned in his poems that although there are many religions, they all lead to the same God. For example, using metaphors such as "all rivers eventually reach the sea," he would say that although religions are different paths, they ultimately reach the same destination. Caste Rejection: He strongly criticized caste discrimination, emphasizing that no identity that separates humans is necessary. He believed that the working class is the highest and that a society in which everyone is equal is the best. Condemnation of Religious Fanatics: He severely criticized those who create riots and divisions in the name of religion. He stated that the word "religious fanatic" has become a bad word and that they do not understand the basic principles of religion.Compassion for Life: Emphasising the idea that "all living beings are temples of God," he said that harming any living being is harming God himself. This is similar to Vallalar's principles. For example, in one poem, he states that there is no difference between a collapsed tower and a minaret due to religious riots. By pointing out that after being demolished, broken bricks cannot be identified as belonging to any religion, he conveyed the meaninglessness of the destruction that occurs in the name of religion. In short, Kavikko's poems emphasize humanism, equality, and common spirituality beyond caste and religion boundaries. His poems constantly emphasize the message that people should forget their differences and love each other. [v]

You, who have no hands,

embrace everyone.

We, who have hands,

practice untouchability

with our fellow humans.

Is having hands a flaw?

In this powerful poem, Kavikko Abdul Rahman contrasts the act of embracing with the practice of untouchability. The poem creates a profound comparison between nature (specifically, the sky, wind, or vast space) and humans. The phrase "You, who have no hands" refers to a natural force or divine entity that embraces everything without discrimination. For example, the sky covers everyone, the wind touches every person, and the sun shines on all people without

distinction. This represents universal and unconditional acceptance. In contrast, the phrase "We, who have hands" refers to human beings. Despite having the ability to physically and emotionally embrace one another, humans practice "untouchability" and discrimination. This practice, deeply rooted in social hierarchies such as the caste system, involves the deliberate act of separating and alienating certain people. "Is having hands a flaw?" is a piercing rhetorical question that follows. It makes the reader question why a beautiful gift like hands, meant for connection, help, and embrace, is instead used for separation and exclusion. The poet is essentially asking whether our human capacity for action and choice is a curse when it leads us to be less inclusive than a handless, natural force.The poem highlights the deep irony of human behavior: our ability to choose and act often leads us to be less compassionate and universal than the very forces of nature we inhabit. It is a sharp critique of social discrimination and a call for a return to fundamental human decency and universal love.[vi]

Motivational power among youth:

When everyone else was climbing the mountain, he alone descended. "Why are you going down?" I asked. "To go higher," he said. He continued, "Only the seed that falls below rises above. Water gathers in the ups and downs. The heavier side of the scale is lowered. History is made not by those who ascend the throne but by those who descend. Only the descending clouds quenched the earth's thirst. The kite finds peace not while flying but after falling. It is in the descent, not the ascent, that the notes find their harmony. Descending is ecstasy; is that not why the waterfall sings? The one who spreads out might lose sight of the bottom, but the one who descends will find the base. Only ripe fruits fall. Believing that 'up' is always better is your superstition."(pithan p.49-50)[vii]

Roots and Branches: This poem conveys a profound philosophy of life through the metaphor of small seeds. Within a tiny seed lies a mighty tree, and its eventual growth into a grand tree is a blessing of evolution. This symbolises the inherent potential of humans and their capacity to achieve great things over time. The poem explores the challenges a seed faces as it transforms into a plant and then a tree, and how it overcomes these challenges. The five elements themselves are ready to serve the seed's growth, but the seed must break through the soil that covers it. The paths for the seed are its roots, seeking depth and quenching its thirst. It possesses the power to overcome obstacles, signifying that humans must also surpass challenges to reach their goals. Our desires and searches guide us, and the deeper we root ourselves, the higher we can grow. Just as a tree's towering height originates from its unseen taproot, a person's foundation must be deep and firm for them to rise. There are no limits to the roots in the earth or the branches in the sky, and humans can also reach any goal. Just as roots find water in the darkness and branches reach for the stars, we must continue to strive towards our aspirations. (Alapanai 105-107).[viii]

End Notes

1. Tamil poetry loses sufi voice as Kavikko departs:" Indian Express" Article: 03.06.2017.
2. Tamil poet Abdul Rahman, who gave voice to the voiceless, is no longer "The Times of India" Article: 02.06.2017.
3. Tamil poet Abdul Rahman, master of symbolism, rejected Kollywood: Deccan Chronicle. Article. 02.06. 2017.
4. Kavikko Abdul Rahman Passes Away "The Hindu" Article: 02.06.2017.
5. Kavikko Abdul Rahman No more: The Hindu News;03.06.2017.
6. Abdul Rahman.(2024). Palveethi(15th ed.). Chennai: National Publishers.
7. Abdul Rahman.(2024). Neyar Viruppam(15th ed.). Chennai: National Publishers.
8. Abdul Rahman.(1995). Allapanai(11th ed.). Chennai: Universal Publishers.
9. Abdul Rahman.(2022). Piththan(10th ed.). Chennai: Universal Publishers.
10. Abdul Rahman.(1995). Allapanai(11th ed.). Chennai: Universal Publishers.

வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு இயக்கத்தில் தமிழ்நாட்டுப் பெண் போராளிகளின் பங்களிப்பு

ம.ஹரிஹரன்

1942-ஆம் ஆண்டு மகாத்மா காந்தியின் 'செய் அல்லது செத்து மடி' என்ற முழக்கத்துடன் தொடங்கப்பட்ட வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு இயக்கம், இந்திய விடுதலைப் போராட்டத்தின் இறுதிக்கட்டத்தை வேகப்படுத்தியது. இப்போராட்டத்தில் தேசம் முழுவதும் ஆண்களுக்கு நிகராகப் பெண்களும் பங்கேற்றுத் தங்களது வீரத்தையும், நாட்டுப் பற்றையும் வெளிப்படுத்தினர். இந்த ஆய்வு, வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு இயக்கத்தின் போது தமிழ்நாட்டைச் சேர்ந்த பெண் போராளிகள் ஆற்றிய மகத்தான பங்களிப்பை வெளிச்சம் போட்டுக் காட்டுகிறது. மதுரையைச் சேர்ந்த கே.பி. ஜானகி அம்மாள் தொழிலாளர்களைத் திரட்டிப் போராட்டம் நடத்தியதும், பத்மாசினி அம்மாள் ஆங்கிலேய ஆட்சியரைத் துணிவுடன் எதிர்த்து சிறை சென்றதும் குறிப்பிடத்தக்க நிகழ்வுகளாகும். சென்னையைச் சேர்ந்த மஞ்சுபாஷிணி போன்றோர் இரகசியமாகத் துண்டுப் பிரசுரங்களை விநியோகித்தும், தலைமறைவாக இருந்த போராட்ட வீரர்களுக்கு அடைக்கலம் கொடுத்தும் முக்கியப் பங்காற்றினர். ஆண்களைப் போலவே பெண்களும் தடியடி, சிறைவாசம் போன்ற கொடுமைகளைத் துணிச்சலுடன் எதிர்கொண்டனர். இவர்களின் தன்னலமற்ற தியாகமும், தைரியமும் தமிழ்நாட்டில் போராட்டத்தைப் பட்டிதொட்டியெங்கும் பரவச் செய்தது. பெரும்பாலும் அறியப்படாத இந்த வீராங்கனைகளின் பங்களிப்பை வரலாற்றுப் பக்கங்களில் பதிவு செய்வது, விடுதலைப் போராட்டத்தின் முழுமையான பரிமாணத்தை உணர்ந்துகொள்ள இன்றியமையாதது.

குறிச்சொற்கள்: வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு இயக்கம், தமிழ்நாட்டுப் பெண்கள், விடுதலைப் போராட்டம்

சமூகத்தில் பெண்களுக்கு இருந்த தடைகள்

பெண்களுக்கு இருந்த தடைகள் இந்திய சமூக அமைப்பு பெண்களை பல பல பிற்போக்கான வாழ்க்கை முறைக்குள் தள்ளியது குறிப்பாக ஆங்கிலேயர்கள் காலத்தில் *1819*ஆம் ஆண்டு கிறிஸ்துவ அமைப்புகள் கல்கத்தாவில் பெண்களுக்கு பள்ளிகளை துவங்கும் முன்பு பெண்களுக்காக படிக்கும் சுதந்திரம் இல்லை. *1849* ஆம் ஆண்டு கல்கத்தாவில் பெண்களுக்காக பள்ளிகள் துவங்கப்பட்டது பிறகு அண்டர் கமிஷன் உத்தரவின் படி சிறுமிகளுக்கான தொடக்கப்பள்ளிகள் துவக்கப்பட்டது. *1880* களில் தான் பெண்களுக்கான முன்னேற்றம் நிலையான வளர்ச்சியை கண்டது. பெண்கள் பல்கலைக்கழகங்களில் சேர்ந்து கல்வி கற்கும் சூழ்நிலை உருவாகியது. மருத்துவர்களாக பயிற்சி பெறும் சூழ்நிலை உருவாகியது. எழுத்தாளர்கள் உருவானார்கள் மகளிர் மருத்துவ சேவை அமைப்புகள் *1914* முதல் வளர துவங்கியது. விடுதலைப் போராட்டத்தில் படித்த பெண்கள் மட்டுமே அரசியல் சார்ந்த செயல்பாடுகளில் ஈடுபட்டிருந்த காலகட்டத்தில் *1942* ஆம் ஆண்டு வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு இயக்கத்தில் பல கிராமப்புற பெண்களும் இந்திய நாட்டின் விடுதலைக்காக களத்தில் குதித்தது மிக கவனிக்கத்தக்க ஒன்றாகும். *1931* இந்திய மக்கள் தொகை கணக்கெடுப்பின்படி, மதராஸ் மாகாணத்தில் பெண்கள் சுமார் *48-49%* மக்கள் தொகையைக் கொண்டிருந்தனர். பாலின விகிதம்

முழுநேர முனைவர் பட்ட ஆய்வாளர், வரலாற்றுத்துறை, அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், அண்ணாமலைநகர், சிதம்பரம்

(குனுது ணுர்ச்ணுடிணி) ஆண்களை விடக் குறைவாகவே இருந்தது; 1000 ஆண்களுக்கு சுமார் 970-980 பெண்கள் இருந்தனர். பெரும்பாலான பெண்கள் கிராமப்புறங்களில் வசித்தனர்; நகர்புறப் பெண்கள் கல்வி மற்றும் தொழிலில் பங்கேற்கத் தொடங்கியிருந்தாலும், அவர்கள் மிகச் சிறிய சதவீதமாக இருந்தனர்.

1930களில் பெண்களின் எழுத்தறிவு விகிதம் மிகவும் குறைவாக, சுமார் 2-3% மட்டுமே இருந்தது. பிராமணர்கள் மற்றும் உயர்சாதிப் பெண்களுக்கு கல்வி வாய்ப்பு அதிகமாக இருந்தாலும், நடுத்தர சாதி மற்றும் கீழ்சாதிப் பெண்களுக்கு அது மிகக் குறைவு. சமூக சீர்திருத்த இயக்கங்கள் (அரிகோ, தீட்சிதர், சத்தியமூர்த்தி, பெரியார் இயக்கம்) பெண்களுக்கான கல்வியை ஊக்குவிக்கத் தொடங்கின. பெண்களின் முதன்மை இடம் ''வீட்டுத்தலைவி'' என்ற நிலையாகவே இருந்தது. திருமண வயது மிகவும் குறைவு (சுமார் 10-14 வயது). 1929-ல் இடடிடுஞீ ஙுச்ணுாணுாடிச்ஞ்ணு கீணுண்ணுணுர்ச்டிணணு அஞிணு (குச்ணுாஞீச் அஞிணு) வந்த பின்பு, 1930களில் குழந்தை திருமணத்திற்கு எதிரான விழிப்புணர்வு எழத் தொடங்கியது. பெண்களின் நிலை சாதி அடிப்படையில் மாறுபட்டது. உயர்சாதிப் பெண்கள் படிப்பு-பரம்பரைப் பாதுகாப்பு-பாரம்பரிய கலை ஆகிய துறைகளில் தங்கள் இடத்தை வைத்திருந்தனர். கீழ்சாதிப் பெண்கள் அதிகமாக வேளாண் கூலி, வீட்டு வேலை, கைவேலைகளில் ஈடுபட்டனர்.

பெண்கள் களம் கண்ட போராட்டம்

இந்திய விடுதலை போராட்ட வரலாற்றில் வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு இயக்கத்திற்கு முன்பான போராட்டங்கள் பல அரசியல் தலைவர்களின் முயற்சியால் பல அரசியல் சார்ந்த தலைவர்களின் தியாகத்தால் மட்டுமே கட்டமைக்கப்பட்டது. ஆனால் வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு இயக்கம் அனைத்து தரப்பு மக்களும் களத்தில் இறங்கிய போராட்டமாக திருப்புமுனையை ஏற்படுத்திய நிகழ்வாக அறியப்படுகிறது. அதிலும் குறிப்பாக கிராமப்புறத்தில் இருக்கக்கூடிய பல பெண்களும் பங்கு கொண்ட ஒட்டுமொத்தமான மக்கள் திரண்ட போராட்டமாக வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு இயக்கமே வரலாற்றின் வெளிச்சத்தில் அறியப்படுகிறது. இது அரசியல் போராட்ட வரலாற்றில் திருப்புமுனை என்பதை தாண்டிலும் சமூக மாற்றத்தின் ஒரு எழுச்சி என்பதே அடையாளமாக சுட்டிக் காட்ட முடிகிறது பாரதி, பெரியார் போன்ற பல தமிழ்நாடு தலைவர்கள் பெண் விடுதலை பற்றி முழங்கியிருந்தாலும் பெண்கள் களத்திற்கு வந்த காலகட்டம் இதுவே ஆகும். எனவே இது ஒரு சமூக மாற்றத்திற்கான அடையாளம் என்று உணர்ந்து கொள்ள முடிகிறது. மெட்ராஸ் பகுதியில், குறிப்பாக சென்னை, திண்டுக்கல், ராயபுரம், காந்திகிராம் போன்ற இடங்களில் பெண்கள் தேசிய சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்தில் ஆற்றல் வாய்ந்த தலைமைப்பணியை செய்தனர். காந்தியின் ''ஈணி ணிணூ ஈடிஎு'' அழைப்புக்கு பெண்கள் விரிவாக பதிலளித்து, ஆர்ப்பாட்டங்கள், மார்ச்கள், பிகெட்டிங் மற்றும் ஸ்டிரைக் நடவடிக்கைகளில் முன்னணி வகித்தனர். இதனால் தமிழ்நாட்டில் பெண்களின் பங்கு தனித்துவமானது; தேசிய அளவில் பெண்கள் காங்கிரஸ் இயக்கத்தில் 10% பங்குடன் ஈடுபட்டனர்.

வை.மு. கோதைநாயகி

திசம்பர் 1, 1901 - பெப்ரவரி 20, 1960), தமிழகத்தைச் சேர்ந்த ஒரு புதின எழுத்தாளர் ஆவார். துப்பறியும் புதினம் எழுதிய முதல் தமிழ்ப் பெண் எழுத்தாளராவார். மேடைப் பேச்சாளர், கவிஞர், சமூகநல ஊழியர், இதழாசிரியர்,115 புதினங்களை எழுதியவர். தான் வாழ்ந்த 59 ஆண்டுகளில் 35 ஆண்டுகள் எழுத்தே உலகம் என்று இயங்கினார். கோதைநாயகி, திசம்பர் 1, 1901 ஆம் ஆண்டு, செங்கல்பட்டு மாவட்டம், நீர்வளூரில் வாழ்ந்த என்.எஸ். வெங்கடாச்சாரி, பட்டம்மாள் ஆகியோருக்கு இரண்டாவது குழந்தையாகப்

பிறந்தார். வைணவ குடும்பத்தைச் சேர்ந்த இவரைச் சிறு வயதில் கோதை என்றும் ஆண்டாள் என்றும் செல்லமாக அழைத்தனர். பிறந்த ஒரு வயதிலேயே தன் தாயை இழந்தார். அதனால் அவரது பாட்டி வேதவல்லி அம்மாளும், அவரது சிற்றப்பா மனைவியான கனகம்மாளும் அவரை வளர்த்தனர். வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு பத்திரிகையாளராக, நாவலாசிரியராக மட்டுமிருந்த வை.மு.கோ.வுக்கு அன்னி பெசன்ட் அம்மையார் மூலமாகத் தேசபக்தர், சமூகத் தொண்டர் அம்புஜம் அம்மாளின் நட்பு ஏற்பட்டது. தந்தை சீனிவாச ஐயங்கார் இல்லத்துக்கு 1925-ஆம் ஆண்டு மகாத்மா காந்தி வருகை தந்த போது வை.மு.கோதை நாயகி அம்மாள் காந்தியைச் சந்தித்தார். இந்நிகழ்வு வை.மு.கோவின் வாழ்க்கையில் பெரும் திருப்பத்தை ஏற்படுத்தியது. காந்தியின் எளிமையான தோற்றமும், ஆராவாரமற்ற அவரது உறுதியான நாவன்மையும் அம்மையாரை மிகவும் கவர்ந்தது. பட்டாடையே உடுத்திப் பழக்கப்பட்ட வை.மு.கோ. அது முதல் கதர் புடவையையே அணியத்தொடங்கினார். மங்கல நாணைத் தவிர ஆடம்பரமான அணிகலன்களைத் தவிர்த்து, வேறு நகைகளை அணிவதில்லை என்று உறுதி பூண்டு அதையும் இறுதி வரையில் கடைப்பிடித்தார். பின்பு அம்புஜம் அம்மையார், ருக்மணி இலட்சுமிபதி, வசுமதி இராமசாமி ஆகியவர்களுடன் இணைந்து சமூக சேவையில் ஈடுபட்டார். நகர்ப்புறங்களில் மாணவிகள் மற்றும் பெண்களை ஒருங்கிணைத்து, வை.மு. கோதைநாயகி பிரச்சாரக் கூட்டங்களை நடத்தினார். அவரது தலைமையில் பெண்கள் கூட்டமைப்புகள் உருவாக்கப்பட்டு, வெள்ளையர் ஆட்சிக்கு எதிரான விழிப்புணர்வு பரப்பப்பட்டது. அவர் பத்திரிகைகள் மூலமாகவும் மக்களைத் திரட்டினார். காவல்துறை சோதனைகளில் கைது செய்யப்பட்டு, பலமுறை சிறையில் அடைக்கப்பட்டார். அவரது வீடு தேடப்பட்டு, அவரது குடும்பத்தினர் மீதும் அழுத்தங்கள் கொடுக்கப்பட்டன. சிறைவாசம், விசாரணைகள் மற்றும் தனிமைப்படுத்தலால் மன உளைச்சலை அனுபவித்தார். அவரது உடல்நலம் பாதிக்கப்பட்ட போதிலும், போராட்ட உறுதியை விடவில்லை.

முடிவுரை

கிரிப்ஸ் குழுவின் தோல்வியை எடுத்து காந்தியின் முழக்கம் நாட்டின் மூளை முடுக்கெல்லாம் பிரிட்டிஷ் ஏகாதிபத்தியத்தை எதிர்த்து ஒரே குரலாக இருந்தது தமிழ்நாட்டில் காமராஜர் வேலூர் உபயத்துல்லா திருவண்ணாமலை அண்ணாமலை சி.என்.முத்துராமலிங்க முதலியார் எம் பக்தவச்சலம், சத்தியமூர்த்தி போன்ற தலைவர்கள் பல முறைகளில் போராட்டங்களை நடத்தினார்கள் அதனால் கைது செய்யப்பட்டார்கள் பாம்பே போன்ற பகுதிகளில் சிறை வைக்க பட்டர்கள் மேலும் பல தலைவர்கள் வேலூர் சிறையில் அடைக்கப்பட்டார்கள். நாட்டில் சிறைச்சாலைகள் பற்றாக்குறை ஏற்படும் அளவிற்கு பலர் சிறைகளில் அடைக்கப்பட்டார்கள். மாணவ இயக்கங்களும் பல பேரணிகளை நடத்தினர் நாடெங்கும் வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு என்ற முழக்கம் அதிர்ந்தது பிரிட்டிஷ்காரர்களின் நிறுவனங்கள் அடித்து நொறுக்கப்பட்டன அவர்களின் ஸ்தாபனங்கள் கொளுத்தப்பட்டன. இந்திய நாட்டின் சுதந்திரப் போராட்டம் என்பது 1920 களில் இருந்து தீவிரமடைந்தாலும் பெண்கள் கலந்துகொண்டு அரசியல் சார்ந்த முன்னெடுப்புகளை நிகழ்த்துவது என்பது மிக அரிதாகவே 1920 முதல் 1930 வரையிலான காலகட்டத்தில் அறியப்பட்டது ஏனெனில் படித்த வசதி வாய்ப்பு படைத்த பெண்கள் மட்டுமே பொது வாழ்விற்கு வரும் அளவிற்கு அரசியல் சார்ந்து சிந்திக்கும் அளவிற்கு ஞானம் பெற்றிருந்தார்கள் ஏனெனில் பெண்கள் பலரும் வீட்டுக்குள் பூட்டி வைக்கப்படும் பொம்மைகளாகவே அதுவரை இருந்தார்கள். பெண்கள் எழுச்சி அடைந்து சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்திற்கு தங்களை ஈடுபடுத்திக் கொண்டு இந்தியாவின் வரலாற்றுப் போக்கை மாற்றி அமைத்து நிகழ்வாக வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு இயக்கம் குறிப்பிடப்படுகிறது அதில் பெண்கள்

வெகுவாக கலந்து கொண்டு தங்களது எதிர்ப்பினை தமிழ்நாட்டில் காட்டி இருப்பதை இந்த ஆய்வு பதிவு செய்திருக்கிறது.

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Elites, Caste, and Social Justice in the Madras Presidency (1900–1930)

Dr. V. K. Arunagiri

The Emergence of a New Society

The early twentieth century marked a significant transformation in Indian society. Longstanding social anomalies were challenged through reform, shaped by both indigenous impulses and Western influences. This process, often described as "modernisation," was facilitated primarily by English education, which introduced Western knowledge and values, promoted the study of Indian languages, and encouraged the birth of prose literature.[1]Prose soon replaced poetry as the chief medium of expression, serving as a powerful vehicle for new ideas. The infusion of Western thought altered the intellectual climate so profoundly that Tennyson's dictum, "the old order changeth yielding place to new," found practical expression in India.[1]

One of the most far-reaching results of Western contact was the rise of a Westernised middle class. Unlike the older middle strata, fragmented by caste and locality, this new elite was united by education and shared aspirations. Merchants and financiers such as Nandkumar, Anandarangam Pillai, and PachiyappaMudaliar were among the earliest beneficiaries.[1] Later, university students, teachers, barristers, journalists, and wealthy traders formed what M.N. Srinivas called the "New Elite." Though constituting less than one per cent of the population, they wielded influence far beyond their numbers. Lord Dufferin described them aptly as a "microscopic minority".[1]Lawyers in particular shaped the values of this class, seeing the "Rule of Law" as the foundation of society. The reforms of Lord Ripon in 1882–83, introducing elected local self-government, provided them vital training in administration. Leaders such as Rajagopalachari, Patel, Nehru, T.M. Nair, and TheagarayaChetty gained their earliest experience here, heralding a new social and political order.[1]

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The Composition of the New Elite

The rise of the New Elite in the early twentieth century cut across caste boundaries, from the highest Brahmin to the lowest Pariah. Its intellectual leaders came from diverse backgrounds, though a significant proportion were drawn from high-caste Brahmins. Many among them consciously renounced caste distinctions, emphasising equality. Reformers such as Keshab Chandra Sen of the BrahmoSamaj, Vivekananda, the champion of a renewed Hinduism, and Aurobindo, the philosopher of modern India, belonged to non-Brahmin communities, while Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna, and the Tagores, though Brahmins, openly denounced caste.[1] Even in South India, leaders such as Dr. T.M. Nair, Sankaran Nair, and TheagarayaChetty emerged as outspoken critics of caste orthodoxy. Their contributions marked a significant step toward dismantling entrenched social hierarchies.[1]

Nevertheless, the disproportionate representation of Brahmins within this class was undeniable. Scholars such as Edward Shils, B.B. Misra, and Selig S. Harrison observed that educated Brahmins dominated the civil service under British rule. Madrasi and Bengali Brahmins in particular became highly visible in administration, education, and politics, occupying a majority of influential positions.[1] Their dominance created resentment among other communities, who began to mobilise for a share of new opportunities.

As M.N. Srinivas noted, the backward class movements often carried a strong element of anti-Brahminism. Thus, the very process of Westernisation that created a modern educated elite also gave rise to new tensions. While it produced positive forces such as nationalism and reform, it simultaneously generated negative outcomes in the form of communalism, casteism, and regionalism.[1]

The Caste Structure in the Madras Presidency:

The Brahmins

The Madras Presidency was marked by conservatism and deep-rooted caste distinctions. Among Hindus, society was broadly divided into Brahmins, non-Brahmins, and untouchables.[1] Brahmins, though a small proportion of the population, exercised disproportionate influence. They maintained exclusivity through agraharam settlements, distinctive speech, dress, and diet. Their orthodoxy fostered a sense of superiority, vividly captured by Abbe J.A. Dubois, who described Brahmins as convinced of their inherent nobility above all others.[1] Their dominance stemmed from ritual status, landholding, and control of village administration.

In the Telugu region, Niyogi Brahmins of the Northern Circars sustained power as landlords and Karnams, while Desastha Brahmins monopolised district administration in Guntur. In Tamil areas, Smarthas (Aiyers) and Sri Vaishnavas (Iyengars) retained ritual authority and prospered economically, concentrated especially in the Cauvery delta. Tanjore, with its centres of Brahminical learning and Vedic scholarship, was considered their citadel.[1]

In Malabar, the conservative Nambudiris held pre-eminence, while Pattar Brahmins of Travancore and Cochin, benefiting from early access to English education, entered princely service as clerks, accountants, and landholders. Despite privileges, Brahmins faced restrictions: scriptural injunctions forbade manual labour, limiting them to priesthood, land ownership, or state service. Increasingly, Western-educated Brahmins left their agraharams for employment in schools, colleges, and offices, symbolising their adaptation to colonial modernity.[1]

The Non-Brahmins

The category of "non-Brahmins" encompassed a diverse range of castes—landholders, cultivators, traders, artisans, and service groups—who ranked below Brahmins but above untouchables.[1] The famous *Non-Brahmin Manifesto* of 1916 extended this identity to include Muslims, Christians, and depressed classes, reflecting its broad political reach.[1]

Among trading communities, the NattukottaiChettis stood out for their maritime trade, temple endowments, and philanthropy. BeriChettis produced figures such as P. TheagarayaChetty, while Komatis styled themselves as Vaishyas and organised through the Arya VaisyaMahasabha to petition the

colonial state.Vaniyars, engaged in oil trade, also claimed Vaishya status.[1]

Cultivating castes such as Vellalas of Tamil Nadu, Reddis of Andhra, and Kammas of the Godavari–Krishna delta consolidated power as landowners. The BalijaNaidus, multilingual and enterprising, were active in trade and politics, while the Nairs of Malabar combined martial traditions with advances in female literacy, making their region the most educationally progressive in South India .[1]

Artisan castes—goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, and stonecutters—known collectively as Kammalans or Panchalas, occupied a respected position due to their indispensability in agrarian life. Collectively, these non-Brahmin groups later mobilised politically against Brahmin dominance, laying the groundwork for the Justice Party.[1]

The Untouchables

At the bottom of the hierarchy were the depressed classes, variously called untouchables, Panchamas, Adi-Dravidas, and later Scheduled Castes. In Tamil areas, they were Pariahs; in Malabar, Pulaiyas; in Andhra, Malas and Madigas. Segregated into parasheris, they endured humiliating restrictions, from denial of temple entry to prohibitions on dress, education, and housing.[1]

In Malabar, untouchability was practised with extreme severity, where even proximity was considered polluting. In Tamil Nadu, Pariahs lived in conditions resembling medieval European serfdom, bound as hereditary slaves to landlords. They performed essential but degrading work such as scavenging and irrigation maintenance. Social restrictions extended to forbidding them jewellery, modern clothing, or umbrellas; women were denied the right to cover their upper bodies. Education was explicitly barred.[1]

Despite enduring severe oppression, their labour remained integral to agrarian production. Reformers such as Gandhi, who introduced the term *Harijan* in 1933, missionaries who expanded educational opportunities, and a number of welfare associations—including the Depressed Class Union, the Pariah MahajanaSabha, and the Poor School Society—sought to improve their condition. Nevertheless, even by the 1920s, their political representation was minimal, reflecting a long-standing legacy of servility deeply entrenched within the caste order.[1]

The Caste as the Idiom of Social Mobility

In the early twentieth century, the political landscape of South India underwent significant change. Communal organisations proliferated across major cities and towns, functioning as pressure groups that sought concessions and privileges from the Government of Fort St. George. The Minto–Morley Reforms further encouraged this trend by positioning the government as a patron of caste and community interests, which in turn multiplied political activities.[1]

Alongside caste associations, landlords, zamindars, traders, factory workers, Muslims, and Christians also organised themselves into powerful groups. As a result, provincial politics in Madras became crowded with competing communal and sectional interests. This development, as contemporary observers noted, profoundly shaped South Indian political history and accelerated the shift toward new principles of politicalorganisation and relationships.[1]

The Formation of Caste Organisations

The early twentieth century saw the rapid proliferation of caste associations in the Madras Presidency. Several factors contributed to this development, most notably the spread of modern transport and communication. The expansion of railways, roads, and canals connected previously isolated communities, enabling greater social mobility and interaction. Towns and cities became centres of economic, educational, and administrative activity, where new forms of collective identity could take shape.

Literacy and the vernacular press also played a crucial role. Newspapers and pamphlets circulated reformist ideas across regions, allowing caste groups to develop a wider sense of solidarity. As M.N. Srinivas observed, these associations created new networks that shattered traditional parochialism and expanded the horizons of caste politics.[1]Trading communities were

among the first to organise. Komatis, Nadars, Devangas, and BeriChettismobilised their kinship ties to advance business interests while lobbying for legislative representation. Such associations also sponsored social reform, establishing schools, student hostels, and scholarships to secure educational advancement for their members.[1]

The colonial government, particularly after the late nineteenth century, unintentionally fostered this growth. Officials increasingly entertained petitions framed in caste terms, encouraging groups to articulate their demands collectively. By 1917, Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State for India, received multiple caste-based memorials requesting political concessions.[1]Peasant communities such as the Reddis, Kammas, and Gounders soon followed, forming associations to challenge Brahmin dominance in education and public service. Although often parochial, these organisations provided platforms for social mobility and mutual support, resembling freemason-style brotherhoods in their activities.[1]As R. Suntharalingam observed, caste associations became a defining feature of South Indian politics in the twentieth century, laying the groundwork for the Justice Party's emergence and shaping the trajectory of non-Brahmin mobilisation.[1]

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Fish Curing Yards in Colonial and Contemporary Tamil Nadu – with Special Reference to Tuticorin

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The practice of curing fish by salting, drying, smoking and occasionally boiling has been an indispensable method of preservation along the Tamil Nadu coast. For centuries, these techniques ensured the movement of marine protein into inland markets where fresh fish was unavailable. In the late nineteenth century, the colonial state intervened to formalize and regulate this traditional sector through the establishment of curing yards. These yards reflected the convergence of indigenous food practices with colonial imperatives of revenue and export potential.

Tuticorin, already renowned for its pearl fisheries and maritime trade, became important for the cured fish industry. By the early twentieth century, the Madras Fisheries Department sought to modernize operations through improved infrastructure and experimental preservation methods. Yet, despite these initiatives, the persistence of poor hygiene and infrastructural deficits has marked both historical and contemporary trajectories. This paper offers a descriptive analysis of the establishment, operation and current condition of fish curing yards in Tamil Nadu.

Early Development Under Colonial Rule

The first regulated curing yards were established in 1874 under the Madras Presidency.[1] These institutions were justified as a response to criticisms of unhygienic curing practices, which allegedly compromised the quality of fish sold to inland consumers. The colonial state offered concessions in the form of duty-free salt and built regulated spaces with concrete drying floors, brine tanks and storage sheds.1

Beyond concerns of sanitation, curing yards also reflected the fiscal priorities of the colonial administration. Salt was one of the most heavily taxed commodities, yet fisheries were granted exemptions to encourage production of cured fish as an 'essential foodstuff' for agrarian labourers across the Deccan.1 The colonial administration simultaneously sought to regulate traditional practices, discourage what officials called 'native indiscipline' and expand exports to Ceylon and Southeast Asia.1

Tuticorin soon emerged as the flagship centre of this experiment. Its existing maritime networks and commercial infrastructure facilitated the rapid circulation of cured fish into regional and international markets.[1] The yards became experimental grounds where colonial officials such as James Hornell promoted trials in boiling, smoking and salting as part of a modernization agenda.[1]

Operations and Socio-Economic Role

Curing yards were open yards where fish were salted, spread out on drying floors and occasionally based on the variety and nature of fish it is smoked before dispatch. Employment was extensive, especially among the fishermen community women handled sorting, salting and drying.1 Curing thus became not merely an industrial process but a form of community livelihood.

By the early twentieth century, certain improvements were introduced. Cement tanks for brining, raised drying platforms and running water supplies were promoted in order to 'rationalize' production.1 Yet traditional knowledge remained central, with local communities continuing to rely on generational expertise in salting proportions, drying techniques and market preferences.

The cured fish trade contributed significantly to regional consumption. Large quantities were dispatched inland by rail and bullock cart, providing affordable protein to populations far removed from the coast.[1]Export also remained important, with Tuticorin's cured fish reaching Burma, Malaya and Ceylon.[1]

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Socially, curing yards reinforced new patterns of labour organization. Communities like the Nadars of Tuticorin expanded their commercial role through engagement with fisheries and curing activities, linking caste mobility with emerging colonial markets.[1]

Contemporary Relevance, Challenges and Suggestions

Despite the growth of mechanized fishing and cold storage, curing remains an essential preservation method along the Tamil Nadu coast. It continues to supply rural and inland markets where refrigeration remains limited.[1] However, persistent sanitation problems have undermined the industry's reputation.

Studies indicate that water used for washing fish and preparing brine often fails to meet Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) norms, with high microbial loads of coliforms and fungi detected.1Microbial contamination is frequently found in curing tanks, soil and on the hands of workers, reflecting limited awareness and inadequate training.1

These sanitary challenges reduce the shelf life, safety and export competitiveness of cured fish. While Tuticorin maintains relatively higher standards, the broader industry struggles to adapt to rising expectations of food safety and international trade requirements.1

To improve the condition of fish curing yards, it is important to build better sanitation facilities such as clean water supply, hygienic brine tanks, and raised drying platforms. Workers should be given regular training on hygiene and safe handling of fish so that the quality of cured fish improves. The government can support this by offering subsidies and technical help to upgrade the yards, while also keeping a close watch on quality standards. Finally, curing yards should be connected with modern marketing cooperatives, which will make them more competitive in both local and international markets.

Conclusion

The history of fish curing yards in Tamil Nadu illustrates both continuity and change. Established in the colonial period as regulated spaces for fish preservation, they became vital for food security, employment, and export. Tuticorin emerged as the emblematic centre, combining traditional knowledge with state intervention. Despite modernization efforts, curing yards today continue to grapple with poor sanitation and infrastructural deficiencies. The future viability of this traditional industry depends on sustained government policy, worker awareness, and infrastructural renewal. As a case study, fish curing yards shed light not only on the history of fisheries but also on the broader entanglements of colonial governance, local livelihoods, and contemporary food security.

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Community Participation in Sustainable Ecotourism: A Critical Analysis of Ecotourism in Dindigul District

S.Saroon Begum

Eco tourism, defined as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people, is a burgeoning sector globally. In India, destinations like the Dindigul district, with its rich biodiversity and scenic landscape, offer immense potential. However, without active participation of the local community, ecotourism can lead to negative socio-economic and environmental impacts. This paper investigates the effectiveness of community involvement Dindigul ecotourism model and identifies key area for improvement. This paper critically examines the role of community participation in developing sustainable ecotourism in the Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu. The paper analyses the opportunities and challenge of involving local communities on ecotourism sites like Kodaikanal, Thandikkudi, Pazhani and Sirumalai hills. It argues that while community engagement is crucial for the ecological and economic success of ecotourism, current initiatives face significant hurdles, including equitable benefit distribution, infrastructure deficits and balancing conservation with commercial interest.[1] The paper concludes that a more historic participatory and well-regulated approach is necessary for ecotourism to be truly sustainable and beneficial to both the environment and local populations.

Community Participation: A Framework for Sustainability

Community participations is recognized as a key pillar for successful ecotourism. In Dindigul, initiatives are being implemented to involve local communities and stakeholders. Community participation in ecotourism can take various forms, from direct involvement in service provision (homestays, guides) to ownership of tourism enterprises and decision-making roles in conservation efforts. This model not only ensures that benefits stay within the community but also leverages local knowledge for effective resource management and conservation. In Dindigul, initiatives by government bodies like the Tamil Nadu Forest Department and non-governmental organizations like NABARD have focused on empowering localcommunities. These efforts include training programs, establishing eco-development committees, and promoting community-managed trekking routes and homestays.

The Ministry of Tourism has organized workshops to train and sensitize homestay and bed Breakfast owners in kodaikanal .These programs focus on professional standards, hygiene and while promoting sustainable practices. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, in collaboration with local organizations and the forest department, has launched ecotourism projects in Sirumalai Hills.[2] These initiatives, like the one at Siru-ula, aim to create a sustainable travel culture and reduce carbon footprints. Directly involving the community in managing trekking routes and providing Services. The Tamil Nadu Forest department, under the Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and greening project has identified ecotourism destinations with a participatory approach involving local communities and institution. This indicates a policy level Commitment to community engagement.

Critical Analysis and Challenges

Despite the positive steps, ecotourism in Dindigul faces a number of challenges:

1. Inequitable Benefit Sharing: While tourism brings revenue, the benefits often don't trickle down to all

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community members. A significant portion may be captured by external investors or a select few local elites, leading to increased economic disparity within the community.[3]

2. Infrastructure Deficiencies: The lack of proper roads, sanitation facilities, and waste management systems in many ecotourism areas of Dindigul negatively impacts both the tourist experience andImpacts both the tourist experience and the local environment. Waste management is a critical concern, especially in sensitive ecological zones.[4]
3. Balancing Conservation and Commercialization: The increase in tourist footfall, particularly in ecologically fragile areas, poses a threat to biodiversity. There is a continuous struggle to balance the need for revenue generation with the imperative of protecting the natural environment.[5]
4. Lack of Authentic Participation: In some cases, community participation is merely a superficial exercise. Locals may be employed in low-wage jobs without having a real say in the management or direction of the ecotourism initiatives.[6]

Conclusion

Ecotourism in Dindigul district holds significant promise, but its long-term success hinges on genuine and equitable communityPromise, but its long-term success hinges on genuine and equitable community participation. For a truly sustainable model, the following recommendations are crucial:

- Empowerment through Capacity Building: Beyond basic training, provide local communities with the skills and resources to manage ecotourism enterprises independently.
- Establish Fair-Trade Tourism Models: Implement policies that ensure a significant portion of the tourism revenue is reinvested in community development projects, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure.
- Develop Sustainable Infrastructure: Prioritize the development of environmentally-friendly infrastructure, including effective waste management and eco-friendly transportation, to mitigate the ecological footprint of tourism.
- Strengthen Governance and Regulation:Create and enforce regulations that protect local communities from exploitation and ensure all ecotourism ventures, including private ones, adhere to sustainable and ethical practices.[7]

By addressing these challenges, Dindigul can transform its ecotourism sector into a powerful tool for environmental conservation and inclusive economic growth, serving as a model for other regions.

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The Foundations of Medical Education in the Coimbatore Region during the Colonial Period - A historical study

S.Sivakumar

Introduction

The study of medical education in colonial India has attracted considerable scholarly attention, particularly in relation to the tension between Western medicine and indigenous traditions. Within this larger framework, the Coimbatore region, part of the Madras Presidency, offers a valuable case study. Known historically as Kongu Nadu, Coimbatore emerged as a significant center of agrarian prosperity, missionary activity, and administrative importance under British rule. Yet, while its economic and industrial history has been documented, the history of medical education in the region remains understudied.

Before colonial intervention, medical knowledge in Coimbatore was largely sustained by practitioners of Siddha and Ayurveda, village healers, and temple-based cures. These systems emphasized holistic approaches and were closely tied to cultural and religious life. With the establishment of colonial administration in the nineteenth century, however, Western medical practices began to penetrate the region. The British introduced dispensaries and hospitals, largely motivated by the need to safeguard European officials and troops stationed in the district. At the same time, the spread of epidemics such as smallpox and plague prompted the extension of vaccination drives and public health measures.

In parallel, missionary organizations, particularly the London Missionary Society, introduced medical services as part of their evangelical and humanitarian agenda. Mission hospitals and training programs for compounders and nurses provided limited opportunities for locals, especially women, to enter medical service. While Coimbatore lacked a medical college during the colonial era, these early initiatives established the foundation for the post-independence expansion of formal medical education.

Indigenous Medical Traditions and Early Colonial Encounters

The history of medical education in the Coimbatore region during the colonial era cannot be understood without first acknowledging the deeply rooted indigenous medical systems that preceded British intervention. Situated within the Kongu Nadu cultural zone, Coimbatore was home to rich traditions of healing, including Siddha, Ayurveda, and diverse folk medical practices that were embedded in religious and community life. These systems provided the foundation upon which colonial and missionary efforts sought to implant Western medicine. The Siddha system, with its origins in Tamil culture, was particularly prevalent in Coimbatore and neighboring districts. Siddha practitioners, or vaidyars, often derived their knowledge through hereditary transmission, palm-leaf manuscripts, and apprenticeship

Their treatments involved herbal remedies, mineral compounds, dietary regulation, and spiritual practices. Ayurveda, though more prominent in northern and western India, was also practiced in Kongu Nadu, especially through traveling physicians and learned brahmins. In addition to these formalized traditions, folk healing formed an essential part of Coimbatore's medical culture. Village healers relied on locally available herbs, rituals, and magico-religious practices to treat common ailments. Diseases such as smallpox were often addressed through propitiation of local deities, while midwives played an indispensable role in childbirth and women's healthcare. Thus, prior to colonial intrusion, the medical landscape of Coimbatore was pluralistic, combining ritual, herbal, and textual traditions.

With the establishment of British administration in Coimbatore, colonial officials began documenting the health profile of the region. The British were initially

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ambivalent toward indigenous medical systems: while they acknowledged the popularity and accessibility of Siddha and Ayurveda, they dismissed these traditions as "unscientific" when compared to Western medicine. Colonial reports frequently described Coimbatore as a district vulnerable to epidemics, particularly smallpox and cholera, which disrupted agrarian productivity and threatened the health of European officials and soldiers. This concern prompted the introduction of vaccination campaigns and rudimentary dispensaries by the early nineteenth century

Medical institutions in Coimbatore were instrumental in managing epidemics such as cholera and smallpox, as well as providing relief during famines. Gazette notifications from the 1876–78 famine highlight the establishment of temporary hospitals and medical relief camps in South Arcot and Coimbatore districts. These primary sources reveal the administrative strategies and challenges faced by colonial authorities in delivering healthcare during crises.

Colonial and Missionary Initiatives in Medical Education

The nineteenth century witnessed a gradual but significant transformation in the healthcare and medical education landscape of the Coimbatore region. Unlike Madras city, which had the distinction of housing the first medical college in India (1835), Coimbatore did not possess a formal institution for training physicians during the colonial period. Nevertheless, the region became a site where colonial and missionary initiatives introduced Western medical practices, trained subordinate staff, and laid the foundations for future institutional development. The British administration introduced dispensaries and hospitals in Coimbatore primarily to serve the needs of soldiers, European officials, and revenue-generating labor populations. The earliest hospitals were attached to military cantonments and district headquarters, with limited services extended to local inhabitants. By the mid-nineteenth century, government reports noted the establishment of civil dispensaries in Coimbatore town and neighboring taluks. Alongside hospitals, the colonial state introduced vaccination programs to combat smallpox, one of the most devastating diseases in South India.

Vaccinators and compounders were trained locally under the supervision of medical officers of the Madras Presidency. While these initiatives were not equivalent to full-fledged medical education, they represented early efforts to create a cadre of Western-trained health assistants. Missionary organizations played a particularly influential role in disseminating Western medicine and promoting rudimentary forms of medical education in Coimbatore. The London Missionary Society established mission hospitals and dispensaries in the region during the nineteenth century, often combining healthcare with evangelical work. These hospitals did not merely provide medical services; they also became centers of training for nurses, midwives, and compounders. Missionaries emphasized the training of women in nursing, as they could reach female patients who were often restricted by cultural norms from consulting male doctors. This was a significant step toward integrating women into medical service in Coimbatore, although opportunities remained limited in scale.

Since no medical college existed in Coimbatore during the colonial era, the focus remained on subordinate medical education. Training programs were designed for compounders, dressers, and vaccinators, who assisted European doctors in dispensaries and hospitals. Instruction was largely practical, emphasizing drug preparation, bandaging, and basic surgery. Such training reflected the broader colonial policy of medical hierarchy, where Western-educated European doctors occupied the top tier, while Indian assistants performed subordinate roles. Nevertheless, these subordinate staff became crucial mediators of medical knowledge in rural Coimbatore. In the process, local assistants received on-the-job training in public health methods, sanitation engineering, and epidemic control. Although these initiatives were motivated by imperial concerns—protecting European lives and maintaining revenue productivity—they inadvertently provided Coimbatore with a generation of locally trained health workers. These men and women, while not formally educated in universities, became the first cohort of Western-trained

medical personnel in the district. Colonial and missionary initiatives in Coimbatore during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries laid the groundwork for medical education, albeit in limited and hierarchical forms. Through dispensaries, vaccination campaigns, and mission hospitals, Western medicine gained institutional presence in the district. While formal medical colleges were absent, the training of subordinate staff and nurses represented a crucial step in familiarizing the local population with Western medical practices. These developments ensured that by the time of independence, Coimbatore was prepared to expand its medical education infrastructure more systematically.

Legacy and Impact of Colonial Medical Education in Coimbatore

The subordinate training of compounders, vaccinators, and nurses in Coimbatore created a foundation of local health personnel who bridged the gap between colonial officials and rural populations. These individuals, although excluded from higher levels of medical education, were instrumental in spreading familiarity with Western medical practices. Their presence made it possible for independent India to quickly expand public health programs and establish new medical institutions, such as the Coimbatore Medical College (1966). Missionary hospitals also left behind enduring institutions. Facilities set up by the London Missionary Society and other Christian missions continued to operate after independence, becoming important centers of healthcare and training. These hospitals provided both infrastructure and a model for combining education with service. Colonial medical education in Coimbatore, though limited, offered new forms of social mobility. Training as a dresser or compounder provided stable employment and a degree of prestige within local communities. Nursing initiatives, particularly those focused on women, helped challenge existing gender norms by introducing women into semi-professional healthcare roles.

The duality of colonial medicine in Coimbatore is evident, while designed primarily to safeguard European officials, soldiers, and revenue interests, it also introduced local populations to new forms of training and healthcare. Public health campaigns, mission hospitals, and subordinate training programs may have been limited in scope, but they familiarized the region with Western medical structures. In this sense, colonial medical education was both an instrument of imperial control and a seed for regional progress. It institutionalized hierarchies but also created the groundwork for Coimbatore's later emergence as a center of medical education and healthcare in Tamil Nadu.

Conclusion

The development of medical education in colonial Coimbatore was neither linear nor comprehensive, yet it was foundational. The evolution of medical education in colonial Coimbatore was foundational yet uneven. Indigenous systems—Siddha, Ayurveda, and folk practices—prevailed before British intervention, but colonial dispensaries, hospitals, and vaccination campaigns gradually introduced Western medicine. Missionary initiatives, particularly by the London Missionary Society, expanded training opportunities for nurses, assistants, and women, fostering early professionalization. While these efforts reinforced hierarchies and marginalized traditional systems, they also produced locally trained personnel and familiarized communities with Western medical practices. These colonial precedents laid the essential groundwork for Coimbatore Medical College (1966) and the region's emergence as a modern hub of medical education and healthcare.

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A Study on Pottery Classification and Making Techniques in Salem Region

K Karneshwaran

Introduction

Pottery is an invaluable resource for archaeologists. Because it is durable and was widely used, it offers a unique and comprehensive look into ancient civilizations. It reveals details about people's social, economic, and personal lives in a way that other artifacts often do not. One of the most critical functions of pottery was for storage and funerary, which became vital with the rise of agriculture and the need to preserve extra food. This widespread use makes ceramics a key "index" for understanding many civilizations. By analyzing a piece of pottery's clay and decorations, archaeologists can determine where it was made, how it was manufactured, and its purpose. They also use advanced scientific techniques like spectroscopic studies, petrographic observations, and mineralogical analyses to answer complex questions about ancient cultures.

During the Sangam Age both literary texts and archaeological findings show how the Sangam people used pottery in their daily lives, from cooking, storing water to collecting grain and funeral practices. Excavations have uncovered many different types of pots, including sarcophagus and Urn. These discoveries provide valuable insights into the cultural and social practices of the time. Excavation reports from this period reveal a wide range of pottery types, such as Black ware, Red ware, Black and Red ware, Russet coated ware, Black slipped ware, Red slipped ware, Black polished ware, Red polished ware, urns, and miniature pots.

Pottery has been in use in Tamil Nadu since the Sangam period and continues to be prevalent today. Evidence for this enduring tradition can be found in Sangam literature and archaeological excavations. Sangam literature often serves as a valuable resource for archaeology. Works such as Maduraikkanci, Netunalvatai, Purananuru, Akanaṉūṟu, Pathirruppaththu, Ainkurnuru, Kuruntokai, Natṟiṇai, and others provide literary evidence of the Sangam people's use of pottery. The enduring popularity of ceramics in contemporary times is attributed to people's ongoing interest in the craft and the continuous innovations it has undergone.

Area of Study

Salem District is located on the extreme north of Tamil Nadu, mostly bordered by Karnataka State, Salem District was officially established in 1772. Geographically, it is located between 11°14’ and 12°53’ North latitude and 77°44’ and 78°50’ East longitude.

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The district is bordered by several regions in North Dharmapuri District, in South Tiruchirappalli (Trichy) and Namakkal Districts in East Kallakurichi and Perambalur Districts, in West Erode District and the state of Karnataka. Salem's landscape is defined by its many hills and is surrounded by mountains. The district has a rich cultural history, with roots in the ancient Kongu Nadu region.

Pottery Making

There are two primary methods for creating pottery by the use of wheels and handmade pottery. Handmade pottery like large jars, is often shaped using techniques such as coiling and pinching. The pinching method involves shaping a lump of clay from the center outward to form the desired vessel. Wheel-made pottery is created using a potter's wheel. This technique typically results in thinner, more refined vessels with evenly spaced grooves. It was often used for making higher-quality pottery. After a pot has been formed and is partially dry, it undergoes several finishing processes.

Shaping and Finishing: Techniques like scraping are used to smooth the pottery's surface and remove uneven areas. The beating or padding method uses a wooden paddle and a stone to beat the clay into its final shape and size.

Surface Treatments: A thin layer of liquid clay called slip is applied to the pot's surface for color and a smoother finish. Common slip colors include red, orange, and black. Burnishing is a polishing process that uses a stone or a piece of pottery to create a shiny, glazed appearance.

Decoration: Pottery is often decorated with two types of ornamentation: painted designs and surface effects. Painted designs include geometric shapes, animals, and wavy lines. Surface effects are created by techniques such as salt glazing, which involves adding salt during firing to produce a unique cracked surface. Other designs are incised or carved directly into the clay with tools, creating patterns or perforations.

Firing Method

For pottery making various firing methods were included; which includes the open kiln firing method, inverted firing method and firing at the reduced condition. These methods and the various techniques employed in pottery making are shown by the available pottery.

Open kiln firing is a basic method where pots are stacked and covered with flammable materials like straw and dung. The pots are directly exposed to the flames, and the specific results, such as color and finish, depend on the kiln's atmospheric conditions, including whether it's an oxidizing or reducing environment. The placement of the pots can also affect the outcome, as seen in inverted and straight firing techniques.

Firing in a Reducing Condition: This method fires pots in an environment with little to no oxygen. The pots are not directly exposed to the flames. This lack of oxygen causes the pottery to turn black or gray, and this process is responsible for the creation of ancient black, gray, and black slipped wares.

Inverted Firing: Used to create black and red pottery, this technique involves placing pots upside-down in a firing platform. The pot's exposed parts (the body, neck, and base) turn red from the direct flames. However, the rim, which is concealed in the slot, turns black due to limited oxygen. The inside of the pot is also filled with combustible material, making the interior consistently black.

Straight Firing: Similar to inverted firing, this method also produces black and red pottery. The main difference is that the pots are placed right-side up in the slots. This causes the hidden base of the pot to turn black while the rest of the pot turns red. The interior, filled with combustible material, also remains black.

Saggar Firing Saggar firing is a method that uses a closed kiln to achieve a uniform burn on pottery. In this process, pots are placed inside rectangular wooden boxes, which are then arranged at various levels within the kiln. The kiln is sealed on all sides, with heat entering from a single opening at the bottom, directly

underneath the boxes. This indirect heating method ensures that the pots are fired evenly, resulting in a consistent color and finish without any variation. This technique is used for pottery where a perfectly uniform appearance is desired.

Ceramics The archaeological excavation yielded a variety of ceramics like Red ware, Red slipped ware, Black and Red Ware, All Black Ware, Red and Black ware, Brown slipped ware, coarse Red ware, perforated ware, painted ware, chocolate brown ware.

Black-and-Red Ware: distinctive type of pottery frequently found at Iron Age and early historic sites in southern India, such as Uraiyur and Kaveripattinam. This pottery is typically located in the oldest layers of archaeological sites, alongside all-black ware and painted pottery. This type of pottery was crafted on a potter's wheel and gets its unique two-tone appearance from a process called inverted firing. During this technique, the pot is placed upside down in the kiln. The lower part of the pot is exposed to the air, causing it to turn red, while the upper section and the rim are in contact with flammable materials, which makes them turn black. The inside of the pot is also consistently black. The pottery's shiny, polished surface is a result of salt glazing. Fragments of black-and-red ware are commonly found at the lowest levels of excavations, with the earliest examples dating back to the 3rd century BCE. Common shapes include pots, bowls, dishes, and small vessels.

Black Ware: a high-quality pottery type from southern India, often compared to the Northern Black Polished (NBP) Ware from the north. It's typically found alongside Black-and-Red Ware at various archaeological sites across the region. This type of pottery is completely black on both the inside and outside. The black color is achieved by firing the pottery in a reducing atmosphere, which is a kiln environment with very little oxygen. This process causes the clay to turn black, resulting in a consistent color throughout the vessel.

Black ware is made from finely prepared clay. If it was created on a potter's wheel, it has a very thin and delicate structure, while handmade pieces tend to be thicker. A slip (a thin coating of liquid clay) is usually applied to the outside of the pot, and sometimes to both sides, to give it a smooth finish. As an associated pottery type with Black-and-Red ware, Black ware is found in almost all sites in southern India and is dated to the 3rd century BCE.

Red Ware: a very common type of pottery found at archaeological sites. Its surface is typically red to reddish-brown. This pottery has a long history, with examples found from the Neolithic period all the way up to the present day. The main shapes for this type of pottery are pots and bowls.

Red Slipped Ware: a type of pottery found in archaeological layers that are more recent than those containing Black-and-Red ware. This pottery is made on a potter's wheel and gets its name from the red slip, a thick mixture of clay and red ochre, applied to its surface.

Potters applied the slip to either the exterior, interior, or both sides of the pot once it was firm enough. After being fired, the surface was often rubbed to give it a smooth finish. This type of pottery dates from the 4th to the 9th century CE.

Chocolate Brown Ware: a type of pottery found at early historic and Iron Age sites throughout southern India. It is made from very fine, well-prepared clay, giving it a thin, delicate feel. As its name suggests, the pottery is characterized by its distinct chocolate brown color

Coarse Red Ware: a type of pottery made from low-quality, impure clay mixed with materials like husk, grass, and sand. This results in a dull red color and a rough, uneven surface. The pottery is often poorly fired, indicating a decline in ceramic craftsmanship. Fragments of this pottery are commonly found at all levels of archaeological sites, but they are particularly prevalent in the middle and later layers, dating from around the 4th century CE onward.

Painted Ware: a type of pottery distinguished by its decorative designs. These decorations are primarily linear or geometric patterns, often applied using white paint. This type of ornamentation is commonly found on various kinds of pottery, including black-and-red ware and russet-coated ware.

Red on Black Ware: a type of pottery found at early historic sites, with a distinct color pattern: the outside is black and the inside is red. The exterior's glossy black finish is achieved through a special treatment. This pottery type has been found from early historic times to the present day.

Perforated Ware: a type of pottery with small holes or perforations. It was likely used to drain water or starch from cooked rice.

Graffiti Marks on Pottery During the excavation, archaeologists discovered various pottery shards with graffiti symbols. These symbols were found at different depths, and their exact age will be determined by analyzing the other artifacts found with them. The symbols varied in design and appeared on different types of pottery: multiplication symbol, ladder symbol, a symbol placed inside a U-shaped semicircle, a pattern of oblique lines, a way line superimposed over another symbol.

Additionally, several other pottery fragments with incomplete symbols were also recovered, making them difficult to identify fully.

Conclusion

The comprehensive analysis of pottery from this region confirms its invaluable role as a primary source for archaeological and historical research. As a durable and versatile artifact, pottery offers a unique window into the social, economic, and cultural life of ancient societies, particularly during the Sangam Age in Tamil Nadu. The wide variety of ceramics uncovered—including Black-and-Red ware, Black ware, Red ware, and others—reveals not only their daily utility for purposes like storage and cooking but also the sophistication of ancient pottery-making techniques.

The distinct methods of production, surface treatment, and firing, such as the inverted firing that created the iconic black-and-red vessels and the specialized reducing condition firing, highlight a deep understanding of materials and processes. Furthermore, the presence of graffiti symbols on these artifacts provides intriguing evidence of early symbolic communication. The continuity of pottery traditions from the Sangam period to the present underscores its enduring cultural significance in Tamil Nadu. Ultimately, pottery serves as a tangible index of human innovation and cultural evolution, making it an indispensable tool for reconstructing the history of ancient civilizations.

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Decline of Iron and Steel Production in Tamil Nadu and the Provisions of the Madras Forest Act of 1882

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Introduction:

Iron and steel productions is one of the prominent primitive occupations of Tamil Nadu. It is been in existence since at least second millennium BCE. Its cultural association with people can be attributed to the Iron age. In Tamil Nadu, the production and trade of iron and steel had well flourished since the age of alexander.[i] Quality of the Iron and steel of Tamil Nadu was much celebrated in western countries since ancient days. The industry had started losing its place from global market during 19th century. Several factors can be cited for its decline. One among the major factor of such kind would be the forest laws. The present paper will examine the impacts of forest legislations of colonial times. Further, it seeks to highlight some of the stringent provisions of the Madras Forest act of 1882 that potentially affected the iron and steel manufacturing occupation.

Working Pattern of The Industry:

Iron smelting seems to be not an easy or unhealthy occupation by itself. But, the work needs to be carried out near a forest region which potentially interrupted the manufacturing and the smelters were constantly being affected by fever and other naturally erected diseases that complicated the process.[ii] Also, the nature of moving from one place to another for occupation had also impacted the manufacture. Besides this, the natural calamities were also set to have interfered with the process in the manufacturing of Iron and steel goods. It was a general practice prevailed in the industry that a specific count of people had to be appointed. The limit was set to be 8 or 9 per 1 bloomery[iii] and 3 for one furnace. The count included miners, smelters, charcoal burners, etc. Members engaged in iron making had to concentrate on other occupations during the wet season. It is a much accepted fact that the people were into cultivation during the post iron making operation. Along the side of cultivation, they focus on recovering their health.[iv] As the industry is set to be a primitive occupation, its production methods were a holy secret and were communicated only to their sons. This secrecy did not sustain for more time in the modern times. The traditional occupation deteriorated considerably in the 19th century. Some of the prominent causes for its decline can be attributed to private interference with the production and draconian forest legislations.

A Brief Note on Forest Administration in The 19th Century:

With a formal expansion of Madras presidency in 1801 the English had shown dominance in the administration. It had controlled all the revenue generating sectors through the board of revenue. One greater exclusion was the forest department. The department was not much concentrated in the initial days. However, the government had appointed a first forest conservator in 1804 and formed a committee to study the aspects of forest regions in 1805. Since then, there was no effective progress shown in forest management and they were used as resource generating units for private companies like Porto Novo Iron works. During the aforesaid period the forest resources were greatly exploited by those companies. In fact, there were no proper regulations to govern the forest administration till 1882.

Forest legislations and its impact on iron and steel industry:

Nearly after half a century, the government, after pausing the productions in Porto Novo, had decided to revive the earlier methods of productions in the industry. Accordingly, in 1865, the Government at Fort

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St. George appointed Dr. Brandis, who was serving as first Inspector General of Forest (IGF) at Fort William in Calcutta to examine the feasibility of increasing the generation of fuel. After an extensive study he suggested the fast-growing trees like casuarina in the coastal districts of Chingleput and South Arcot. Also, he suggested to include the Eucalyptus mostly been found in Nilgiris district in a more profitable way.[v] Furthermore, he stressed to send an officer with more proficiency in metallurgical technics to other continental iron produce centers and America to study the process of burning the charcoal and iron.[vi] there is no sufficient supporting evidence to show that his suggestions were been accepted and attempts were made to revive the industry. Meanwhile, in the same year "The Indian Forest act of 1865" was enacted. The act contained more stringent provisions related to accessing the forest by individuals. It proposed to include all the territories of India. However, The Madras government through its board of revenue refused to implement the act citing villagers right over forest and the government could not take absolute control of the same.[vii]Despite opposing the act the government did nothing for the cutting of fuel. Also, it did not accept the suggestions of Dr. Brandis. It is still a holy mystery of the fact why the board has opposed the act. The enactment was amended once again in 1878; this time the Madras presidency was not included in the act itself considering its previous refusal to implement the 1865 act. However, the Madras government had enacted its own legislation in 1882. Interestingly, the legislation replicated most of the provisions from 1865 and 1878 acts.

The act originally consisted of 13 chapters and 119 sections. It comprehensively covered all the aspects of forest administration. It was noted as one of the best forests governing administrative efforts of the government of Madras.[viii] Bennitt, argues, the act which set to govern only one region has further curbed the rights of the native inhabitants on the banner of forest conservation. It is his contention that expansion of reserved forest was purely for commercial purposes.[ix]It may not be suitable to discuss all the provisions of the act here. Therefore, concentration is given only to the relevant sections that affected the iron and steel industry. Section 3 of the act empowers the government to declare any range of a forest within its territory as reserved forest and impose a subsequent restriction on the resources available in the forest. Accordingly, in 1885 Government proclaimed at least 750 Akers of a total forest region as reserved zones near Salem under this section.[x] Further, it was ordered that no activity as regards to utilizing the wealth from those zones by any individuals has been banned. One of the rigorous restrictions placed on the burning of charcoal and collecting forest produce under section 21(F) of the act apparently rendered the functioning of the industry unsatisfactory. Section 26(D) mandated the burning of Charcoal by individuals only on a designated government wasteland. This provision appears to be more time consuming and practically impossible for the native smelters. Section 35 of the act placed a restriction of transporting the generated charcoal and timber without a prior permission from the officials. This section has explicitly restricted the movement of goods for iron smelting. The prolonged delay in granting permission to move the charcoal and timber rendered at least half of the generated resources contaminated.[xi] Furthermore the act places a restriction on the trees to be used in the process of cutting fuel. The scheduled timber found in section 40 of the act prohibits the usage of teak, sandalwood and rosewood for generating charcoal from the reserved forest range. Section 43 of the act ensures a stricter implementation of section 35of the act. It gave an unvetted power to forest officials to confiscate the charcoal and tools found to be used for iron smelting without prior permission. Notably the confiscated objects shall not be returned to the smelters unless permitted by the court.[xii] The above provisions had critically been detrimental to the industry because it did not fulfil the fuel and working needs of iron smelting occupation. For instants, during the process of

ore generation and smelting 1 KG of iron requires 16 KGs of charcoal while at least 4-7 KGs of wet wood is mandatory to generate 1 KG of charcoal.[xiii] It was not possible for the native smelters to utilize the forest to generate those required resources with the stringent provisions. By placing an unrealistic restriction on forest region, the British had created a very uncertain situation for the traditional industry at the end of 19th century.

Conclusion:

The English who ruled India for about two centuries did not recognize the resounding cultural association of the goods produced traditionally. It viewed those industries merely as a revenue generating sector rather than a cultural mirror of a region. By permitting a private entity to extensively focus on a production of iron and steel, the government had brought great uncertainty to the industry. It paved the way for most people to give up the occupation of iron and steel production. Traditional methods were not encouraged despite suspending the private interference. The administration was more obvious to extract a revenue out of the industrial wealth rather than fixing the persisted issues. Therefore, it enacted the Madras Forest act of 1882 with more stringent provisions. By enacting the act, the government had complicated the possibility of its decline even more. Though some attempts were made to revive the industry by establishing rail connectivity with the forest region to transport the iron goods have proved to be productive, it was suspended shortly due to the objections from England. Owing to the above facts and circumstances, the industry did not revive to its early condition. In fact, it marked the end of the industry.

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Nattukotai Chettiars: The transformation of Traders to Bankers in Colonial India

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Introduction

The Chettiars, also known as the Nattukottai Chettiars, represent one of the most remarkable mercantile and banking communities in India. Originating in Tamil Nadu, particularly in the Chettinad region, they earned recognition as pioneers of indigenous banking practices. Long before the establishment of modern banks, the Chettiars functioned as the primary source of credit for farmers, traders, artisans, and even princely states. Their entrepreneurial spirit carried them beyond India's borders, establishing financial and trading networks in Burma (Myanmar), Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Malaya (Malaysia), Singapore, and other parts of Southeast Asia.

Their history provides valuable insights into the development of finance in colonial and early modern India. More than just moneylenders, they were innovators in credit mechanisms, promoters of rural and plantation agriculture, and patrons of social and cultural life. At the same time, they were deeply embedded in the colonial economy, serving both as facilitators of British imperial capitalism and as agents of indigenous enterprise. This dual role has attracted considerable scholarly attention, making the Chettiar experience central to understanding the evolution of Indian banking traditions. This article deals with the Nattukottai Chettiars and their transformation of trades to bankers in India during the colonial period.

Origins of the Chettiar Community

The Chettiar community traces its roots to Tamil Nadu, with strong connections to the towns of Karaikudi, Devakottai, Pallathur, and other centers in the Chettinad region of present-day Sivagangai and Pudukottai districts. Traditionally, the Chettiars belonged to the *Vaishya varna* (trading class) within the Hindu social hierarchy, although their specific caste identity evolved uniquely in Tamil society. Early records suggest that Chettiars were engaged in the salt trade, pearl fishing, and gem business during the medieval Chola and Pandya periods. The proximity of the Coromandel Coast and the thriving port towns of Nagapattinam and Kaveripattinam gave them access to maritime networks. They also maintained links with Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia in pre-colonial times.

By the 17th and 18th centuries, however, changing patterns of global trade—particularly the growing dominance of European companies such as the Portuguese *Estado da Índia*, the Dutch VOC, and later the English East India Company—reduced the opportunities for Indian merchants in overseas maritime commerce. Many traditional merchant groups declined, but the Chettiars adapted by shifting from maritime trade to moneylending and financial intermediation. Their reputation for honesty, meticulous bookkeeping, and community trust enabled them to reinvent themselves as bankers in the evolving colonial economy

Banking Practices of the Chettiars

The banking practices of the Chettiars were unique and sophisticated, combining traditional methods with innovative financial instruments.

Use of *Hundis:* Perhaps their most significant contribution was the use of *hundis* (bills of exchange). A *hundi* allowed the transfer of money across regions without physically moving coin or bullion.[3]For example, a trader in Madurai could deposit funds with a Chettiar agent, who would then issue a *hundi* payable in Rangoon or Colombo. This system functioned much like modern bank drafts or promissory notes and greatly reduced the risks of theft during transport.

Collateral-Based Lending: Loans were generally provided against collateral such as land deeds, jewelry, livestock, or agricultural produce. The Chettiars also financed irrigation tanks, wells, and canals, securing

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repayment from future harvests. Interest rates varied depending on risk but were often higher than those charged by European banks, reflecting the unsecured and small-scale nature of many loans.

Meticulous Accounting: The Chettiars maintained rigorous accounting systems. They initially recorded transactions on palm-leaf manuscripts, later transitioning to cloth-bound ledgers (Pattolai). Each transaction was noted with precise detail, including borrower's lineage, landholding, and repayment schedule. Such records ensured transparency and facilitated intergenerational continuity in business practices.

Community-Based Banking: Unlike impersonal banking institutions, Chettiar finance operated on the principle of trust within the community. A Chettiar's reputation for integrity determined his creditworthiness. Disputes were usually resolved within caste councils (Nattars), avoiding colonial courts. This collective ethic made their networks resilient and self-regulating.

Role in Agriculture and Rural Finance: The Chettiars became indispensable to the agrarian economy of the Madras Presidency and beyond. They financed zamindars and ryots (peasants) for cultivation expenses. They provided advance loans for irrigation works, enabling large-scale rice cultivation in the Cauvery delta. They supported the commercialization of crops such as cotton, indigo, groundnut, and sugarcane. In Burma, their financing of paddy cultivation in the Irrawaddy delta revolutionized agricultural output, while in Ceylon, they supported tea and rubber plantations. In many cases, their lending bridged the crucial gap between sowing and harvest, sustaining rural livelihoods.

However, their role was controversial. Critics accused them of charging high interest rates that led to indebtedness among peasants. The stereotype of the "village moneylender" often carried negative connotations, though it ignored the structural dependence of colonial agriculture on private credit.

International Expansion of Chettiar Banking

From the mid-19th century onwards, the Chettiars expanded beyond South India into Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, and Singapore, forming one of the earliest examples of an Indian overseas financial Diaspora. Burma (Myanmar): This became their largest field of operation. Chettiars financed land reclamation in the Irrawaddy delta, provided credit to rice farmers, and supported the export trade of paddy. By the 1920s, Chettiar loans dominated the Burmese countryside. Ceylon (Sri Lanka): Chettiar capital supported the development of tea, coffee, and rubber plantations, often working alongside British planters.

Malaya and Singapore: Here, they acted as intermediaries between European banks and Asian traders, providing liquidity to small merchants and Chinese businessmen. By 1920, it is estimated that nearly 70% of all Chettiar capital was invested outside India, making them one of the most globalized Indian business communities of their time.

Relationship with the Colonial Economy

The Chettiars occupied a paradoxical position within the colonial economy. On one hand, they filled the gap left by European banks, which largely avoided small borrowers and rural clients. On the other hand, they borrowed from European banks to extend credit to indigenous populations. Thus, Chettiar finance linked local economies with global capital markets.Their credit facilitated the commercialization of agriculture, which ultimately served the needs of the colonial export economy. Yet, without them, many farmers and small traders would have been excluded from credit altogether. This duality—agents of imperial capitalism but also protectors of indigenous commerce—remains a central theme in the historiography of Chettiar banking.

Social and Cultural Life of the Chettiars

The wealth accumulated through finance was reflected in the distinctive architecture and philanthropy of the Chettiar community. Mansions of Chettinad: Built with imported Burmese teak, Italian marble and Belgian glass, these palatial houses reflected both prosperity and cosmopolitanism. Many are still standing today as heritage monuments. The religious endowments were founded by Chettiars and the construction and renovation of Hindu temples, particularly those dedicated to Lord Shiva and Murugan.

They also financed festivals and rituals, reinforcing their social prestige.They established schools, colleges, and hospitals in Tamil Nadu, contributing to the region's social development. Their philanthropy extended overseas, with donations to temples in Burma and Ceylon.Their lifestyle combined orthodox Hindu traditions with cosmopolitan influences absorbed from Southeast Asia, making them one of the most culturally vibrant communities of colonial South India.

Decline of Chettiar Banking

Several factors led to the decline of Chettiar dominance in finance during the mid-20th century like the rise of Modern Banks. The establishment of the Imperial Bank of India (1921), followed by the Reserve Bank of India (1935), introduced modern regulatory frameworks that marginalized indigenous bankers. Like that, the Nationalization in Burma has triggered the downfall. In the 1960s, the Burmese government's land and banking reforms expropriated Chettiar properties, forcing thousands to return to Tamil Nadu under difficult conditions. The shift in the economic structure might be the growth of cooperative credit societies, government-backed rural banks, and land reforms that reduced dependence on traditional moneylenders. Accusations of usury and peasant exploitation tarnished their reputation, leading to political pressures against private money lending.

Legacy and Historical Importance

Despite their decline, the Chettiars left a lasting legacy. Financial Innovation: Their use of hundis and accounting systems influenced the development of Indian banking.They enabled agrarian expansion in India and Southeast Asia. Chettinad mansions, temple endowments, and educational institutions stand as reminders of their prosperity. Many Chettiars successfully transitioned into modern business, industry, and education, continuing their tradition of enterprise.

Conclusion

Today, while they no longer function as rural bankers, the Chettiars remain active in commerce, philanthropy, and cultural preservation. Their history demonstrates the adaptability of an indigenous community to changing global and national economic environments. The story of the Chettiars illustrates how a regional trading caste reinvented itself as a financial powerhouse during the colonial era. By establishing networks across South and Southeast Asia, they not only sustained rural economies but also integrated local markets into global circuits of capital. Their contributions to finance, agriculture, architecture, and education justify their reputation as the "Bankers of India." Although modern banking eventually replaced them, their legacy endures in both India's financial traditions and its cultural landscape.

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P. Jeevanandham and the Struggle Against Untouchability- A Study on Gandhian Socialist Perspective

Jasmin Vijila. T

P. Jeevandham, popularly known as Jeeva was a multifaceted personality as a freedom fighter, Crusader against Social evils, a well-known writer, a Communist, a trade unionist, a man of the masses and the champion of the working class. P. Jeevanandham was born on 21 August, 1907 at Boothapandi, Kanyakumari District. His parents Pattanpillai and Umayammai.[1]Though a farmer by profession, his father was well versed in indigenous medicines. Jeevanandham was the fourth among the nine children of his parents.[1] He was named as Mukandi and also as Sorimuthu, after his family deity Sorimuthaiyan.It was in 1927 that he called himself as Jeevnandham.[1]

Gandhi's Influence on Jeeva

Jeeva was very much influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, and adopt many principles of Gandhi, like Abolition of Untouchability, Ahimsa, Khadi, Simplicity, Honesty,Self-less service and Sacrifice. Jeeva by nature was liberal, broad minded and humanist in outlook. He liked the company of his friendsirrespective of caste, creed and color. He had many friends among Untouchables. As a true follower of Gandhi, he stood for the abolition of untouchability. He believed in the principle that all men were born equal and so why should some people alone must be ill- treated as untouchables. He opposed to this unjust social practice.

Jeevanandham's Early Activism

Young Jeevanandham was disturbed by the ill-treatment caused to the Adi- Dravidas. There were a few incidents in his life to show his efforts to abolish untouchability. Among them the prominent incident happened in the temple at Boothapandi. In this temple after the hoisting of the flag for annual function.Usuallythe Adi-Dravidas were not allowed to enter the temple streets. This was opposed by Jeevanandham by entering the temple streets along with some Adi- Dravida boys. These activities created ill-feeling in his family.[1] Perhaps this sort of sympathy and affection towards the down-trodden sections made him marry an Adi-Dravida woman in 1938. She was the daughter of Kulasekaradas, an Adi-Dravida Congress M.L.A. elected from Cuddalore.

From Student to Social Reformer

During his schooling, he started a Footballteam and named it us 'Gandhi Football team' and included many lower caste students. Being interested in political and social activities, Jeevanandham could not concentrate upon his studies. Hence his father warned him not to mingle with Adi-Dravidas.[1] Opposing the advice of his father, Jeevanandham discontinued his studies and left his house. There upon he directed his full attention towards political and social activities.

A Voice for the Oppressed

As a social worker, Jeevandam earned distinction during the anti-Brahmin movement in the South.[1] The caste system in the Hindu social set up had split up the Hindu society in several watertight compartments. Generally, the Hindus were divided into high castes and low castes.[1] The lower castes were subjected to several difficulties in education, occupation and social life.

The Vaikom Satyagraha and Jeevanandham's Role

As a champion of the removal of untouchability, Jeevanandam inaugurated his social activities with his participation in the famous VaikomSathyagraha in 1924.[1]Vaikom is a place in central Travancore. In 1924, there was a conflict over the right of lower castes to use certain roads outside the temple in Vaikom. The erstwhile Princely state of Travancore which comprised of Kerala and Kanyakumari district was well known for religious orthodoxy. Here in the small town of Vaikom near Trivandrum the abominable practice of untouchability was reigning Varnashrama Dharma was strictly adhered. Lower castes should not enter the

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streets of the upper castes. The untouchable should not enter not only the temples but also the streets leading to them. The Ezhava leader Narayana Guru of Kerala took steps to eradicate the evil but he could not succeed. In pursuance of Mahatma Gandhi's HarijanUpliftment Movement, the local Congress decided to launch a struggle against the religious orthodoxy and fanaticism of higher castes. E.V. RamasamiNaicker the president of Tamil Nādu Congress Committee accepted the offer of leading the struggle. He started with a strong contingent of supporters. Discontinuing his school educationonce for all, Jeeva joined the Vaikomsatyagrahaas a volunteer of the Congress Party. The incident had great impact on Jeevaand his life. For the first time in his life, he realized the value and potentiality of the Gandhian technique of Satyagraha. This incident pushed him into the mainstream of national struggle, where he was to play a very important role for not less than four decades.[1]

Jeeva and the Suchindram Temple Satyagraha

After his return from Vaikom Satyagraha, Jeeva was determined to fight against untouchability, in his native district Kanyakumari, at Suchindram Thanumalayan temple. Jeevanandham and his associates Gandhiraman and M.E Naidu entered the temple with some Harijanfriends.[1] They organized a Satyagraha opposing the famous Suchindram temple, in which Jeeva alsoparticipated as a volunteershowing his solidarity withothers.Thus, graduallyJeeva'sattraction towardsGandhi's Reconstructive Programs had increased.The Vaikom and Suchindram incidents were represented to Maharani, the regent of Travancore.[1]The Maharani tried to settlethe matter peacefully, but the prolonged satyagraha invited a need for quick solution.Thus, ended in victory.[1]

Jeevanandham's Stand Against Caste Discrimination

Deserted by the house, Jeevanandham had to earn his livelihood. He worked as a teacher for some-time in the Traditional school orGurukulam at Cheran Mahadevi[1] established in December 1922 by V.V. Subramaniyalyer, the terrorist leader, freedom fighter and the editor of the Tamil newspaper, Desa- Baktan.[1] There too, he felt very much about the distinction shown between the Brahmin and non-Brahmin students when the Brahmins sat separately while dining.[1] In January 1925 Jeevanandam apprised these to E.V.Ramaswami, the leader of the Self Respect Movement. This issue took a severe turn and the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee appointed a sub-committee to look into the matter since the Congress funds and sponsorship had been largely responsible for thesetting up of the school.[1] By that time the abuse appeared all the more grievous and Jeevanandam with Varadarajulu Naidu, President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, staged an all-out campaign.[1]They wanted complete equality with the Brahmins in the matter of inter-dining and, save the non-Brahmins from the age-long social injustice that had been meted out to them by Hinduism.[1] As a result of the non-Brahmin pressure, V.V.Subramaniyalyer resigned and the Gurukulam was closed thereafter. A few days later V.V.Subramaniyalyer died of an accident in Courtallam falls.[1]

Jeevanandam's Educational Experiment

The closure of the Bharatwaja Ashram created a vacuum in the field of education in the South-Eastern part of Tamil Nadu. Jeevanandamrealised the necessity of establishing an ashram based on equality. For thispurpose, he approached the wealthy Chettiars of the South who were the protagonists of education. He met KasiViswanathamChettiar, the head of an Education Committee at Chettinad. With the financial assistance of KasiViswanatham, Jeevanandam started Gandhi Ashram atSiruvayal in 1927 with Kumbalingam as President and himself as its secretary.[1]He was the headmaster of the institution too.While on tour in Tamil Nadu in 1927 Gandhi visited the Ashram and praised Jeevanandam for its principles and maintenance.[1]However, difference of opinion arose between the President and the Secretary which resulted in his resignation in 1929. Thereafter he directed his work to Nachiarpuram in Ramnad District.

Unmai Vilakka Nilayam

At Nachiarpuram, Jeevanandam with his associate, A.Subbaiah started an organisation called UnmaiVilakkaNilayam. In a notice circulated, they

explained its principles, aims and means as removal of poverty, ignorance and slavery,equality - irrespective of caste, religion, nationality and language,abolition of untouchability,eradication of superstitions,upliftment of Adi-Dravidas andemancipation of women.For obtaining these goals, the means as stated, by them werepropaganda,establishing schools, gurukulams, labour unions, hospitals and yoga schools anddistributing notices and publishing books and journals.To improve the condition of Adi-Dravidas, efforts were taken to establish a United Labour Union. The notice was signed by Jeevanandam and A.Subbaiah as Secretaries of the Association.[1] In 1930, the Gurukulam was transferred to Kottaiyur near Karaikudi.[1] He proved himself as a devoted servant of the down-trodden communities. He took efforts to uplift the socially depressed classes.

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Historical Transformation in Pregnancy – Related Pain and Material Mortality in the Madras Presidency

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In ancient period of Tamil region, the presence of *Sumaitangi Kal* (literally, "stone that bears the burden") continues to serve as a poignant cultural marker. These stones were erected by families to commemorate women who tragically lost their lives during childbirth in ancient period[1].Their enduring visibility in the landscape offers insight into both the cultural memory and the embodied experiences of women.The *Sumaitangi Kal* is more than a funerary memorial; it stands as an acknowledgment of the intimate connection between maternal sacrifice and collective remembrance. The placement of such stones is deeply embedded in Tamil cultural practices, reflecting both grief and reverence. By inscribing maternal mortality into the

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public sphere, these stones demonstrate how childbirth was not only a personal ordeal but also a social event that shaped familial and communal identities.Historically, childbirth in madras presidency was fraught with risks. Women often gave birth at home, either assisted by kin or local midwives. While these traditional methods reflected indigenous medical knowledge, they did not always guarantee safety for the mother. High maternal mortality was a grim reality, and the *Sumaitangi Kal* is a physical reminder of this vulnerability.The advent of British colonial rule marked a significant shift in this landscape. With the introduction of European medical practices, new institutional frameworks emerged, including hospitals and trained obstetric care. Colonial health policies, although unevenly implemented and often entangled with social hierarchies, gradually contributed to a reduction in maternal mortality rates.

Dais or Tradional midwife

In pre-colonial India, the responsibility of healthcare largely rested with Hakkims and Vaidyas, who functioned as traditional medical practitioners. However, maternity was not perceived as a disease to be cured by doctors but rather as a natural yet painful and often life-threatening process. In such cases, the crucial role was played by Dais (traditional birth attendants), who were responsible for assisting childbirth[2]. While Daiswere known by different names across India, a striking commonality remained, they predominantly belonged to marginalized caste (Fishermen, gond**,** Chamars ,behar). Within the framework of Hindu tradition, women's bleeding was regarded as ritually impure. Consequently, the blood loss during childbirth was also considered a source of impurity. The task of handling this "impure" work was therefore relegated to the Dais. Following delivery, both the mother and the newborn were subjected to a series of rituals of purification, intended to cleanse them of this perceived impurity by various methods that followed.Childbirth typically occurred in unhygienic, poorly ventilated spaces such as storerooms or hut set apart from the household[3]. This practice was directly tied to notions of pollution and ritual impurity, thereby compounding the risks of infection, maternal mortality, and infant mortality.According to Edgar Thurston and billigton the Dais method of midwifery is barberious and most dangerous with superstitious beliefs."The Koravar midwife induces the woman to mention her paramour's name, and as the name is mentioned, the midwife puts a pinch of earth into the woman's mouth with the idea of accelerating delivery"[4].If the maternity takes so long they use weight or jump on women to induce pain . they also use bare filthy hands to remove baby from the mother's womb.in some cases baby's shoulder and their hand got damaged while removing baby forcefully. For instance in the book caste and tribe of south india by Edgar Thurston it is bluntly mentioned that "The umblical cord is cut by the mother of the infant.For this purpose,the right thigh of the baby is flexed towards its abdomen and a piece of cooled charcoal placed on the right knee . The cord is placed on the charcoal and divided with the sharp edge of an arrow." According to sean lang there were no exact mortality rate but their risk of dying in child birth was so high.There also a belief of evil spirit that in pregnancy whatever can go wrong so they cover their throat with tube for not getting attacked by evil spirit.

European method of midwifery

Madras played a major role in midwifery in British India. First lyin-in maternity hospital established in Madras presidency in 1844. They introduced European method of midwifery in madras presidency for safe labor[5].Unlike indigenous or domestic practices, which relied largely on experiential knowledge passed down among women, the Western method emphasized systematic training, classification of labor, and clinical intervention. Childbirth was no longer treated as a purely domestic or spiritual event but as a medical process subject to observation, record-keeping, and professional management.In this the categorization of labour into natural, difficult, preternatural, and complex cases; the use of instruments such as forceps to assist in prolonged or obstructed deliveries; during childbirth. Hospitals and lyingin institutions became central to this

system, providing spaces where large numbers of deliveries could be supervised, recorded, and analysed. The Western method of midwifery was institutionalized through hospitals like the Madras Lying-in Hospital, which kept detailed records of thousands of births. These statistics enabled physicians to identify high-risk cases, compare outcomes, and refine medical interventions. According to the 1860 annual report of madras lyin in hospital from 1844 to 1860 there were more than 8000 deliveries had done. The annual report of the Madras Lying-. It records an**increase of 88 deliveries** over the preceding year, thereby demonstrating both the growing trust of the population and the continued usefulness of the institution. Since its establishment in **1844,** the hospital had already overseen **more than 8,000 deliveries**[6]. A figure that not only illustrates its central role in the medicalization of childbirth but also highlights the success with which long-standing cultural reservations against institutional care were being gradually overcome.The detailed statistics of the year's activity reflect the methodological precision of Western obstetrics. A total of **928 cases of labour** were admitted, of which **826 were classified as natural, 56 as difficult, 42 as preternatural,** and**26 as complex**[7]. Such categorization reveals the emphasis on systematic classification in Western medical practice, which enabled physicians to distinguish between normal and abnormal labours and to develop protocols for their management. This scientific structuring of childbirth was an important step toward ensuring that complex cases could be handled with foresight and preparedness, thereby reducing risk.Western midwifery also emphasized **continuous monitoring and patient care**. Standard procedures included the administration of **enema,** regular **pulse and temperature checks**, and careful observation of skin condition. For convulsion cases, midwives applied cooling techniques, such **as ice application** and hair removal, to reduce overheating. Nutritional and medicinal interventions like **arrowroot, brandy, and cannabis** were used judiciously to support maternal stamina and ease labour. The use of the **stethoscope** used to monitor the fetal heartbeat accurately, ensuring timely interventions when distress was detected[8]. Additionally, the **duration of each delivery** was meticulously recorded, providing essential data for anticipating labour timelines in future patients.The report demonstrates that the integration of **scientific European methods** with attentive maternal care markedly enhanced the **safety of childbirth**. Even in cases classified as difficult, preternatural, or complex, the hospital's systematic approach and continuous monitoring contributed to a **high rate of safe deliveries** and a large proportion of live births. This combination of **classification, detailed observation, and therapeutic intervention** represents a significant advance over traditional methods, offering a structured, replicable, and data driven model of obstetric care.What emerges from this data is the clear demonstration of the value of **systematic medical recording and classification**. Such reports were not merely administrative exercises; they represented a form of medical memory, allowing practitioners to compare present cases with past ones and to apply improved methods of intervention.The methods of institutional midwifery may have improved, yet women heavily favored dhais over male practitioners, finding a greater sense of cultural familiarity and physical comfort with traditional birth attendants.

Women For Women

The **Dufferin Fund**, formally established in **1885** under the patronage of Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India, and his wife, Lady Hariot Dufferin, was a landmark initiative to address the absence of medical facilities for Indian women. Social restrictions and cultural norms often prevented Indian women from being treated by male physicians, leaving them vulnerable during childbirth. The fund, officially known as the *National Association for Supplying Female medical aid to the Women of India*, sought to remedy this by training women doctors, nurses, and midwives, and by establishing hospitals and dispensaries exclusively for women[9.] Its foundation coincided with broader developments in European medicine, especially in obstetrics. Queen Victoria herself had famously

experienced the agony of childbirth and later got rest peacefully, a practice that became associated with the advancement of obstetric anesthesia in Europe. This royal acceptance lent legitimacy to medical interventions in maternity care and influenced how European models of obstetrics were promoted within the empire. In India, the Dufferin Fund extended this ethos by positioning Western medicine as both modern and compassionate, aiming to reduce maternal mortality. The initiative not only provided medical relief but also legitimized women's entry into the medical profession in colonial India. Nevertheless, while it improved healthcare access for women, it also reinforced the paternalistic structures of colonial governance, as the "rescue" of Indian women's bodies became a symbolic justification for imperial intervention[9].

Conclusion

The historical trajectory of midwifery in India reflects a complex interplay between entrenched cultural traditions, religious customs, and superstitious beliefs, which collectively shaped the experiences of women during childbirth. For centuries, labor and delivery were enveloped in ritualistic practices that often prioritized social or spiritual considerations over medical efficacy, resulting in profound suffering for women at every stagerom the onset of labor to delivery and cord cutting. These practices, while culturally embedded, frequently exposed women and infants to preventable complications, reinforcing a normalization of pain as an inherent and inescapable aspect of childbirth. The arrival of European medical methods during the British colonial period introduced a transformative perspective, systematically challenging these long-standing beliefs. Western midwifery emphasized structured observation, careful classification of labor types, and meticulous record-keeping, enabling practitioners to anticipate complications and replicate successful interventions in future cases. Techniques such as monitoring maternal pulse and skin condition. The introduction of instruments such as forceps further facilitated safer deliveries in cases of obstructed labor, reducing the physical strain on both mother and child. By acknowledging the realities of pain rather than accepting it as inevitable, European midwifery redefined the childbirth experience,.Also the establishment of the Dufferin Fund not only expanded medical care for women but also opened the gates of the medical profession to Indian women themselves. This marked a profound shift, as female doctors and midwives began to serve their own communities, bridging cultural barriers and reshaping the experience of labour.Thus, while childbirth had long been associated with suffering and fatalism, colonial interventions through midwifery introduced a new visionone where pain was not merely endured but actively alleviated, and where women could access care that gave dignity to one of life's most perilous passages.

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A Historical Perspective on Women's Education Through the ages in India

A. Sudha

Introduction

The tender regard for womanhood is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Vedas and as such women enjoyed a fair amount of personal freedom and equality with men. The courteous address for a woman is the same as for Goddess (e.g., Rigveda, X. 10.12). She is often described as 'kalyani, the blissful one'. There are great goddesses, like Usha, Saraswati and Aditi, etc. among the vedic seers. In the Vedic period among the higher section of society, the sacred initiation (upnayan) of girls was common and they used to go through a regular course of education. Some attained distinction in the realm of theology and philosophy and a considerable number of women used to follow the teaching career. (p :19) In the post-vedic period our hermitages were situated in the farflung forest areas, and as such for security purposes the practice of sending women out to great scholars and to centres, situated in the remote forests, began to be looked upon with disfavour. It was preferred that women should receive training at home from father, brothers and members of kin groups. Such a practice made it obvious that tradition of importing learning to women remained restricted to high-up Brahmin families only. This limited access of women to learning, also curtailed their religious rights and privileges. In general, girls used to have non-formal education from elder brothers, parents, learned guests, etc. The King Drupad had appointed a learned Brahmin to teach state-craft to his son. His daughter (Draupadi) also learnt Brihaspati – Arthashastra from the learned Brahmin at home. Shakuni, the prince of Gandhar king and Gandhari (sister of Shakuni) both were well-versed in Arthashastra. Though the girls were not sent to hermitage, in the families of hermits some female members used to live including Acharya's wife (guru-patni), daughter, etc.

Women used to take keen interest in narrating and listening to the stories. This was not only a source of entertainment for them but also a tool of knowledge. Brihannala (name adopted by Arjuna in disguise in the kingdom of Virata) used to narrate various interesting stories and amuse the persons in the harem (inner apartment) of the king Virata. Thus, we see the deteriorating trends in the education of women in the post-Vedic as well as in the epic-age, i.e., the age of Ramayana and Mahabharatha, exact time of which still stands as disputed among the (p:20) scholars. Accordingly to Altekar, "The cause of women education suffered a good deal after 300 B.C. on account of the new fashion of child marriage that then began to come into vogue. Buddhism and Jainism, which came into existence in the form of a revolt against Brahminism, tried to assign an important and honourable place to women in society. Many women achieved distinctions as teachers and scholars. (p: 21)

Women Education in Medieval Period

The Muslim rulers of India generally took a keen interest in education, and many of them founded schools, colleges and libraries in various places in their dominions. The permanent settlement of Muslims in India, and conversion of some of the inhabitants to Islam, meant the establishment of mosques, and as in other Muslim countries, the mosques, especially in towns, were a centre of instruction and of literary activities. Muslim educational institutions are distinguished as maktabs or madrashas. The maktabs is a primary school often attached to a mosque, the chief business of which is to instruct boys in those portions of the Koran which a Muslim is expected to know by heart in order to perform his devotions and other religious functions. Sometimes instruction in reading, writing, and simple arithmetic (3 R's) was also included in the curriculum. (p: 22). There were no maktabs and

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madrashas for girls throughout our medieval Indian History. Perhaps it was not considered desirable and necessary to educate the female section of population. There were, however, arrangements for the education of girls of the well-to-do and royal families". Therefore, we find many scholarly women in the royal families. Among the women some became successful rulers also, like Rajia Sultan, Chand Bibi, etc. Nurjahan was adviser-in-chief to her husband Jahangir, son of Akbar the great.

During the period between the invasion of Mohammed of Ghor and the advent of British rule in India, the position of Indian women deteriorated. The menfolk being constantly engaged in warfare with the Muslims, it was considered safer to keep the women in seclusion. This was the beginning of the purdah system. As purdah prohibited the movement of women outside the house, it proved a positive impediment in the way of their education and also tended to make the women – folk more and more dependent on men for their affairs outside the homes. Ongoing political struggle made life invariably very uncertain and insecure. Protection of young and lonely girls became a problem for the parents and this gave rise to various social evils like, female-infanticide, child-marriage, Sati, etc. we may call this period as a dark period as far as Women's education is concerned.(p:23)

Women Education under British Rule

After the Muslim period, the British Government assumed a position of domination in India. It was basically interested in establishing their colonial rule and as such retained from interfering with their life-style of the local people. As a result, it did not pose any problem to existing practices in the country. The East India Company did not consider it necessary to educate the fair-sex, perhaps because lady clerks or officers were not required for administrative purposes. At the same time, a variety of odd superstitions held back girls' education. Nevertheless, some efforts were made during the colonial regime to create opportunities for elementary education for women. Gradually, the British Government became interested in ending some of the evil and inhuman practices in India like Sati, child-marriage, etc. this led them to introduce women education. Actually the Christian missionaries, who followed the advent of the British in India, worked for women's education.

During the Company's rule, there were no separate state schools for girls, and hardly a few girls were attending boy's schools. Most (p: 24) of the girls' schools were run by missionaries and a few by private bodies. In 1851, the Protestant Missions were conducting 86 boarding schools for girls and 286 day schools for girls with an enrolment of 2,274 and 8,919 respectively. The Roman Catholic Missions were also active, but the figures for their schools are not available. A number of private schools were conducted by British officials in their private capacity. The most important institution of this type was Bethune School, which was founded by Mr. J.E.D. Bethune in 1849. Mr. Bethune was the Legal Member of the Supreme Council of the Government of India. This school gave an impetus to Indians to start similar institutions in the country".

Initially the missionaries started schools for educating their Christians converts only. But at a later stage they opened schools for non-christian girls also in Bengal, Mumbai and Chennai. This fact has been reported in Educational Records of the Government of India. Because of the age-old prejudice against mixed classes, for boys and girls, the Mission started zanana schools staffed by lady teachers to which girls alone were admitted. The schools were available only to the higher-ups in the society. The mission schools had two definite aims in starting girl schools. Firstly, they hoped that the educated girls would in future establish schools for educating women, and secondly, it was their hope that many of those educated girls would become converts and would be a suitable means for spreading Christianity and the truth of the Gospel among their countrymen.

The despatch of 1854 (Charles Wood's Despatch) gave a lot of encouragement to such efforts. The dispatch stated, " No subject could have a stronger claim to have our attention than education. It is one of our sacred duties." On the other hand it also declared: " we must emphatically declare that the education which

we desire to be extended in India is that which has for its object the diffusion (of useful knowledge and which India may, under providences, derive) of the improved Arts, Science, Philosophy and Literature of Europe; in short of European Knowledge." The despatch fully endorsed the declaration of Governor – General of Bengal that for women education, the Government should extend an active cooperation and help. The directors of the Board of the Company were of the opinion that women education will give an impetus to the moral standard of the public. According to Wood's Despatch the total number of girls' schools was 256 in Chennai, 65 in Mumbai, 288 in Bengal and 17 in the Northeastern Provinces. In the Punjab, the traditional education of women had continued as an indigenous effort (p: 25) and the modern type of girl's schools had just begun to come into existence.

The Indian Education Commission of 1882, while examining the question of girl's education remarked, "Female education is still in an extremely backward condition and needs to be fostered in every legitimate way." It recommended that it should receive a larger share of public funds. As a result, state funds were spent more freely on girls' education. There was a sharp rise in private efforts also. Owing to these two factors, girls' education progressed. This was noticeable amongst Europeanised communities, viz., the Brahmo Samaj, the Parsees and the Christians. In 1901-02, there were 12 colleges, 467 secondary schools, and 5,268 primary schools for girls, but the total girls' enrolment in all educational institutions was 447,470 only.

But very soon, the feeling of passive apathy was changed into active sympathy owing to sentimental and material causes. Parents were gradually realising that the education of their daughters was as much a part of their duty as the education of their sons. The demand for educated wives also developed. The Education Departments also took some active steps and devised new plans for spreading education, viz, separate schools were started arrangements of conveyance for taking girls to schools were made, inspectresses were appointed, liberal prizes were offered to girls and fees were remitted at times, many schools run by local bodies were transferred to government, favourable grants were given to private girls' schools. Teachers of boys' schools were rewarded for every girl whose attendance could be secured, steps were taken to attract ladies to the teaching profession, and provincial committees with a fair proportion of lady members were set up for discussing the problems of girls' education.

These steps gave a great encouragement to girls' education. In 1904, Mrs. Annie Besant established the Central Hindu Girls' Schools at Benaras with the object of imparting western education to girls quite separately from boys in a modernized school of Hinduism. In 1916, the first Medical College, Lady Hardinge College, Delhi, was established for the six in the country. The Women's (SNDT) University (Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women'sUniversity. This is the first Women University in India as well as in South-East Asia. The University was founded by Maharshi Dr. Dhondo Keshav Karve in 1921 from this University. The University Headquarters is in Churchgate Campus, Mumbai and the other two campuses of this University are at Juhu, Mumbai and Karve Road, Pune) was also established in the same year. In 1917, there were 12 arts colleges, four professional colleges and 166 secondary schools for girls. The enrolment also showed an increase; but the problem of retention persisted due to several socio-economic factors.

The British Government adopted a liberal policy for promoting girl education. A number of schemes were started. The period after 1921(p: 26) was charged with national awakening among the people as a result of the steering of the struggle for freedom by the Indian leaders, who realized that women's participation was important for social progress. There were some notable leaders including Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Annie Besant and Sri Syed Ahmed Khan who advocated education for women, removal of their social disabilities and restoration of their legal and social rights. Socio-economic movements like the Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj lent further support to these concepts. The reform movements brought a new awakening among the women-folk and they, especially from the middle classes, were imbibed with new ideas. As modern education became a torch light for them,

they came out of the four wall of the homes and took active part in various social activities.(p: 27)

Conclusion:

Women in all times in India enjoyed a high status in society and were given equal importance to men in terms of education and empowerment. Women were encouraged to pursue higher education, and many became scholars, poets and philosophers. Women also played an important role in politics and economics and had a say in school and cultural matters. The contributions of women writers such as Gargi, Lopamudra, and Maitreyi are still remembered and celebrated in India today. It is important to learn from the ancient Indian civilization's emphasis on education and women's empowerment and continue to work towards gender. Women in Ancient India enjoyed a high status in society. They had the right to own property and inherit from their fathers. Women were also allowed to participate in religious ceremonies and perform rituals. In fact, there were many female priests who officiated at religious ceremonies. Women also played an important role in politics in ancient India. There were queens and princesses who ruled kingdoms. For example, the queen of Magadha, Nandini, ruled the kingdom after her husband's death. In addition to political power, women also enjoyed economic power in ancient India. Women were involved in trade and commerce and were known for their business acumen. For example, the city of Pataliputra, which was the capital of the Mauryan Empire, was known for its women traders. In ancient India, women played an active role in social and cultural matters. They participated in decision-making processes and contributed to the affairs of both the family and the community. Women actively participated in arts and literature, and were admired for their creativity and artistic talent. Women registered their talents in all time and their lifetime not only in India throughout the world.

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The Role of Christian Missionaries for the Development of Women in Salem District – A Study

S. Murugan

Introduction

All through the ages, the position of women has consistently been marginalized in various forms across nearly all societies in India. Feticide, infanticide, child marriage, Sati, the dowry system, and denial of rights are the injustices that harm women. Women in the Salem District were also subject to these social injustices. They endured these superstitious and cruel customs just as their peers did. They endured these superstitious and cruel practices just like their peers did in other regions of the country. The Christian Missionaries closely studied the society and aimed to uplift women from their dire situation and transform them into a cultured community that could be the foundation for creating significant and lasting social institutional reforms.

Condition of women in Salem district

The condition of women in Salem District was

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pathetic. Women were completely dependent on men, had a lower social rank, and had no right to self-respect.

The social structure was created to restrict women's freedoms. Only men had access to education, and they had to contend with social norms that were oppressive and constrictive.

Women's rights were restricted, and the notion of education or schooling was unfathomable for them. Additionally, cultural expectations prevented women from leaving their houses; if they ventured out, they faced gossip and shame. In Salem District, the society strongly promoted Child Marriage, the Devadasi system, the mistreatment of widows, and frequently practiced female infanticide. Their basic rights were overlooked. In the period of colonial rule, the state of women was worse due to these factors. Birthing a girl child was considered bad and a sign of financial struggle. The missionaries gave women and underprivileged communities access to necessities that society had previously denied them. Their educational endeavors had a profound effect and opened the door to a more just future. Discrimination based on caste was pervasive in the Salem area, which is home to several castes. Inequality was maintained by dominant castes frequently suppressing the fundamental rights of people from lower castes. By advocating for education as a way to promote equality and raise the downtrodden segments of society, the missionaries sought to alter this system.

Contribution of Christian missionaries for women's empowerment:

For women, the situation was much worse because society largely ignored their plight. When missionaries arrived in India, they actively worked to eradicate various social evils, regardless of their religious convictions. They sought to uplift disadvantaged groups, like the lower castes, and improve the lot of women through education and other social reforms. In 1623, Roman Catholic Jesuit missionary Robert de Nobili made his first appearance in Salem. In 1827, the Protestant mission arrived.

Sisters Of Saint Joseph Cluny:

In 1894, a French Catholic order founded a private school in Yercaud. In 1890, a lower secondary school was established, and in 1908, a European High School was founded. Although the majority of the students at these schools were Catholic females, they welcomed students from other religions, promoting inclusive education.

London Mission School For Girls

Women were not allowed to study school, but this changed when missionaries started their service in Salem. Missionaries introduced education as a way to free women from societal inequalities because they understood how important it was for them. By designating Miss. Schill and Miss. Ridley to spearhead women's welfare programs in 1885, the London Missionary Society (LMS) made important strides in this direction. At about the same time, Mr. Mabbs closed the girls' boarding home and started the day schools. Between 1869 and 1870, Rev. Phillips purchased a land in Yercaud to construct an LMS school for Native American girls only. To further promote women's welfare and education, the Australian Auxiliary Society dispatched female missionaries to Salem in 1891. Among them was Rev. F.W. Cox's daughter, Miss. Lois Ainsley Cox, a Zenana missionary with LMS in Salem and the first woman missionary in this region. In 1895, the mission board established the "Policy of Single Women Missionaries" to encourage the roles of women in missionary activity. In order to establish a solid basis for women's education in the region, Miss. Cox eventually started schools for females at Kitchipalaya, Ammapet, Gogai, and Ponnampet, enrolling 203 girls and hiring 10 instructors.

Vocational Training School for Girls

The famine of 1876 presented many difficulties for Christian missionaries, but they recovered and were able to continue their service by 1880. Miss. Annie Crouch and Miss. Lois Ainsley Cox were committed to enhancing the lives of women in the Salem region. A modest plot of land in Hasthampatti was acquired in order to construct a house close to a girls' school in recognition of Miss. Cox's achievements. Practical skills like agriculture, cow husbandry, and livestock management were taught to the girls at the institution. As a result of missionaries' efforts to advance women's

education, more women are going to college and getting ready for the Higher- Grade Teacher Certificate exam. In addition to promoting religion, Christian missions placed a high priority on uplifting the lower classes and raising women's social standing, which had a long-lasting effect on society.

Hobart Girls School And Home

The Hobart Mission, which had its start in Australia, dispatched the Hobart Sisters to India with the intention of empowering women. A middle school for girls was founded by these missionaries, and it eventually grew into a high school. They started the first female teacher training school in Salem in June 1926 on the premises of the Salem Central Jail Mission Bungalow in Alanguttai. The missionaries established a solid basis for social transformation by acknowledging that everyone has a fundamental right to education. Nonetheless, underprivileged people still frequently face barriers to education and basic rights today. The missionaries' attempts to offer inclusive learning opportunities are in line with the belief that education is still an essential tool for empowering people and eradicating social injustices.

Leprosy Relief Rural Centre

Mother Emma, a Belgian missionary, founded the Leprosy Relief Center in Omalur Taluk and Mettur in 1931. In order to reach the people, she and her colleague expanded the program in 1956 by opening many dispensaries and a mobile clinic.

Ladies Zenana Auxiliary

In Salem, the Ladies Zenana Auxiliary Mission carried out important medical and educational initiatives. In order to provide lodging, they established a ladies' dormitory and established a ladies' Higher Elementary School at Sendhamangalam. They also provided care for the indigenous youngsters in the Kolli Hills as part of their activities. As Jesse Mann Brand's wife and a female missionary, Evelyn Brand was instrumental in delivering healthcare in the Kolli Hills. In 1913, the medically trained couple started working in the region to aid the local tribe. They established schools in the Kolli Hills for tribal children. They treated skin allergies with contemporary medicine, and made home health visits. A school for girls was established in 1907, and Evelyn also established the first boarding home for girls in Kolli Hills.

Ruth Harries, a missionary from the Ladies Zenana Auxiliary Mission, concentrated on tribal women after Evelyn Brand. Her efforts to the Kolli Hills included giving mothers and children in particular medical attention. Another missionary, Miss. Stella Hazel, started the Sendhamangalam Girls' School. Girls and married women were given vocational training by missionaries, who taught them how to make mats and weave textiles and socially useful productive works. By giving the Ladies Zenana Auxiliary a van for mobile medical services, the Strict Baptist Mission brought much-needed medical assistance to the isolated Kolli Hills. In particular, Dr. Ruth Harries made a significant contribution to the community by concentrating on healthcare and education in order to better the lives of tribal women and children.

Conclusion

In the Salem district, Christian missionaries played an essential role in challenging and altering deep-rooted social norms that restricted women's rights and access to education. In addition to offering educational opportunities for women through the establishment of schools, healthcare initiatives, and vocational training programs, these missionaries addressed broader social injustices faced by marginalized groups. Their efforts illustrated the powerful impact that education can have in reducing inequality and laid the foundation for future advancements in social reform and the empowerment of women. The importance of inclusive education as a catalyst for social change is highlighted by the ongoing influence of these missionaries, which inspires present-day efforts for social justice and gender equality. Reflecting on the contributions of these early trailblazers, it becomes clear that the fight for women's rights and access to education is now a crucial endeavor, embodying the ideals of justice and empowerment that they promoted.

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Education and Empowerment of Women in Chennai District (1919-2025) - A Historical Study

K Applerajan[1] and G. Punithavathi[2]

Introduction

Chennai, which was called Madras until 1996, has been a bellwether for social change in southern India for a long time. The city's public institutions, civic culture, and associational life have all had an impact on women's hopes and dreams. These include missionary schools from the colonial era, early women's colleges, modern IT corridors, and metro-rail commutes. This study examines women's education and empowerment in the Chennai district through six phases: late colonial reform (1919–1937), nationalist consolidation and transition (1937–1947), early postcolonial state-building (1947–1970), welfare expansion and urbanization (1970–1990), liberalization and the knowledge economy (1990–2010), and rights-based, tech-enabled inclusion (2010–2025). It consistently emphasizes the interaction of policy, institutions, social movements, and the lived realities of caste, class, and urban environments.

Late Colonial Reform and the Seeds of Modernity (1919–1937)

The Government of India Act of 1919 brought dyarchy to the Madras Presidency. This meant that "transferred subjects" like education and public health were moved to a provincial level that was more in tune with local politics. This constitutional push came at the same time as decades of missionary and indigenous reformist work that was already going on in Madras city. In the 1910s, the city was home to Queen Mary's College (1914) and Women's Christian College (1915), which were some of the first schools that made it possible for middle-class women to get higher education in the arts, sciences, and teacher training. The University of Madras, with its system of affiliated institutions, was an important way for the government, mission, and community colleges to offer more college education to women.

There were new places for women to be in Madras's civic life, like public lectures, literary societies, and social reform groups. As a moral duty and a civic duty, reformers fought against child marriage, for widow remarriage, and for women's education. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, a doctor and social reformer, was one of the most important people from this time. She was the first woman to be elected to the British Indian legislature (Madras Legislative Council, 1927). Her work to improve medical education for women, provide hostel amenities, and safeguard women from exploitation made the city a center of reforming feminism.[1] But these increases were not very big. Access was determined by caste,

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community, and class: Brahmin and upper-caste non-Brahmin families were disproportionately represented in higher education, while several working-class women from fishing, artisan, and Dalit communities continued in informal labor or domestic service. But the institutional seedbed—colleges, hostels, evening schools, and urban transport—was being planted.

Nationalist Consolidation and Transition (1937–1947)

During the late 1930s and 1940s, the Congress ministry's efforts to improve education coincided with a strong movement for self-respect and social change. Chennai's urban schools, including those administered by the Corporation, saw an increase in the number of students. People were starting to see females' education as a civic entitlement instead of a private privilege. The press and public rallies in Madras city made women's education and literacy political issues that needed to be addressed. During this time, two things stand out as especially important. First, the feminist associational sphere between the wars—women's conferences, professional networks for teachers and nurses helped women learn how to be leaders outside of school. Second, legislative reform gained traction concerning topics such as the devadasi system, culminating in its elimination in 1947 in the erstwhile Madras Province.[2] Even while the implementation was uneven and didn't always ensure socioeconomic security, the law's symbolism made education seem like the right way to go ahead and move up in the world. As independence neared, the women of Chennai participated in nationalist mobilization as organizers, healthcare workers, and educators. The city's high number of institutions, such newspapers, colleges, courts, and corporations, made it a good place to turn national ideas about citizenship into real changes in the city.

Early Postcolonial State-Building (1947–1970)

Independence changed women's education from a promise in the Constitution to a right. The state's investments in basic and secondary education, teacher training, and public health in Chennai coincided with the emergence of women's colleges such as Ethiraj College for Women (established in 1948), Stella Maris College (1947), and the expansion of programs at pre-existing institutions. The "professionalization" of women's education in fields like business, science, and social work was in line with a state that was quickly becoming more bureaucratic and needed teachers, clerks, nurses, and social workers.[3] The Corporation of Madras improved school infrastructure, scholarship funding, and sanitation, which had an effect on attendance (particularly for girls). The opening of government and women's hostels near colleges allowed first-generation women from peri-urban and rural areas around Madras (Tondiarpet, Perambur, eventually Tambaram, and beyond) sign up and stay in school. At the same time, the city's strong print culture sparked public discussions on dowry, marital abuse, and whether or not women should be allowed to work for pay. But there were still structural problems. Gendered norms restricted women's access to engineering and the physical sciences; labor markets sometimes confined women to teaching, nursing, and clerical positions. For Dalit and working-class women in the industrial areas of north Chennai (like Ennore-Manali), long journeys, hazardous neighborhoods, and the double load of taking care of the house limited their options. Still, educated degrees were being socially recognized as valuable for marriage negotiations and for limited upward mobility.

Welfare Expansion, Urbanization, and Mass Schooling (1970–1990)

During the 1970s and 1980s, Tamil Nadu had a very active welfare state. The noon meal initiative, which grew in importance throughout the 1980s, was the most important of them. It changed the number of girls who enrolled and stayed in primary school across the city's dense network of Corporation schools. Nutritional support, free textbooks, uniforms, and later bicycles (which were more widely available in the 2000s) lowered the hidden costs of learning for disadvantaged families and showed that the government was serious about girls' education. Chennai's urbanization got worse: industrial estates, housing board colonies, and slum improvement projects brought more women to the city. The path from school to work started to change. A lot of first-generation students went to polytechnics, nursing schools, teacher training

schools, and secretarial institutions. Women's colleges added more science classes, and co-ed colleges in the city opened up more seats.[4] The University of Madras' affiliation system made it possible for more people to attend college. Suburban campuses and evening institutions made higher education more accessible to working women.

Liberalization, the Knowledge Economy, and New Frontiers (1990–2010)

In the 1990s, economic reforms changed Chennai's focus to services, especially IT/ITES, finance, design, media, and healthcare. Women with graduate and postgraduate degrees in computer science, electronics, business, and management now have a new path to follow. There were a lot of private colleges for engineering, arts, and sciences in and around the city, which greatly increased the number of students who could go to college. Placement cells, soft-skills training, and campus recruiting made it routine for women to go from the classroom to the corporate corridors on Old Mahabalipuram Road (OMR) and in Tidel Park. Public transportation, such as MTC buses and suburban rail, was still very important, as was the city's increasing network of hostels for women from other states. Self-Help Groups (SHGs) grew stronger with state assistance in the late 1990s and 2000s. They gave women more control over their money by teaching them about microcredit, saving, and starting their own businesses. This helped many women stabilize their homes and pay for their daughters' schooling. The Vishaka Guidelines (1997) and other important legal events changed workplace rules. Women's cells and Internal Complaints Committees started to show up in bigger companies. Chennai's top schools solidified their reputations as places where women might move forward in the world and in their careers. At the same time, community institutions and open universities gave married women and single mothers a second opportunity.[5] The city's "educational ecosystem" now includes highly selective colleges, mid-tier private schools, vocational centers, and adult literacy programs, each of which fills a different need in empowerment.

Rights-Based, Tech-Enabled Inclusion and the Post-2010 Decade (2010–2025)

Over the past fifteen years, politics and technology have worked together to change how women are educated. The smartphone revolution happened at the same time as rights-based frameworks in Tamil Nadu, like the Right to Education at the school level, targeted scholarships, and gender-responsive budgeting. Women could get more credentials while still doing care work thanks to digital classrooms, MOOCs, and blended learning. Colleges in Chennai made placement preparation, coding bootcamps, and entrepreneurship cells a normal part of their programs. Hackathons and innovation labs aggressively sought out women to take part. Several Tamil Nadu programs helped the city's gendered mobility and educational continuity. In the early 2020s, women could ride state-run buses for free. This made it easier for college students and trainees to get to and from work. Scholarships and other incentives for schoolgirls, as well as more dorm space for college students, made it less likely that students would drop out during the important time after Class 12. At the same time, the 2013 POSH Act set up formal procedures for people to complain about sexual harassment on campus, which changed the way things were done at universities, hospitals, and businesses.[6] The COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2022) was a shock that set back progress for a while. School closures and digital inequalities hit girls in low-income homes the hardest. But Chennai's many NGOs, public libraries, community study centers, and institutions that are willing to help make do with gadget sharing, data subsidies, and modular assessments. After the pandemic, there was a lot of pent-up demand, and re-enrollments shot up. Short-cycle courses in healthcare, logistics, data entry, and retail let women who had stopped studying get back into the workforce quickly. By the middle of the 2020s, women in Chennai were working in a wide range of fields, including as software engineers, designers, nurses, teachers, bank officers, lawyers, journalists, researchers, and small business owners. Many of them were juggling family responsibilities with delayed marriage and having children.[7] Women's colleges added programs in data science, fintech, environmental sciences, and media

studies. Co-ed schools, on the other hand, improved their safety and mentorship systems. Tamil Nadu has some of the highest rates of female literacy and female gross enrollment in higher education in India. Chennai's district statistics are usually at or above the state average, which shows that the city has an advantage over the rest of the state.

Conclusion

Over the course of a century, Chennai's women have changed education from a protected privilege to a common expectation. More and more, it is also a way to get into public life, paid work, and civic leadership. At every stage, the city's unique combination of reformist tradition, institutional density, and practical welfare has been important. Early women's colleges opened up new possibilities; Corporation schools and midday meals made the base bigger; buses, hostels, and legal protections made public space easier to get around; and the IT-anchored economy provided new ways to climb. But empowerment isn't something that happens just once; it's a connection between institutions and how women deal with caste, class, gender, and space every day. Chennai's next goal is to make the "bundle" that already works for many people affordable access, safety, relevance, and dignity available to everyone. This way, a girl in a resettlement colony in north Chennai will have as smooth a glide-path as her friend in an aristocratic enclave. By tightening those bolts with targeted neighborhood compacts, better care infrastructure, digital public goods, and climate-resilient campuses, the city will not only continue its legacy, but it will also set a new standard for women's education and empowerment in cities across India.

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From Beneficiaries to Agents: Conceptualizing Women's Empowerment through Welfare Schemes in Tamil Nadu

K. Selvakumar

Women's Participation in State-Sponsored Schemes in Tamil Nadu

Historical Trajectory

Tamil Nadu has long been recognized as a pioneer in social welfare, with successive governments treating welfare not as charity but as a means of social justice. From the **Midday Meal Scheme** launched in the 1980s—which later became a national model—to targeted interventions such as marriage assistance programs, maternity benefits, and subsidized food canteens, the state has cultivated a strong legacy of people-centric welfare. Women have been a particular focus, given their central role in household well-being and community development.

Over the decades, Tamil Nadu has shifted from **universal provisioning** (food subsidies, school meals)

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to **targeted empowerment schemes** (scholarships for girls, microcredit programs, health insurance). This historical trajectory reflects a movement from welfare as relief, to welfare as **capability expansion and empowerment**.

Types of Schemes

(a) Economic Empowerment

- **Self-Help Groups (SHGs):** Tamil Nadu was among the early adopters of SHG-based microfinance models, which provided women with access to credit, savings, and collective bargaining power. SHGs have since become a backbone of women's economic participation in rural and peri-urban areas.
- **Microcredit and Entrepreneurship Programs:** State-supported microfinance and revolving credit schemes encourage women's entrepreneurship in agriculture, handicrafts, and small businesses.
- **Skill Development and Employment Initiatives:** Vocational training centers and targeted skill development schemes for women aim to integrate them into emerging sectors.

(b) Social Security

- **Maternity Benefits:** Programs like Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Benefit Scheme provide financial support to pregnant women, ensuring nutrition and reducing maternal mortality.
- **Old-Age and Widow Pensions:** Direct cash transfers offer financial stability to vulnerable groups of women without stable income or family support.
- **Nutrition Programs:** The Puratchi Thalaivar MGR Nutrition Scheme and Amma Canteens provide subsidized food and nutrition, reducing food insecurity among women-headed households.

(c) Education and Health

- **Scholarships and Incentives:** Free textbooks, uniforms, bicycles, and higher education assurance schemes have encouraged girls' enrollment and continuation in school.
- **Health Insurance:** Schemes such as the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme provide accessible healthcare coverage for women from low-income families.
- **Special Programs for Girl Children:** Initiatives like the Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme offer financial support to girls pursuing higher education, reducing dropout rates and promoting gender parity.

Challenges in Women's Access and Participation

Despite Tamil Nadu's reputation for progressive welfare schemes, women's actual access and participation remain constrained by multiple, overlapping barriers. These challenges illustrate the gap between **policy intent** and **lived realities**, showing that formal entitlement does not automatically translate into empowerment.

Awareness and Outreach Gaps

A key challenge is the **limited awareness** of available schemes, eligibility criteria, and application procedures. While Tamil Nadu has invested in outreach through community workers and local institutions, many women—especially in rural and peri-urban areas—remain unaware of the full spectrum of entitlements. Information is often disseminated in technical language, through bureaucratic notices, or via digital platforms inaccessible to less literate women. The lack of **proactive, community-based awareness campaigns** creates uneven participation.

Bureaucratic Hurdles and Documentation Barriers

Access is often mediated by administrative requirements such as proof of income, caste certificates, residence documentation, and bank account linkage. For women who lack control over household documents or who live in informal settlements, these requirements become exclusionary. Bureaucratic discretion at local offices can create **delays, duplication, and opportunities for gatekeeping**, deterring many from completing the process. Women with caregiving responsibilities also face **time poverty**, making it difficult to repeatedly visit government offices.

Digital Divide and Technology-Related Exclusion

The transition toward digital governance and direct benefit transfers (DBT) has streamlined delivery but also introduced **new forms of exclusion**. Many women lack smartphones, digital literacy, or reliable internet access. Biometric authentication errors, technical glitches, and limited support at e-sevai centers often prevent timely receipt of benefits. In rural areas, dependence on intermediaries for online applications can reinforce unequal power dynamics, undermining women's agency.

Socio-Cultural Constraints

Patriarchal norms continue to restrict women's mobility, decision-making, and visibility in public spaces. Even when schemes are available, women may face resistance from family members or communities in **claiming entitlements independently**. Social stigma can also discourage participation in programs targeted at widows, single women, or divorced women. Additionally, the heavy burden of **unpaid care work** leaves women with little time to engage in training, entrepreneurship, or political participation through scheme-related forums.

Caste, Class, and Rural–Urban Inequalities

Access to welfare is mediated by structural inequalities. Dalit, Adivasi, and economically marginalized women face **systematic barriers** in securing benefits, despite formal eligibility. Rural women are often disadvantaged by physical distance to service centers, while urban poor women in slums encounter exclusion due to lack of formal residence proof. In both contexts, frontline service providers may display biases based on caste, class, or marital status, further **deepening inequities**.

Opportunities and Enablers

While women's access to state-sponsored schemes in Tamil Nadu faces challenges, there are also significant **opportunities and enabling factors** that can enhance participation and empowerment. These enablers illustrate how innovative policies, institutions, and partnerships can bridge gaps between **entitlement and empowerment**.

Policy Innovations in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu's history of progressive welfare offers several examples of **inclusive, women-centered policies**. Universal programs like the **Midday Meal Scheme** and **Amma Canteens** have reduced food insecurity and improved women's health indirectly by lessening household care burdens. The **Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme** provides financial incentives for girls' education, reducing dropout rates and opening pathways for empowerment. By prioritizing both **universal access** and **targeted interventions**, Tamil Nadu demonstrates that welfare can move beyond subsistence to capability expansion.

Role of Self-Help Groups, Panchayati Raj Institutions, and Women Leaders

The **Self-Help Group (SHG) movement** in Tamil Nadu has been a major enabler of women's participation. SHGs not only expand financial access but also foster **collective bargaining power, peer support, and political voice**. Similarly, the **73rd Constitutional Amendment** and subsequent empowerment of **Panchayati Raj Institutions** have opened opportunities for women to act as local decision-makers and scheme monitors. Women leaders at the grassroots level often serve as **role models and intermediaries**, ensuring that marginalized women are informed and included in welfare initiatives.

Digital Governance and E-Services as Facilitators

The expansion of **digital platforms, e-sevai centers, and Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT)** has the potential to make welfare delivery more transparent, efficient, and less vulnerable to corruption. Assisted digital models—where local facilitators help women navigate online systems—can mitigate the risks of digital exclusion. Mobile-based grievance redress systems and SMS-based updates also improve accountability, reducing information asymmetry and giving women more control over their entitlements.

Civil Society and NGO Partnerships

Civil society organizations and NGOs play a crucial role in **awareness generation, training, and**

advocacy. Many grassroots organizations in Tamil Nadu have supported women in accessing schemes, resolving bureaucratic hurdles, and developing skills to sustain participation. Public–civil society partnerships enhance **trust, outreach, and inclusivity**, particularly for marginalized groups such as Dalit women, migrant workers, and urban slum dwellers.

Potential for Scaling Successful Models Nationally

Tamil Nadu's welfare architecture offers **replicable models** for other Indian states. Programs such as **Amma Canteens**(food security), **maternity benefit schemes** (maternal health and nutrition), and **SHG federations** (economic empowerment) can be adapted to different contexts. The state's emphasis on **policy continuity across governments** and integration of welfare with empowerment provides lessons for building **resilient, gender-sensitive welfare systems** at the national level.

Conceptual Insights and Policy Implications

Conceptual Insights

A conceptual reading of women's participation in Tamil Nadu's welfare architecture highlights that **participation cannot be equated with enrolment alone**. While access to schemes is necessary, the transformative potential lies in how participation expands women's **agency, decision-making capacity, and empowerment**. This reframing shifts the focus from counting beneficiaries to evaluating how welfare schemes **reshape power relations within households, communities, and institutions**.

Three key insights emerge:

1. **From Beneficiaries to Agents:** Women must be seen not merely as passive recipients of welfare but as active participants capable of shaping program design, implementation, and evaluation.
2. **From Access to Empowerment:** Access creates opportunity, but empowerment occurs only when women can exercise control over resources, voice preferences, and engage collectively.
3. **From Scheme-Specific to Systemic Change:** Individual schemes matter, but their real value lies in how they collectively contribute to **long-term capability expansion and gender equity**.

Policy Implications

(a) Designing Inclusive Schemes with Gender Sensitivity

- Policies should account for intersectionality by explicitly targeting marginalized groups such as Dalit, Adivasi, migrant, and single women.
- Simplified eligibility criteria, reduced documentation, and proactive outreach are crucial.
- Schemes should also address women's unpaid care work by integrating childcare and time-saving support.

(b) Monitoring and Evaluation with Gender-Disaggregated Data

- Current evaluation metrics emphasize **coverage** rather than **outcomes**. There is a need for gender-disaggregated data that tracks not only enrollment but also empowerment indicators such as decision-making, mobility, and asset ownership.
- Independent social audits and participatory monitoring can improve accountability and inclusivity.

(c) Strengthening Last-Mile Delivery Mechanisms

- Delivery must be simplified through single-window service centers, SHG-based facilitation, and community intermediaries.
- Assisted digital models should be scaled to prevent digital exclusion.
- Grievance redress mechanisms must be strengthened with local accessibility and time-bound resolution.

(d) Policy Integration with SDG 5 (Gender Equality)

- Tamil Nadu's welfare initiatives should be explicitly aligned with **Sustainable Development Goal 5**.
- Linking state schemes with global commitments reinforces accountability and positions Tamil Nadu as a leader in gender-inclusive development.

- Integration across sectors—health, education, nutrition, livelihoods, and political participation—can ensure that schemes collectively advance gender equality rather than functioning in silos.

Conclusion

Women's participation in state-sponsored schemes in Tamil Nadu reflects both the **strengths** of a progressive welfare state and the **persistent barriers** that limit empowerment. On the one hand, Tamil Nadu's policy innovations—ranging from universal nutrition programs to targeted education and health schemes—have created a culture of entitlement that fosters inclusion. The state's emphasis on self-help groups, local governance, and policy continuity further enhances women's access to welfare benefits.

Yet, as the analysis shows, access alone does not guarantee empowerment. Women continue to encounter **awareness gaps, bureaucratic and digital hurdles, socio-cultural restrictions, and intersectional inequalities**. These challenges mean that participation often stops at enrolment rather than translating into **agency, decision-making, and long-term capability expansion**.

The opportunities lie in **reframing welfare as empowerment**. Building women-centered, inclusive welfare models requires:

- Designing schemes that explicitly address intersectionality and unpaid care burdens.
- Strengthening last-mile delivery through single-window access, assisted digital platforms, and community-based facilitators.
- Embedding robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks with **gender-disaggregated indicators**.
- Linking state-level initiatives with **global gender equality commitments** under SDG 5.

Directions for Future Research and Practice

Future research should move beyond scheme-level evaluations toward **systemic and longitudinal studies** that examine how welfare influences women's capabilities across life stages. Intersectional analyses—covering caste, class, urban–rural divides, and digital access—are particularly crucial to understanding persistent inequities. At the practice level, partnerships between **state, civil society, and community-based women's groups** will be essential in transforming welfare from a safety net into a **springboard for empowerment**.

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Rukmani Lakshmipathi: The Prominent Freedom Fighter and A Social Reformer- A Study

Dr. J. Priya

Early Life & Education:

Rukmani Lakshmipathi was born to an agriculture family whose grandfather was the landlord in Madras. She was the Daughter of Huggahalli Srinivasa Rao Choodamani. She was born with silver-spoon on 6th December 1892. She was born in a family with political influence and her guardian was the Dewan of Cochin state. She was graduated from women's Christian College, Madras and she was the one among the first batch of women students school graduated from women's Christian College. There are only forty students were admitted fine the first batch of B.A in women's Christian College, Madras .From the very young age, she was infused with the thoughts of nationalism , social justice and the national independents movement. While she studying she was participated in various freedom struggle progress and women's rights programs. Like the birds of the same flock , she was deeply inspired & influenced by eminent national leader's such as Mahatma Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu and Rajagopalachari2.

Inter-Caste Marriage:

Rukmani was a girl of progressive thoughts from a young age and she set herself as an example to the society on empowerment and equality in many ways that also reflect in her marriage life as well. She married an MMC doctor who later turned his interest in Native Indian medicine named Dr. Achanta Lakshmipathi. Their marriage gave a shock-wave to the whole Madras presidency because inter-caste marriages were not prominent in that period. Later, she devoted her life more to the nation than her family.

Active Participation in Politics:

Rukmani Lakshmipathi joined Indian National Congress in 1923 at her 31 age and she had an active role in organizing the Youth League of the INC. However, she entered into social welfare activities way before she joined Congress. In 1911 she participated in the Women's movement and became the secretary of the Bharat StreeMahamandal. In 1917, she joined the Women's India Association (WIA). When she entered active politics in 1923, the first action done by Rukmani was donating all her jewelry to the Harijan Welfare Fund. It is unbelievable for the women of her age even this age to donate all the jewels, who already had four girl children, but she did it heroically. As an Indian representative, Rukmani Lakshmipathi attended the International Women's Suffrage Congress at Paris in 19264. She actively participated in political activities which are based on the Khadi movement, abolition of

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Child-Marriage, and Liquor prohibition. She used to wear Khadi and taught others to spin the Spindle and wear Khadi and so she makes a positive impression on others by wearing Khadi. Rukmani Lakshmipathi did not hesitate to confront the British, She vehemently opposed the Simon Commission. In 1929 at an organized meeting in the Madras beach, Rukmani ferociously orate against the commission, and celebrated a hypothetical Independence Day on January 26, 1930, by raising Tricolor in Triplicane, which is the bravest action done by a woman and that brought her into the front line of freedom struggle.

The First Female Prisoner of Salt Satyagraha:

The principle of Satyagraha followed by Gandhi attracted more women into the Indian Freedom Struggle. On the other hand, Gandhiji gave priority to women to participate in Sathyagrahas to achieve their political independence. Under the Civil Disobedient Movement, to oppose the Salt Tax, Gandhiji started his march to Dandi on 12 March 1930 for breaking the Salt Law. At that same time, under the leadership of Rajagopalachari, a march to break the Salt Law was conducted in Tamilnadu from Tiruchirappalli to Vedaranyam. Rukmani Lakshmipathi was a selected oneamong the 100 Sathyagrahis who were chosen for salt Satyagraha in Tamilnadu6. They started their march on 13th April followed by Gandhi and reached Vedaranyam on 28th April 1930. Many frontline leaders including Rajagopalachari were arrested for the violation of the Salt Law during the protest, while all the prominent leaders got arrested one by one, Rukmani Lakshmipathi courageously lead the march that reached Vedaranyam. On May 15, 1930, Rukmani Lakshmipathi picked a handful of salt from Vedaranyam and got arrested on the same day for treason against the British Empire. That made Rukmani Lakshmipathi the first woman to get arrested for the Salt Satyagraha as well as Civil Disobedient Movement throughout India. The Indian Ladies magazine praised her bravery for meeting the Lions inside the cave. She was taken to Vellore prison and imprisoned for one year. In the prison, as a political prisoner, she got the privilege of writing letters to home, among them 30 of those letters were preserved at Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

The First Women Member of Madras Legislative Assembly:

After facing much more agitation and jailing for Civil Disobedient Movement, she actively participated in politics as a member of the Indian National Congress. In 1934, she was elected to the Madras Legislative Council by winning a by-election. During 1935-36, she was appointed as the Vice president of the Tamilnadu Congress Committee and was elected the Municipal Councilor. She presided over the Tamilnadu Provincial Committee held at Karaikudi in 1936. After winning the 1937 election, Rukmani Lakshmipathi became the first women member of the Madras Presidency Legislative Assembly8. And then, she became a member of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress. In 1938, she visited Japan as a Member of the Good Will Mission. She was elected as the Deputy Speaker of the Madras Legislative Assembly and then she held the position of the Deputy Speaker from 1937 to 1945. In January 1941, Gandhiji called on the Individual Satyagraha Movement9. Rukmani Lakshmipathi was one of the 21 handpicked Sathyagrahis by Mahatma Gandhi himself to stand on a bench in an important spot in the town and shout out a slogan that opposed the British government. When she was arrested and submitted to the court where she made a statement: "Let the women in India follow the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and maintain the honor and dignity of the Motherland." Not only she was arrested, but she was also stripped off of her people's representative posts. When Independence was fast approaching, After the World war, under the Congress Ministry, when T.Prakasam became the Chief Minister of the Madras Presidency in 1946, Rukmani Lakshmipathi served as the Minister of Public Health and she was the First Female Minister of the Madras Presidency from May 1946 to March 1947. She was also served local bodies like corporations of Madras and the Chingelpet District Board. Further, she served as an Honorary Presidency Magistrate at Madras.

Achievments of Rukmani Lakshmipathy:

Rukmini Lakshmipathi was the first woman who got the degree in Madras University. She was one of the

political leaders who came from social work. She was one of the founder member of WIA and a prominent member of the same. She was the first woman who insisted the western education to Indian children. She worked for the implementation of adult education, female education and extension of elementary education. She actively participated in the freedom struggle and joined as a member of Indian National Congress (INC) in 192411. Her political activities were spread over TamilNadu and considered as an active congress woman. She was an opportunity to attend the 10th International Women's Suffrage Alliance Congress in Paris in 1929 as a delegate from India. She availed this chance to travel all over Europe and propagated for India. She was one of the women who clubbed her social activities with political activities. She was the secretary of 'Bharat Maha Mandal' which was an organization for social work.

She worked for the prohibition of liquor through 'Youth League' which was formed by her. She was actively involved in the agitation against Simon Commission and raised the slogan 'Simon go back' in 1929 and Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha in 1930 under the leadership of Rajaji. She was imprisoned in connection with salt sathyagraha. Again she was arrested and imprisoned for the participation of the Civil Disobedient Movement in 1932. She championed the cause of Harijan welfare and she contributed her whole wealth to Harijan Welfare Fund.

Rukmini Lakshmipathi was occupied in several positions and served significantly. She was elected to the Madras Presidency Legislative Assembly in the election of 1937. On 15 July 1937, she was elected Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. She was the first woman Minister for Public Health of the Madras Presidency in the T.Prakasam Cabinet, which was the one more credit in her career. She was imprisoned in 1930 due to her active participation in Salt Satyagraha at Vedaranyam. She was respectfully called 'Mother' by the Congress people. She made sincere attempt to enact of the social legislation on problems like caste system, child marriage, alcoholism, untouchability and Devadasi system.

Conclusion:

After 78 years of Indian Independence, it's our prime duty to honor and remember the prominent leaders who sacrificed a lot for our country. Like Rukmani Lakshmipathi, there are more progressive women who set themselves as an example for future generations by their selfless services to the country as well as the society. Rukmani Lakshmipathi was a great social reformer who worked for the upliftment of women in society. And so, she always remained an active social reformer, an advocate of the extension of the Elementary Education Act, Adult Education, and compulsory Female Education. Without them; we shouldn't be living like this for sure. After a long struggle for Independence, Rukmani was chosen to hoist the National flag in the Congress Office at Royapettah to commence Independence Day. In Independence India, Rukmani Lakshmipathi continued to be an MLA till her death on 6th August 1951. On her memory and to honor her service to the nation, a Road in Egmore, Chennai has been renamed after her. In 1997, the Government of India issued a postage stamp in her honor.Rukmani Lakshmipathi is one of the prominent freedom fighter of India and she is one of the pioneer women who participated in politics in the British era.

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இராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ் – ஓர் வரலாற்றுப் பார்வை

முனைவர் கு.சக்திவேல்

பிறப்பு

திருநெல்வேலி மாவட்டத்தில் கள்ளிக்குளம் என்ற கிராமத்தில் மைக்கேல் பாக்கியநாதன்-சொர்ணம்மாள் தம்பதியரின் மகளாக 1919ம் ஆண்டு ஏப்ரல் திங்கள் 7ம் நாள் இராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ் பிறந்தார்.

தமிழகத்தில் குறிப்பாக, கோயம்புத்தூரிலும் அதைச் சுற்றியுள்ள கிராமப்புறங்களிலும் பெண்கள் மற்றும் குழந்தைகளின் வளர்ச்சிக்கு இவர் செய்திருக்கும் பணி மிகவும் பெரியது. 1934ம் ஆண்டு இவர் பத்தாம் வகுப்பு படித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கும் போதே, இவரின் தாய்மாமன் தேவதாஸ் (உதவி ஆய்வாளர்) என்பவருக்கு திருமணம் செய்துவைக்க வீட்டில் ஏற்பாடு செய்தனர். ஆனால் இராஜம்மாளுக்கு அதிகம் படிக்க வேண்டும் என்று ஆசை. இப்போது எனக்கு திருமணம் வேண்டாம் நிறைய படிக்க வேண்டும் என்று எவ்வளவோ போராடிப் பார்த்தார். ஆனால் தன் பெற்றோரின் விருப்பத்தின்படி அவரின் தாய்மாமாவான தேவதாஸ் என்பவரை மணந்தார். ஆனால் பத்தாரம் வகுப்பை முடித்து விட்டுத்தான் மாமியார் வீட்டுக்குச் செல்வேன் என்று பிடிவாதமாக சொல்லிவிட்டு, மீதி ஏழு மாத படிப்பை விடுதியில் தங்கி படித்து தேர்வு எழுதினார். தேர்வு முடிந்தவுடன் கணவர் வீட்டிற்குச் சென்றார். எஸ்.எஸ்.எல்.சி. தேர்வில் அதிக மதிப்பெண் பெற்றார்.

இராணிமேரிக் கல்லூரியில் பி.எஸ்ஸி. ஹோம் சயின்ஸ் பட்டப்படிப்பில் சேர்ந்தார். ஹோம் சயின்சில் படித்து தங்கப்பதக்கம் பெற்றார். இந்தியாவில் அதற்கு மேல் படிக்க வசதியில்லாத காலகட்டம் அது. அந்த தருணத்தில் மத்திய அரசு சில துறைகளில் உயர்கல்விக்காக மாணவ-மாணவிகளை வெளிநாட்டுக்கு அனுப்பி படிக்கவைக்கும் திட்டத்தை கொண்டு வந்தது. ராஜம்மாள் ப. தேவதாஸ் அவர்கள் இத்திட்டத்திற்கு விண்ணப்பித்தார்.

அமெரிக்கா செல்லுதல்

டெல்லியில் நடந்த நேர்முகத் தேர்வில் வெற்றிபெற்று மத்திய அரசு செலவில் அமெரிக்காவிலுள்ள ஒஹையோ மாநில பல்கலைக்கழகத்தில் தனது விருப்பப் பாடமான ஹோம் சயின்ஸ் மேற்படிப்பு படிக்க தேர்ந்தெடுக்ப்பட்டார். மூன்றாண்டுகளில் எம்.எஸ்ஸி., எம்.ஏ. பிஎச்.டி., (1947-1950) ஆகிய மூன்று பட்டங்களை பெற்று தாயகம் திரும்பினார்.

கௌரவ விரிவுரையாளர், வரலாற்றுத்துறை, மாநிலக் கல்லூரி (தன்னாட்சி), சென்னை.

உலகத்தமிழ் மாநாட்டில் பங்கேற்றல்

1951ல் மே மாதத்தில் இலங்கையில் யாழ்ப்பானத்தில் உலகத் தமிழ் மாநாடு நடந்தது. அதன் தலைவராக அவினாசிலிங்கம் சென்ற போது, ராஜம்மாள் அவர்களையும் அழைத்துச் சென்றதுடன் நிகழ்ச்சி நிரலிலும் முக்கிய இடம் அளித்தார்கள்.

1950 முதல் 2002 வரை வகித்த பதவிகள்

1950ம் வருடம் அமெரிக்காவிலிருந்து தாயகம் திரும்பியவுடன் புதுதில்லி செவிலியர் கல்லூரியில் பேராசிரியராக ராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ் பொறுப்பேற்றார். அப்போதுதான் உருவாகிக் கொண்டிருந்த இந்திய மனையியல் சங்கத்தின் பூர்வாங்கக் கூட்டங்களில் ஆயுள் உறுப்பினர்களில் ஒருவராக கலந்து கொண்டார். டெல்லி பல்கலைக்கழக மகளிர் சங்கத்தின் செயலாளராகத் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்டார். 1953-55ல் பரோடாவிலுள்ள எம்.எஸ். பல்கலைக்கழகத்தில் முதன்மையர் மற்றும் மனையியல் பேராசிரியராகவும், மனையியல் புலம், புதுதில்லி மத்திய அரசின் செவிலியர் கல்லூரியின் உணவியல் பேராசிரியராகவும் (1951-53) ராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ் பணியாற்றியுள்ளார்.

1955 முதல் 1961 வரை சத்துணவு உதவி இயக்குநராகவும், தலைமை மனை பொருளியலறிஞராகவும், இந்திய அரசின் உணவு மற்றும் விவசாயத் துறையில் இணை இயக்குநராகவும் (மனையியல்), விரிவாக்க இயக்குநராகவும் இராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ் பணியாற்றியுள்ளார்.

1960 முதல் 1981 வரை ஸ்ரீ அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் கல்லூரியின் முதல்வராக பணியாற்றினார். 1961 முதல் 1971 வரை இந்திய மனையியல் கழகத்தின் தலைவராக 10 ஆண்டுகள் இராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ் பணியாற்றினார். 1975 முதல் 1976 வரை மத்திய அரசின் புதுதில்லியிலுள்ள இந்திய வேளாண்மை ஆராய்ச்சி கழகத்தில் உதவி இயக்குனராகவும் இருந்தார்.

அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் கல்லூரியின் தோற்றம்

மனையியல் கல்வியின் சிறப்பை யாரும் அவ்வளவாக உணராதிருந்த கால கட்டத்தில் பெண்களின் மத்தியில் மனையியல் கல்வியை பரப்ப வேண்டும், பெண்கள் சீரும் சிறப்பும் அடைய வேண்டும் என்ற எண்ணத்துடனும், கிராமங்களில் வாழும் பெண்கள் கல்லூரிக் கல்வியை முழுமையாக பெற வேண்டும் என்று எண்ணிய அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் 1957ம் ஆண்டு ஜூலை மாதம் 24ம் தேதி அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் கல்லூரியை உருவாக்கினார்.

1978-ல் அவிநாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் கல்லூரிக்கு சென்னைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் 'தன்னாட்சி' அதிகாரம் வழங்கியது. தன்னாட்சி அதிகாரம் பெற்ற அக்காலத்தின் எட்டு கல்லூரிகளில் அது ஒன்றுதான் மகளிர் கல்லூரி. 1988-ல் அக்கல்லூரி நிகர்நிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகத் தகுதி பெற்று, அவிநாசிலிங்கம் பெண்கள் பல்கலைக்கழகமாக உயர்ந்தது. ராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் அதன் துணைவேந்தர் ஆனார். பின்னர் அதன் வேந்தராகவும் செயல்பட்டார்.

பல்கலைக்கழக வேந்தராக பதவியேற்றல்

1978ல் சென்னைப் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தில் டி.எஸ்ஸி. பட்டம் பெற்று 1988 ஜூன் முதல் 1994 ஜூன் வரை அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் பல்கலைக் கழகத்தின் முதல் துணைவேந்தராகவும் 1994 ஜூலை 1 முதல் மார்ச் 2002 வரை பல்கலைக்கழக வேந்தரகவும் பணியாற்றியுள்ளார். தேசிய மற்றும் பன்னாட்டு அமைப்புகளில் ஆலோசனை வழங்கும் பதவிகளை வகித்து வந்தார்.

நூல்வெளியீடு

மனையியலின் பொருள்' (ஹுனுச்ணடிணஞ் ணிஞூ ணூடனு ஏணிட்னு குஞிடினுணஞிஞு) என்ற நூலை 1958ல் வெளியிட்டு, அதில் மனையியல் என்பது வாழ்க்கைகுரிய கல்வியாகும். வீடும் குடும்பமும் ஒரு நாட்டின் அளவு கோல்களாகும். இவையே நாட்டின் முன்னேற்றத்தை காண்பிக்கிறது.

'குடும்பக்கலை' என்பது ஆரம்பப்பள்ளி முதல் பல்கலைக்கழகம் வரையிலும் சிறந்த இடத்தை பெற்றுள்ளது. முதியோர் கல்வி திட்டங்களிலும், கிராம நல, தேசிய நல திட்டங்களிலும் பெரிய வாய்ப்பு கிடைத்திருக்கிறது. நாகரிகம் துவங்கிய காலத்திலிருந்து சமூகத்தின் வளர்ச்சிக்கும், நலத்திற்கும், பெருமைக்கும் இன்பத்திற்கும் அடிப்படையாக இருந்து வந்திருப்பது குடும்பம் ஆகும். உயர்ந்த ஆன்மீகப் பண்புகள் நல்ல குடும்ப வாழ்க்கையிலிருந்து உற்பத்தி ஆகின்றன.

சீரிய குடும்ப வாழ்க்கைக்கு கல்வியை தருவது குடும்பக்கலை. இந்நூலின் குறிக்கோள்கள் வாழ்க்கையின் உயர்ந்த இன்பமும், நிறையும் பெறுவதாகும். வாழ்க்கையின் தினசரி தேவைகளான உணவு, உடை, வீடு, பணம், உயிர், உடல்நலம், குழந்தை வளர்ப்பு, கோயில் பாதுகாப்பு, சமூக கடமைகள், இறைவழிபாடு போன்ற பல துறைகளை உள்ளடக்கியதே குடும்பக்கலை நூலின் சிறப்பம்சமாகும். குடும்பக்கலை நூல் மொத்தம் இரண்டு பாகங்களாக வெளிவந்தாலும் இவ்விரண்டு நூலும் மொத்தம் ஐந்து பாகங்களாக பிரிக்கப்பட்டு அதில் மனித ஆரோக்கியம், தினசரி உணவு வகைகள், சுத்தம், சுகாதாரம், வீடு பராமரித்தல், நோயின்றி வாழ்தல் ஆகியவற்றை தெளிவுபட விளங்கவைக்கும் நூலாகும்.

1997ம் ஆண்டு எழுதிய 'அய்யா அவர்கள் உருவாக்கிய அவினாசிலிங்கம் பல்கலைக்கழகம்' என்ற நூலில் அய்யா அவர்கள் தியாகச் சுடராய், தூய நல்ல வாழ்வின் சான்றாக காந்தியின் வழியில் வாழ்ந்து கல்விக்கும் பெண்கல்விக்கும் தன்னை அர்ப்பணித்துக் கொண்டார்.

அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் கல்லூரியிலிருந்து மாதந்தோறும் வெளியிடப்படும் ஒரு புத்தகம் 'விஞ்ஞானச்சுடர்' ஆகும். இது அவினாசிலிங்கம் கல்வி அறக்கட்டளை சார்பில் அறிவியல் தமிழ் மாத இதழாக வெளியிடப்படுகிறது.

சத்துணவு திட்ட உயர்மட்டக்குழுவில்
இராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ்

1982ம் ஆண்டு அப்போதைய தமிழ்நாட்டின் முதல்வர் எம்.ஜி.ஆர். குழந்தைகளுக்காக சத்துணவு திட்டத்தை அறிமுகப்படுத்தியபோது, அத்திட்டத்தை கண்காணிக்க அமைக்கப்பட்ட உயர்மட்டக் குழுவில் இடம்பெற்றிருந்தவர் டாக்டர் ராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ்.

அவினாசிலிங்கம் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் புகழை உலக அரங்கில் ஓங்குவித்து பலநாடுகளில் உள்ள பல்கலைக்கழகங்களுடன் இணைந்து செயலாற்ற பல திட்டங்கள் வகுத்தார். பல ஆராய்ச்சித் திட்டங்களைத் துவக்கி அதன் மூலம் புதுப்புதுக் கண்டுபிடிப்புகளையும், கண்டுபிடித்த முடிவுகளை மக்களுக்குப் பயன்படும் வகையில் மக்களிடையில் பரப்ப விரிவுப் பணியையும் ஊக்குவித்து பல்கலைக்கழக படிப்பை நகர, கிராம மக்களுக்குப் பயன்பட வைத்தார். இந்த அரிய செயல்களுக்காக மத்திய அரசின் பத்மஸ்ரீ விருதை பெற்றார். பல பல்கலைக்கழகங்கள் அவருக்கு கௌரவ டாக்டர் பட்டம் கொடுத்து கௌரவித்தன. இவ்வாறு கல்வி உலகில் குறிப்பாக பெண் கல்வித்துறையில் மேலும் மேலும் முன்னேறி புகழின் உச்சியில் இருந்தார்.

இன்னும் பல ஆண்டுகள் இருந்து இப்பல்கலைக்கழகத்திற்கும், கல்வி உலகிற்கும், பெண்கள் முன்னேற்றத்திற்கும் பெரும்பணி ஆற்றுவார் என நம்பிக்கொண்டிருந்த எல்லோருக்கும் பெரும் ஏமாற்றத்தைக் கொடுத்தார். உடல் நலம் சரியில்லாமல் 17.3.2002 அன்று மரணம் அடைந்தார். கல்லூரியின் முதல்வராக பொறுப்பேற்ற ராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ், அவினாசிலிங்கம் கல்விக் கோவிலில் முழு மனதோடும் எல்லையில்லாத ஆர்வத்தோடும் பணிபுரிய டாக்டர் தி.க அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் கொடுத்த ஊக்கமும் நம்பிக்கையும் முக்கிய காரணமாகும். இவரது அயராத உழைப்பாலும், பணியாளர்களின் அன்பு பணியாலும் மாணவியரின் அன்பு நிறைந்த உழைப்பாலும்

இன்று உலகமே வியக்கும் பல்கலைக்கழகமாக கோவை நகரையே பெருமைப்படுத்திக்கொண்டிருக்கிறது.

கோவை அவிநாசிலிங்கம் பல்கலைக்கழகம் மற்றும் நியூட்ரிஷன் சொசைட்டி ஆஃப் இந்தியா இணைந்து ராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் நினைவைப் போற்றும் வகையில், ராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ் விருதினை ஆண்டுதோறும் வழங்கி கௌரவித்து வருகிறது.

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Empowerment of Muslim women through education in Vellore District- A Study

K. Murugan

Institutional Landscape

Some of the main educational institutions and organisations that contribute to Muslim women's education and empowerment in Vellore district include: MMES Women's Arts & Science College (Melvisharam Muslim Educational Society) Established in 2007, this is a minority institution for women. It offers a variety of undergraduate, postgraduate, M.Phil, and PhD courses. As a women's college, its focus is not only academic learning but also holistic development-through infrastructural amenities, clubs, NSS/NCC, placement/career guidance, etc.

Vaniyambadi Muslim Educational Society:

This society manages several institutions including Islamiah Women's Arts and Science College (established 1997), Islamiah Girls' Higher Secondary School, and others. Their educational offerings allow Muslim girls to access higher education locally, and reduce barriers related to travel, safety, cost. Mun Muslim Girls Primary Schools in Arcot and Ranipet (parts of Vellore district).These schools provide foundational education to Muslim girls from early grades, often with Urdu medium or with strong community support.

Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind (Vellore District):Runs Niswan (girls') Quran/Islamic teaching centres, scholarships, and educational support for needy students.

Benefits: Education of Muslim women through these institutions brings multiple benefits:

Address Asst. Professor in History, Islamiah College, Vaniyambadi

1. Increased access and enrolment: Local women's colleges and girls' schools reduce physical, cultural, and economic barriers to education (e.g., travel costs, family safety, cultural norms).
2. Higher academic achievements**:** There are reports of Muslim girls earning university ranks, and performing well in arts, social sciences and science courses.
3. Improved socio‑economic mobility**:** With degrees, women are more able to get better employment or engage in entrepreneurial or teaching work etc. Education also helps in participation in civic/social decision making.
4. Enhanced self-esteem and empowerment: Education gives confidence, awareness of rights, ability to interact beyond traditional gender norms. It tends to reduce dependency and opens up choices.
5. Preservation and understanding of culture and language:In some schools (e.g. Urdu medium or offering Urdu / Islamic Studies), students can maintain connection with their religious and linguistic heritage while also getting mainstream education. This can foster a sense of identity and belonging.

The growth of self confidence is due to the growth of education, which made today's educated Muslim women 'Empowered'.

Challenges

Despite these positive trends, there are several challenges:

1. Resource constraints: Many of the institutions may lack adequate infrastructure (labs, libraries, technology), funds for scholarships, or modern teaching aids.
2. Quality vs access tradeoffs: Access may increase but sometimes quality lags (teacher quality, curriculum relevance, exposure to modern skill sets).
3. Social / cultural barriers**:** Some Muslim families might still hesitate to send girls to higher education due to safety, traditional gender roles, or economic costs.
4. Language barriers: Students in Urdu medium or with less proficiency in English/Tamil may find higher education & competitive exams more difficult.
5. Awareness: Some potential students/families might not know about the available institutions, or about scholarships / support options.
6. Employment opportunities: Even after education, women may face difficulties securing jobs due to limited networks, discrimination, or lack of local opportunities.

Suggestions for Strengthening Empowerment

To build on the existing educational ecosystem and further empower Muslim women in Vellore, the following steps could help: expand scholarship & financial aid for Muslim women to reduce dropout at higher secondary and college levels.

Enhance infrastructure & quality at women's colleges:

Better labs, digital classes, tie-ups with industry for internships, remedial classes for weak students Skill development & vocational training integrated with academic curriculum so that students are job ready. Strengthen community outreach & awareness: campaign in rural Muslim communities about the importance of girls' education and existing opportunities .Language support: bridging programs to help students who studied in Urdu medium or who are weak in English / Tamil.

Safe transport / hostel facilities:

Particularly for girls coming from remote or conservative areas, to reduce obstacles relating to travel safety or staying away from home. Monitoring & data collection: gather recent district level data on enrolment, drop‑out, performance disaggregated by religion and gender to better assess progress and plan interventions.

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The Role of Women in Tamil Nadu Political Sphere in Dalit Activism

Madhankumar.S[1] and Dr. B. Perundevi[2]

Dalit Women's Activism in Tamil Nadu

Dalit activism in Tamil Nadu represents a sustained and transformative challenge to entrenched caste hierarchies, socio-economic marginalization, and gendered subordination. Within this broader struggle, Dalit women occupy a distinctive and pivotal position, negotiating the compounded oppressions of caste and gender while simultaneously articulating demands for social justice, political representation, and economic equity. Their activism reflects an intersectional praxis that is both historically grounded and contemporaneously relevant, linking the legacies of anti-caste reform movements with modern advocacy for women's rights and empowerment.The mobilization of Dalit women in Tamil Nadu can be traced to early anti-caste reform initiatives and grassroots social movements that sought to dismantle feudal oppression. The 1968 Keezhvenmani massacre, which exposed the brutal exploitation of Dalit agricultural laborers, became a watershed moment, catalyzing the emergence of organized Dalit women's activism. Leaders such as **KrishnammalJagannathan** and organizations like **LAFTI (Land for Tillers' Freedom)** foregrounded land redistribution as a critical vehicle for social transformation, directly challenging entrenched feudal structures and creating spaces for Dalit women to exercise agency within their communities. Subsequently, Dalit women have consistently engaged in struggles over labor rights, access to education, social protection, and the eradication of caste-based violence, forging a distinctive activist ethos that bridges grassroots mobilization with institutional advocacy. Despite their central contributions, Dalit women continue to face systemic barriers in achieving political and social parity. According to the 2011 Census, Scheduled Castes constitute approximately 16.6% of India's population, with women representing roughly half of this demographic.

In Tamil Nadu, Dalit women's representation in political offices—particularly within higher legislative bodies—remains disproportionately low. A study on Dalit women panchayat leaders revealed that many occupy positions of nominal authority, frequently excluded from substantive decision-making processes due to entrenched patriarchal and caste-based hierarchies. Further illustrating the persistence of structural inequities, an RTI survey indicated that between 2020 and June 2025, 3,041 cases under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act were registered across nine districts in Tamil Nadu, with Madurai accounting for the highest incidence at 514 cases.

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Contributions to Dalit Activism and Politics

Dalit women's engagement transcends symbolic representation; they have catalyzed substantive social and political transformation:

- **Grassroots Governance**: Through panchayats, Dalit women have addressed water scarcity, sanitation, and land rights, often achieving outcomes superior to male predecessors while fostering inclusive development.
- **Advocacy and Mobilization**: They organize federations to demand enforcement of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and advocate for women's representation in higher legislative bodies, influencing parties like ViduthalaiChiruthaigalKatchi.
- **Cultural Resistance**: By reclaiming narratives through literature, music, and public discourse, Dalit women construct counter-narratives to Brahmanical patriarchy, inspiring youth and sustaining collective identity.
- **Electoral Influence**: As both voters and leaders, Dalit women shape identity-based politics. Over 277,000 women panchayat heads exemplify their latent potential to broaden representation and policy impact.

Dalit women in Tamil Nadu exemplify a vanguard of political activism, bridging personal emancipation and collective liberation. Their trajectory—from historical erasure to contemporary leadership—demonstrates a form of vernacular liberalism demanding equity beyond formal reservations. By confronting violence, structural bias, and socio-economic marginalization, they innovate strategies for political inclusion and social justice. Ensuring the sustainability of their impact requires institutional reforms, capacity-building programs, amplified visibility, and cross-movement solidarity, thereby fully harnessing the transformative potential of Dalit women within Tamil Nadu's political sphere.

Limited Political Representation

Despite the implementation of reservation policies, Dalit women remain underrepresented in higher echelons of governance. At the panchayat level, women constitute nearly one-third of elected representatives due to mandated quotas; however, studies indicate that many Dalit women occupy these positions nominally, while real decision-making power is often exercised by male relatives or dominant-caste intermediaries. Their limited participation in committees, development planning, and budget allocation underscores a persistent discrepancy between formal representation and substantive empowerment. In higher legislative arenas, such as the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, Dalit women constitute a marginal fraction of elected members. The 2021 assembly elections marked one of the lowest points in female representation in 25 years, highlighting the enduring structural and socio-political impediments to gender and caste parity. These patterns reflect both the entrenched dominance of upper-caste political networks and the economic marginalization of Dalit women, which restricts their capacity to contest elections independently.

Caste-Based Discrimination in Governance

Dalit women in Tamil Nadu face persistent caste-based discrimination within political institutions themselves. They are frequently excluded from committee meetings, denied access to development funds, and subjected to informal sanctions by dominant-caste actors. Such discrimination undermines the efficacy of constitutional provisions for reservation, revealing the limitations of legal mandates when social hierarchies remain unchallenged. Furthermore, women occupying reserved seats often face hostility from other council members, making policy implementation and governance initiatives challenging. A particularly alarming challenge is the vulnerability of Dalit women to physical violence, harassment, and intimidation, especially when their political activity threatens entrenched interests. Multiple high-profile cases underscore this risk:

- **Leelavathi Murder Case (1997)**: Leelavathi, a Dalit woman and elected councillor in Madurai, was murdered allegedly due to her efforts to provide piped water to her ward. Her assassination

highlighted the extreme measures employed to suppress Dalit women's political agency.

- **Melavalavu Massacre (1997)**: The killing of a Dalit Panchayat President and six others revealed the lengths to which dominant-caste groups would go to prevent Dalit political participation. Dalit women in the region faced threats and intimidation, discouraging their active involvement in governance.
- **SC/ST Atrocities Cases (2020–2025)**: According to RTI data, 3,041 cases under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act were filed across nine districts of Tamil Nadu, with Madurai recording the highest number at 514 cases. A significant proportion of these cases were dismissed citing "mistake of fact," reflecting systemic inefficiencies in protecting Dalit women from caste-based violence.

Such incidents illustrate the persistent danger associated with political engagement for Dalit women, particularly in rural areas where social hierarchies remain rigid.

Judicial Interventions and Case Law

Judicial mechanisms have occasionally provided avenues for justice and accountability, though challenges remain:

- **Arokia Mary Lucia v. State of Tamil Nadu (2004)**: The Madras High Court emphasized the state's obligation to protect Dalit women from caste-based violence and recognized the need for proactive intervention in cases of social discrimination.
- **Dr. A. Ganapathi v. State of Tamil Nadu (2019)**: This case involved a Dalit woman subjected to social and economic boycotts. The judgment reinforced the enforceability of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and highlighted systemic gaps in protection mechanisms.
- **Public Interest Litigation on Housing for SC Beneficiaries (2025)**: A PIL filed for equitable housing for Scheduled Caste beneficiaries drew attention to the structural inequalities that impede Dalit women from accessing socio-economic resources. The court's directive underscored the state's duty to ensure effective implementation of welfare measures.

Economic marginalization remains a critical impediment to political participation. Dalit women frequently lack access to campaign financing, educational resources, and organizational networks, placing them at a disadvantage relative to dominant-caste or elite women. These constraints limit their capacity to contest elections independently, sustain long-term political careers, and assert authority within governance structures. The intersectionality of caste and gender intensifies these vulnerabilities. Dalit women bear a disproportionate burden of domestic labor, face mobility restrictions, and often experience social ostracization, all of which reduce their ability to engage consistently in political and community organizing.

Policy Gaps and Implementation Challenges

Even when Dalit women attain elected positions, converting policies into tangible benefits remains challenging. Bureaucratic resistance, entrenched local elites, and societal biases often hinder the delivery of welfare schemes such as housing, education, and livelihood support. Their political struggles encompass systemic discrimination, violence, resource inequities, and institutional barriers. Despite constitutional safeguards and grassroots activism, substantive empowerment is limited by entrenched socio-political hierarchies. Legal interventions and policy initiatives demonstrate both possibilities and constraints in promoting equality. The welfare schemes designed to address housing, education, healthcare, and livelihood support frequently encounter gaps in both reach and effectiveness. Dalit women's political struggles are thus multifaceted: they contend with systemic discrimination, sporadic or sustained violence, unequal distribution of resources, and institutional barriers that constrain decision-making power. Even with constitutional guarantees, affirmative action, and grassroots mobilization, substantive empowerment is often curtailed by enduring socio-political hierarchies.Legal interventions and targeted policy

initiatives demonstrate both the potential for inclusion and the limitations inherent in entrenched systems of inequality. While they can open avenues for participation and representation, the broader structural environment—marked by power asymmetries, cultural norms, and bureaucratic inertia—often dictates the extent to which policies translate into tangible, transformative outcomes for Dalit women.

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History of Women in Policing with Special Reference to all Women Police Stations in Tamilnadu.

Shirly Grace Nirmala V .R[1] and Maya R K[2]

Introduction

The societal need to safeguard one's materials, properties, and monitor actions that could potentially harming a community's existence led to the emergence of policing. Policing encompasses not merely safekeeping but also enforcing the laws of the land. This enforcement serves to prevent crime and maintain law and order, ensuring the peaceful functioning of society.

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To understand how these fundamental needs shaped contemporary law enforcement structures, it is essential to examine the historical evolution of policing systems, particularly in the Indian context.

History of Policing in India

The role of women in policing in India is a story of gradual progression from symbolic roles to positions of substantial authority, reflecting the changing status of women in Indian society. The origin of modern policing in India can be traced to the rise of the modern state and development of formal legal political institutions consisting of civil officers, charged with the duty to maintain public order, enforcing law and by preventing crime from happening . But in ancient times, the difference in the functioning of the police and military was very subtle. The duty of protecting the leader and safeguarding the community is often done by the same set of designated personnels. While the modern, formalized system of police forces did not exist in ancient times, there is significant evidence of women performing roles that we would today recognise as law enforcement, security and investigative functions. The highlights of women's participation in security and related functions in the country's history is delineated below.

Women in policing roles in ancient India

The mention of crimes and punishments in the *Rigveda* and the *Atharva Veda* indicates the presence of a network of personnel to enforce law of the land. In India early history of policing can be traced to the epics *Ramayana, Mahabharata* and the political treatise *Arthashathra*. Valmiki's description of *Dandayadha Dharakas* in Lanka represents the presence of policing of sorts. The Mahabharata features certain female characters like Chitrangada and Shikandini who were trained as warriors.

The Greek historians who accompanied Alexander the Great noted that some Indian kingdoms had women fighting alongside men. Though not police, the women in these accounts possibly established a precedent for women in the roles of protection against violence. The cultural acceptance of women in combat roles could have made the idea of females as security guards and security agents are more plausible.

Kautalya's Arthashathra has a detailed account of *Dandhaniti* which represents the legal system and established policing system during the time of the Mauryas.1 In Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, the Nagaradhyaksha or Nagarak is referred to as a city superintendent, an official with comprehensive responsibilities for urban administration and law enforcement. In the Mauryan administrative system the '*Nagarika*' or '*Purpala'* in larger cities and '*Gopa*' in villages used to maintain law and order. Guptas have been known to follow the system laid down by the Mauryans with few changes, which continued for centuries till the beginning of the Turkic invasions.The Arthashastra of Kautilya (2nd Cen B.C. to 3rd Cen A.D.) describes a sophisticated intelligence and internal security network in which women played an integral role, often operating undercover. According to the Arthashastra the *Pracharikas* (Superintendents of Morals) were female agents who moved freely in society, especially in places where men might not have easy access. Their duties included surveillance such as monitoring the activities of government officials, merchants and general public to prevent corruption, fraud and anti-state activities; investigation-posing as artisans, servants, ascetics or fortune-tellers to gather intelligence on suspects; and crime prevention by keeping an eye on potential criminal elements in the kingdom. *Vishakanyas* (poison-maidens) operated as political assassins and used as a specialised tool by the state. They were made immune to certain poisons and used to eliminate the enemies of the king. The Arthashastra also mentions female spies or *Stricharas.* They could be widows, ascetics or even skilled persons such as musicians and dancers who would gain the trust of their targets. Women also played critical security roles within the royal palaces as female bodyguards *(Atmarakshita)* to the royal family especially the queen and the royal quarters or Anthapura.

These women were supposedly skilled in armed combat and weaponry and trusted with the innermost security of the palace. There were also *Anthapura-adhyakshas* or senior women who managed the royal

household and were responsible for the security and conduct of everyone within it, effectively acting as an internal police force. Though the accounts given above can in no way be stated that there were women police persons in the modern sense, as there were no uniformed female police patrolling the streets they did hold formal state-sanctioned positions that involved critical aspects of policing such as surveillance, investigation, intelligence gathering and personal security. Women were part of the ancient state machinery for maintaining internal order and protecting the ruler and his household.

Women in policing roles in medieval India

Formal documented evidence of women holding structured police roles in medieval India is extremely scarce, much more so than in the ancient period. However, based on available sources the gender inclusive bureaucracy of the Mauryan period gave way to Persian and Central Asian traditions brought in by the Sultanates and the Mughals. During the Mughal period, the role of women in statecraft declined in general.Women continued to serve in the security capacity within the royal palaces, specifically in the *Zenana* or the women's quarters. The Mughal *zenana* was a complex institution where security was paramount and it was handled by a combination of trusted male guards stationed outside and by a powerful internal administration of females inside. Female guards of *Ustad-Begums* (teacher-governesses) and *Daroghas* (superintendents) were responsible for the discipline and security of the *Zenana*.They commanded a staff of female guards, servants and slaves. These women were the *de facto* police force within the *zenana* controlling access, investigating internal disputes and preventing any breaches of security. Their authority was absolute within the walls of the *zenana.*

Similar systems existed among the Rajputs where the Ranis and royal women were protected by dedicated female guards. These women were trained in combat for the final defense of the palace women during a siege such as securing the inner quarters or preparing for mass suicide.

Like in ancient times, there was no modern, uniformed police force. Law and order was maintained through a mix of the king's soldiers, and local officials called *Kotwals* who were the chief officers in cities for law and order, magisterial duties as well as administrative duties. There are no known records of women holding this position of *Kotwals.*

Women in policing roles in Tamilakam

There is evidence in the rich literary texts from the Sangam period (Circa.300 B.C-300A.D.) and the subsequent periods about the role of women in policing though not from political treatises like the Arthashastra. The concept of a formal "police force" did not exist but law and order was maintained through a combination of the king's authority, his officials and community-based systems. Women had specific and respected roles within this framework. The concept of *Pattini can* be found in the demand from Kannagi in the *Silapathikaram* for justice. She evokes the concept of divine justice while seeking the same from the king. *Velappadhini* were palace guards who find mention in literature and inscriptions especially with reference to the queens quarters or *Anthapuram.* Sangam literature often describes the personal attendants of queens as being strong and loyal. Whenever princesses and queens travelled between palaces they were accompanied by armed female attendants who acted as their personal security detail. Women also took part in combat duties. Sangam literature mentions women chieftains who ruled over small territories. Eg., Vel-Arachi, a woman of the Velir clan is praised in the poems for her administrative abilities and her bravery. Poems from the *Purananuru* celebrate *Veeramangai* or courageous women taking up arms to defend their homes in times of crisis, this setting a precedent for women as protectors.

In ancient Tamilakam, women did not serve as police officers in a modern or even classical bureaucratic sense but they played a crucial role in maintaining social order and in dispensing justice. Women's authority in law and order was rooted in cultural and moral sanctity rather than administrative office. Numerous Chola inscriptions (9th -13th Cen A.D.) record gifts and endowments made by women and

also specify that these grants were to be used for specific purposes such as maintaining temple security, maintaining village temples and walls and their gates. By funding the community's defence the powerful women elite were directly involved in the defence of the land.The inscriptions of Queens such as Sembiyan Mahadevi the mother of Uttama Chola, show their deep involvement in the maintenance of law and order in the areas under their control.

Colonial administration and Women's Policing in India

The initial proposal to recruit women into the Madras Police was made as early as 1919, amid efforts by the city police to eradicate prostitution. F. Armitage, who was then the Commissioner of Police in Madras, supported stricter laws, and the Government of India even recommended that the Madras Government employ women police personnel to address the issue. P.C. Moore, the then IGP, agreed with this suggestion, but no further action was taken on it afterward. Subsequently, in 1925, the National Council of Women of India collaborated with the Bombay Presidency Women's Club (an elite club for upper class women) which advocated for the appointment of women in the police force. They began their advocacy efforts in the mid-1920s as part of a broader campaign for social reform and women's rights in the Mumbai Presidency to improve the conditions of women in prison.

During the colonial period women's entry into policing was slow and largely symbolic. In the 1930's the first women police were appointed in major presidencies like Bombay and Calcutta. They were not full-fledged sworn officers with equal powers to the men. Their role was limited, similar to the early "matrons" in Western Countries. They were primarily tasked with handling women and child detainees, searching female suspects and dealing with cases involving women and juveniles. They had very limited authority and were not part of mainstream policing. Kamalamma became India's first female police officer in 1933, at the age of 18. She joined the police force in the princely state of Travancore, which was then ruled by Maharaj Chithira Tirunal Balarama Varma. After a rigorous five-year training period at the Police Training College in Thiruvananthapuram, she began her service with a monthly salary of just six rupees. Her primary duty was to assist male officers in arresting female criminals.But the dire need for Women police was felt in the year 1937 when the Kanpur textile mill strike happened. Women and children of the male mill workers participated in the large numbers. At that time male police force felt it was very difficult to physically arrest the women protestors.

Modern history of women in policing

The earliest involvement of women in policing in modern times was not as policepersons with powers of arrest, but as "Matrons." In 1845, the first "Matrons" were employed by the New York City police. The role of these matrons were limited to the care of female and juvenile detainees.

Between the 1880's and 1890's, women's organisations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) were instrumental in the appointment of female matrons in the police force. They argued for the need for child and female detainees to be under the "moral influence" of other women. By 1893 women began to be employed as matrons in other cities in the USA such as Los Angeles. Between 1910 and 1940, the first women with official police powers began to be appointed though they were restricted in their roles as policepersons. In 1910, the first woman was appointed by the Los Angeles Police Department with the title of "Police Officer".She was given the power to arrest but she was limited to the exclusive welfare of women and children. The International Association of Policewomen was formed in 1915 with Alice Stebbins Wells as the founding member to advocate for women in the police profession. The First World War (1914-1918) created opportunities for women to take on new roles. In the UK Edith Smith was appointed as the first women police constable with full powers of arrest in Grantham.The women police of this period performed limited duties. They were not allowed to wear uniforms or respond to general calls. They worked in plain clothes, focussing on protective work such as dealing

with juvenile delinquency, prostitution and cases involving female victims.

They were often part of a "Women's Bureau" within the police department and kept separate from the main force. During the Second World War (1939-1945), women began to be employed in larger numbers in the police forces. Their responsibilities expanded significantly but after the War, they were forced out of their positions to make room for the men returning from the War. Women police officers were once again confined to "Women's Bureaus" of police forces. Despite these setbacks some women made progress such as Frances Glessner Lee who became a Captain in the New Hampshire State Police, who later became a pioneer in Forensic Science. The Civil Rights and Women's Liberation movements created immense pressure for change and saw legal and structural shifts in the integration of women in policing roles.

In the USA, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement (1967) recommended that police departments must employ more women for patrol duties, stating that they were competent to perform most police tasks.Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibited employment discrimination based on sex in the USA. This led to women suing police departments over discriminatory hiring and promotion practices such as height and weight requirements that deliberately excluded women. A series of lawsuits forced departments to fully integrate women into all units of the police force thus leading to the disbandment of separate women's bureaus.

The conduct of "The Patrol Experiment" in 1972 in Washington D.C. where women were Alice Stebbins Wells was the first female police officer of the USAassigned patrol cars equal to men proved that they were just as capable in doing patrol work like their male counterparts. Moreover they were less likely to use excessive force and better at defusing violent situations. As legal barriers to women's employment in the police forces began to be removed women began to join the police forces in greater numbers. From 2 per cent in 1970's the numbers increased to 13 per cent by the 2000's. Women in western countries now serve in every branch of policing including SWAT, homicide and counter-terrorism. However the challenges such as underrepresentation, gender discrimination and male centred policies with regard to leave/equipment/uniform remain.

Post Independence Developments in India

After India gained independence in 1947, and with the adoption of a Constitution in 1950, equality was guaranteed to women. The first hesitant steps towards integrating women into the A police force began to be taken in India. The watershed moment came with the appointment in 1972 of the first woman IPS officer, Kiran Bedi. The entry of women into the elite leadership cadre of the Indian police was a revolutionary step as she was not just a constable but a direct-entry officer destined for command positions. She broke barriers with her assertive style and soon became a national icon. Several legal and social factors in the 1980s forced a re-valuation of the role of women in policing. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1983 was a turning point. The law made it mandatory for police stations to record statements of women who were victims of crimes like rape "only in the presence of a female police officer". This legal requirement created an urgent and immediate need for women officers in every police station in the country.The most significant impact on women in policing was the creation of the All-Women Police Stations (AWPS).

History of All-Women Police Stations

The establishment of AWPS is a significant chapter in the policing history of the country. The idea of AWPS did not emerge from a central government policy but from state-level initiatives aimed at making the police more accessible to women. Before the establishment of All-Women Police Stations, All Women Police Wing was constituted in Tamilnadu in the year 1973 to help policemen to deal with the problems faced by women. The very first AWPS in India was established in Kozhikode, Kerala in 1973. The initiative was largely driven by social and political movements in Kerala, which had a strong history of social reform and high literacy, including female literacy. The objective was to create a dedicated,

sensitive and less intimidating environment for women to report crimes, which they were often reluctant to do as regular police stations were dominated by male officers. Though the concept of AWPS first took root in Kerala, the concept gained national momentum and legal backing a decade later. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1983 was a landmark legislation enacted in the wake of the growing protests against gender-based violence, particularly following the Supreme Court's judgement in the Mathura Rape Case.The Law mandated that the statement of a woman who had been raped must be recorded only by a woman police officer. It also introduced new sections to the IPC for crimes like cruelty by a husband or his relatives (Sec.498A). This legal requirement created an urgent practical need for women police officers across the country. Establishing AWPS became the most straightforward way to comply with this law and demonstrate their commitment to addressing crimes against women. Following the 1983 law, there was a significant wave of establishing AWPS across various states. Tamilnadu became a frontrunner, establishing a large network of AWPS, 222 in the state with 37 established AWPS in Chennai alone as of 2025. Other states like Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi also set up AWPS often starting in major cities before expanding to district headquarters. The primary focus of the AWPS remained on handling crimes against women, such as domestic violence, dowry harassment, sexual assault and molestation.The establishment of AWPS represents a significant development in gender-based policing initiatives. As noted by these stations were created as "gender-based enclaves" to facilitate women's access to justice, though The effectiveness of this approach has been subject to research and evaluation.

Tamil Nadu's Pioneering Role

The first batch of women who were recruited to assist male police officers in arrests anddetention were recruited into Tamilnadu Police in December of 1973 consisting of one Sub Inspector, One Head Constable and 20 Police Constables. After one year of training, they were formally inducted into the police at a parade held at the Rajarathinam Stadium, Egmore on November 1, 1974. In 1976 Letika Saran and G. Thilakavathi became the first women IPS officers of the Tamilnadu Cadre.Even though Kerala was the first state to establish a First All Women Police Station in India, Tamil Nadu is considered to be the pioneer in establishing the larger network of All Women Police Stations in the state with currently 37 units in Chennai alone. Tamilnadu has 222 such units as of today. The First Station was established at Thousand Lights in Chennai by the then Chief Minister Selvi J. Jayalaitha. This station became a model for handling domestic violence cases and served as a reference point for other states.Today Tamilnadu accounts for 30% of women in Police in India. Policing is a state subject and its organisation and working are governed by rules and regulations framed by the state governments. These rules, regulations and functions are outlined in the Police Manuals of the state police forces.

As of today, Tamil Nadu is the only state with the highest number of women police stations in India. This extensive network demonstrated the state's commitment to addressing crimes against women through specialized law enforcement units. The AWPS would respond exclusively to complaints of sexual harassment, marital discord, eve teasing, trafficking, suicide, dowry harassment, child abuse, female infanticide etc. The functions involve preventive duties, administrative duties, supportive duties like traffic maintenance, regular security detailing, assisting in arrest and in rescue operations of women and children.

The women police would also deal with complaints under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1971, the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act 1986, the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights and Divorce) Act 1956 and Tamilnadu Prohibition of Ragging Act (2002) Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012, Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment Act (2013), Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005. Each AWPS consists of one Inspector, one Sub Inspector and 10 Constables. The mode of selection, recruitment and promotion are similar for both male and female police personnel.. Training may vary based on the designation such as for the constabulary position and the inspector position. The

training period is also equal for all police personnel both male and female. The initial function of women police personnel was to assist the male police officers in arresting female offenders and female victims. In today's functioning of the police, functioning policewoman are expected to conduct independent investigations on crimes against women.

Operational framework and case handling of AWPS

In Tamilnadu the placement of All Women Police Station is with the Law and order Police Station for the easy accessibility to the police personnel in case of need and interventional emergencies. The increase in reporting of cases only shows that the mere existence of AWPS has created an awareness to approach for the intervention to resolve a personal conflict. The dedicated women helpline 181 for domestic violence has also added to the easy reporting of the crime, increasing accessibility to the women police personnels. Today the issue of policewomen is that they are dealing with a high number of domestic violence cases on a daily basis apart from the other duties that they are deputed with. Even though the role of police women in the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act is very limited to conduct basic enquiry and pass it on to the protection officer for further filing of FIR, the additional mandate of Community Service Registration to reduce the load of courtrooms with false cases have burdened the women police who are working the AWPS.

Research by Sesha and Murugesan (2009) identified that AWPS in Tamil Nadu operated through a two-tier case disposal system based on case intensity and evidence of crime against women. The first tier are the FIR cases that involve serious cases involving aggravated assault, dowry-related violence, dowry death, and death of women. In the Second tier are the CSR (Community Service Register) Cases. These are cases requiring mediation, negotiation, and dispute resolution rather than serious police intervention for petty crime.

The AWPS usually categorize CSR cases into 10 distinct categories to understand the types of violence reported, enabling systematic handling of the case. The cases registered in the Community Service register mandates the closure of case investigation and the solution met within 24 hours of time. CSR is predominantly used for the registration of domestic violence Cases. Most cases are resolved through mediation and counseling rather than formal legal proceedings. Women approach AWPS seeking mediation, negotiation, and dispute resolution services, indicating the stations' role as alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. This has led to the success of the registering of crimes against women. Multiple studies document that the establishment of AWPS led to significant increases in crime reporting. Amaral, Bhalotra, and Prakash (2019) found a 22% increase in reporting of crimes against women following the introduction of AWPS, which they linked to increased arrests of Perpetrators. According to the Report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), 2022 there is a significant increase amounting to 31.5% in the reporting of domestic violence from the year 2014 and a 4% increase from the previous year 202127 The overall prevalence of spousal domestic violence was 49.5% in rural Tamil Nadu, close to the 44% reported in NFHS-4. Tamil Nadu shows high spatial clusters of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), with district-level physical IPV estimates ranging up to 47.8% in Viluppuram district.29 During the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a significant increase in reporting of domestic violence. This only indicates the effective increase in reporting of the violence, with associated awareness of a presence of the legal platform for the intervention to resolve it. It is important to note that these are filed cases, which happened after the CSR reporting.

Challenges and limitations of AWPS

Research by Amaral, Bhalotra, and Prakash (2019) indicated lower availability of resources in AWPS, which affected performance and outcomes despite increased reporting. Jassal (2020) highlighted a significant gap between cases registered and cases solved, questioning whether Gender-based enclaves effectively facilitated women's access to justice. The implementation of PWDV Act 2005 was predicted to create additional workload for already understaffed policewomen, particularly given the requirement for

negotiation, mediation, counseling, and follow-ups. Jassal (2020) noted that while AWPS increased crime reporting, they also increased travel requirements for victims and potentially served as a dissuading factor for filing complaints. Jassal (2020) concluded that merely creating gender-based enclaves like AWPS has not achieved the intended goal of increasing women's access to justice. The research suggests that gender-sensitive training on issues and gender-sensitive policies are needed for a more comprehensive approach to address violence against women.

Over time the functioning of the AWPS reveals a complex reality. There is a consensus that the establishment of AWPS has led to increased reporting of crimes against women, particularly domestic violence and dowry harassment. Some AWPS have developed expertise in handling specific types of cases and mediation, often providing a support system beyond just legal aid.They stand as a visible symbol of the state's commitment to women's safety.

One of the major criticisms is that the creation of AWPS has led to the ghettoisation of women police or the segregation of women police personnel from the male police force. Instead of being integrated into all units of the police force, they are often sidelined to soft postings, limiting their career growth and experience in tackling general crimes such as robbery, murder or cybercrime. Many AWPS suffer from poor infrastructure, inadequate staff, and limited resources, making them less effective. The assigning of women's issues to AWPS removes the police stations and male officers from being sensitive to or responding to women's issues. It perpetrates an idea that crimes against women are a "special interest" area rather than core policing function. AWPS mostly function as complaint reception centres, with serious investigations being transferred to regular police stations, creating procedural delays and fragmentation of duties. The overall percentage of women in the police force remains around 11-12 per cent nationally resulting in the AWPS being overburdened with cases. Currently there are around more that 700 AWPS across India. Some of them in metropolitan cities like Chennai and Delhi have become model stations with counselling cells, legal aid services and proactive community outreach programmes.

Conclusion

Tamil Nadu's establishment of AWPS represents a significant milestone in India's approach to addressing crimes against women. While these stations have successfully increased reporting of domestic violence cases and provided alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, research indicates that their effectiveness in ensuring justice outcomes requires further enhancement through comprehensive policy reforms, adequate resource allocation, and gender-sensitive training for law enforcement personnel. The Tamil Nadu model, particularly the Thousand Lights AWPS in Chennai, continues to serve as a reference point for other states for creating safe space for women to report the crimes that happen behind closed doors, while highlighting both the potential and limitations of specialized gender-based law enforcement initiatives in addressing domestic violence in India. It became a reference point status by extensive academic documentation. Notably a comprehensive study on domestic violence cases in the year 2004 - 2006 analyzing 72 FIR and 938 CSR cases from Thousand Lights AWPS over three years created one of the most thoroughly documented case studies of AWPS operations in India, providing empirical evidence of effective practices that could be replicated elsewhere.The history of AWPS is a story of good intentions. Initiated through social reforms in Kerala and galvanized by national legislation nationwide, they play a crucial role in breaking the silence around crimes against women and increasing female participation in the police force.

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Muslim Women's Educational Institutions in Vellore District with Special Reference to Vaniyambadi-A Study

Mohammad Osman Pasha

Introduction

Modern Vellore District holds historical significance and also occupies a distinct place in the field of education for its several educational institutions right from the elementary level to colleges. These educational institutions are run by both State and Central Government and some are maintained by the private managements. It wouldn't be wrong on our part if we call it an educational hub. This study will further focus on the other important and unique features of Vellore District.

Vaniyambadi, a town in the Vellore / Tirupattur region of Tamil Nadu, has emerged as a notable centre for educational initiatives, particularly for Muslim women. Over the past century, the Muslim community in Vaniyambadi has, through the Vaniyambadi Muslim

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Educational Society (VMES), established several institutions that provide schooling, vocational training, and higher education specifically tailored to uplift women—many from rural, marginalised, or economically weak backgrounds. Key among these are the Islamiah Women's Arts & Science College (established in 1997), Islamiah Girls' Higher Secondary School, and other skill-development centres. These institutions combine secular and religious values, aim to offer safe and culturally sensitive environments, and are designed not only to improve literacy, but also to empower women socially, economically, and intellectually. Their presence reflects both the historical legacy of Muslim educational reform inspired by the ideals of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and contemporary aspirations toward gender equity in education

Madrasa-e-Niswan, Vaniyambadi:

Moulana Abdur Raheem Sahib who was famous as Badae Hazrath was the President of a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Anjuman and explored the ways and means for the establishment of a girls' school. To execute the plans funds were needed and it was raised under Talim-e-Niswan fund to run the institution. In the beginning the school was called as 'Zanana Madrasa-e-Anjuman and later it was changed as Madrasa-e-Niswan[1] located at Muslimpur area in Vaniyambadi.

The active and robust members of the Madrasa and many other Philanthropists made their attempts in the fast and quick establishment of this institution and it was inaugurated in the year 1909. Janab T. Ameenduddin Sahib who was the President of the Anjuman from 1922-1928 donated a new building for the school and also contributed Rs.120/- annually for its maintenance. The strength of the Madrasa at the time of inauguration was 55 students and at the end of the same year it rose to 123 students[2]. The school which was started in a small residential building, has developed into a mighty institution today.

The first year anniversary of the Madrasa was celebrated on 13th November 1911 and around 600 women attended the function. Staff and students were honoured for their best performance with prizes on this occasion. The people of the town rendered their material and moral support until 1914, which was the main reason for its success. The Madrasa started functioning in a rented building until 1915 when Malang Hayath Basha Sahib donated a house to run the school.

Later the management decided to upgrade the higher classes for the girls and decided to provide hostel facilities to those who sought admission from faraway places. Trained and efficient women teachers were appointed to run this school[3]. Mid-day meals for the day scholars are provided now-a-days. The school provides transport facilities to both the day scholars and the teachers. Girls from poor financial backgrounds are provided with free boarding and lodging. From Class VI onwards secular education is added along with Arabic and Urdu. After 8 years of course of Aalima, women were given Sanad (Convocation Certificate).

Another Sanad was offered to the girls who complete the Fazila Course.The school has the reputation and goodwill of the prime for the girls. Therefore it attracts the strength from all over South India and even from foreign countries like Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, Maturities and South Africa.The school overcomes its expenditure through the landed property and by raising funds during Ramzan and Bakrid festivals. Currently 300 girls are studying in this Madrasa and Janaba Balqees Begum Sahiba is the Headmistress of the Madrasa.

Madrasa-e-Banath, Vaniyambadi:

Madrasa-e-Banath was established 30 years ago with a supreme objective to educate the girls in religious subjects. It came into existence through the efforts of the wife of the local philanthropist Haji Abdus Salam Sahib in Periyapet which is one of the oldest towns in Vaniyambadi. The syllabus of the Madrasa comprises Recitation of Quran, translation of Quran and Hadees through Urdu, Fiqah, Islamic History, Arabic and Urdu grammar apart from Tamil, English, Maths, Science and Social Science. It has a strength of 300 students and has the goodwill of imparting quality education.

Madrasa-e-Azeezia Niswan, Vaniyambadi:

The foundation of this Madrasa was laid in Jafarabad in 1950 to impart only religious education. More than hundred girls of the locality are getting benefitted through this Madrasa who had to travel a long distance to get education. Alhaj Shaik Abdul Azeez Sahib bears all the expenses of the school.

Madrasa-e-Azam, Vaniyambadi:

Janab Shaik Meeran Sahib laid the foundation of Madrasa-e-Azam in 1886. The basic objective of the establishment of this Madrasa was to impart Islamic education and for two consecutive decades it fulfilled its purpose. Later it was converted into a Government recognized Elementary School.

Panchayath Union Muslim Girls' Primary School, Alangayam

A Primary school was opened for the Muslim girls at Alangayam near Vaniyambadi with the name Panchayat Union Muslim Girls' Primary School functioning with 120 students. It got recognized by the Government of Tamil Nadu in the year 1920 In 1957 Panchayath Union opened a school at Jafarabad for Muslim girls and got recognized in 1958[8].

Islamiah Girls Higher Secondary School, Vaniyambadi:

The Vaniyambadi Muslim Educational Society felt the need to establish a Higher Secondary School for the girls and on 25th July 1957[9] it established Islamiah Girls Higher Secondary School with 134 girls on roll in Forms I and II. Year by year classes were added and finally in 1968 the school was recognized as High School and the strength increased to 267.

The first batch of SSLC Board Examination which consisted of 317 students came out with flying colours adding laurels to the institution[8].In July 1978, the school was upgraded as Islamiah Girls' Higher Secondary School and achieved 100% result in 1984-85. The current number of students on roll is around 2000. Mrs. Sharmila is the present Headmistress of the school. Along with secular education, the school imparts religious teaching and arts and craft work to the Muslim girls. They also teach dress designing and tailoring skills.

Islamiah Women's Arts and Science College, Vaniyambadi:

There were no Islamic women's colleges in Vellore District at one time. The girls had to move to Government colleges or DKM College of Vellore or Arignar Anna Government Arts College of Walajahpet or Auxilium College of Vellore. The biggest drawback of these colleges was the lack of Islamic atmosphere. So most of the parents hesitated to send their daughters to these colleges and their studies got interrupted after completing Higher Secondary Schooling.

The Vaniyambadi Muslim Educational Society pioneered the first step to provide graduation courses by establishing Islamiah Women's Arts and Science College on 16th October 1997; within the premises of Islamiah Girls Higher Secondary School.The same year, on 7th October 1997 provisional affiliation from the University of Madras was obtained. Presently the college is functioning under the affiliation of Thiruvalluvar University, Vellore[10].

The main objective of the college is to inculcate moral values, good character, positive attitude, and self reliance among the students. The college offers admission not only to the Muslim women but also to the women of other religions so that the society would develop and a better future for women empowerment can be envisioned. The ceaseless efforts of the General Secretary Janab Kaka Mohammaed Zubair Sahib and Mandi Mohammed Farooque Sahib, the Founder and Correspondent of the college made the dream of establishing a college with Islamic ambiance was fulfilled.

Courses offered in the College:

The college offers B.Sc. Nutrition and Deities and Food Management, B.Sc. Bio-Chemistry, B.Sc. Mathematics, B.Com. ,B.Sc, Chemistry B.A., English Literature and BBA, B.Sc Inertial Designing, B.Sc Zoology, B.Sc Bio Technology and Decor and B.C.A. The teaching faculty of the college is highly efficient who strive to promote better education among women students.

Conclusion

The institutions for Muslim women's education in Vaniyambadi represent powerful examples of how community-led, value-based educational infrastructure can contribute to empowerment. By providing access to higher education, and combining academic, vocational and moral/religious components, colleges like Islamiah Women's Arts & Science College help bridge gender gaps in higher learning, increase opportunities for employment, and foster self-confidence among women. Yet, challenges remain: increasing participation from the most disadvantaged, ensuring affordability, improving infrastructure, and updating curricula to align with modern job markets. Going forward, continued support—both from the community and government—alongside periodic assessment of outcomes, will be crucial to ensure that these institutions not only preserve their heritage, but also expand their capacity to transform lives and contribute to the broader social development of Vaniyambadi.

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Early Commercial Enterprises on the Coromandel Coast

Dr. R. Gopinath

A new dynamic element of Indian Ocean trade in the 17th century was an emergence of new forces of competition involving European and Indian merchants and that competition had operated from the Coromandel Coast. (Sinnappah Arasaratnam). The term Coromandel Coast is here used to cover that stretch of the east coast of India from Nagapatnam in the south to Ganjam in the north. Historically a very ancient component of the trade of Asia, it provided an economic nexus between territories to the east and west of the Bay of Bengal.

The primacy of Coromandel textiles, the importance of Moluccan spices, tin and gold, elephants, aromatics and drugs from all parts of Southeast Asia have been amplified in the abundant monograph and periodical literature in recent years (Sinnappah Arasaratnam1). We have enough evidence in the records of the Companies to show that by the middle of the century the trade of Coromandel had freed itself from

any Portuguese control to which it may have been subject and was being carried on from a number of ports, great and small, along this coast.

A characteristic of sailings from the Coromandel Coast was that they emanated, not from one or two or a few centralized ports but from a large number of ports, large and small, scattered all along the extensive coastline. Many of these ports were old and had featured in trade for centuries. Some were large and well-equipped with markets and port facilities, others were small and only served as points to load and unload goods from ships lying out in the open surf or in the safety of bays or river mouths. Ports like Masulipatnam,

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Cuddalore, Port Novo, and Nagapatnam had grown as large urban settlements, others such as Nizampatnam, Paleacat, Sadraspatnam, Devanampatnam, Karikal and Nagore had the appearance of coastal villages with skeleton services to carry on the import and export trade. All the ports had the advantage of closeness to producing and consuming areas. The geography of the Karnatak was such that large internal markets were no more than a few days journey from the ports. By the mid- 17th century, facilities and infrastructures for the growing trade of the next few decades had been set in place. The instability attendant upon the collapse of the Vijayanagar Empire and the inter-(SINNAPPAH ARASARATNAM)

By the mid-17th century, the Companies had also clearly delineated their interest and participation in the Coromandel trade. They had won concessions from rulers, giving them rights of settlement and important customs and legal privileges both in the ports and in inland transit. They had established institutional centres with an administrative framework to manage the trade on the coast, the Dutch in Paleacat, the English in Madras and the Danes in Tranquebar. Besides these, the Dutch and the English had settled a number of factories in other ports of outlet. All three Companies had established firm and permanent relationships with local mercantile groups. Besides their investments in the exports to Europe, the Companies had realised the importance of the Coromandel trade to Southeast Asia and sought to enter it in strength from very early in the century.

Coromandel trade to Malacca had flourished under the Portuguese flag, proceeding from the ports frequented by Coromandel Hindu traders. These were the old ports of the Southeast Asia trade - Paleacat, San Thome (Mylapore), Devanampatnam, Sadraspatnam, Pondicherry and Nagapatnam.

31 Coromandel Hindus and Muslims were still very much present in the carrying trade, contrary to the general impression that Hindus shipping was being phased out of these waters in the last quarter of the 17th century. A major area of growth is the private shipping of English free merchants and Company servants, some of it in partnership with Indians. Another significant group are the Armenians who are also seen to work closely with Coromandel Hindus and Muslims. San Thome emerged as an important port for the trade to Burma and Siam in the first years of the 18th century. Benefiting from fiscal concessions given by the Nawab's regional governor and attracting to itself the abandoned trade of Masulipatnam, San Thome grew as an uncomfortable rival to Madras in this eastward trade.32 p.125

The traditional trade in Indian textiles and tin, elephants, ivory and aromatic wood from these regions continued to be driven from Madras. A new factor that is introduced in the inter-regional trade relationships is the direct trade from Madras to China. This opened up a demand for Southeast Asian goods for the Chinese market in Madras for ships ready for the direct sailing to China.

Evidence of the trade to South- east Asia from the Indian ports of Coromandel is, therefore, largely inferential and an exercise in extrapolation from evidence in the later decades of the 18th century. Based on this evidence, it could be asserted that the southern Coromandel ports continued to trade with various parts of Southeast Asia with the same intensity as they had done before. The trade of Port Novo eastwards was, by all reports, as strong as ever in the first decades of the 18th century. Further to the south, with the decline of Nagapatnam as it fell under a tight Dutch hold, the neighboring port of Nagore had attracted to itself most of the eastward trade.43 To the north, San Thome continued to grow as a centre of Southeast Asian trade under the fiscal incentives provided by the Arcot Government.44 The major lines of trade were the same as had been prosecuted in the preceding century. Acheh continued to attract a good share of the trade, in spite of its political instability, largely because of the good political contacts Coromandel merchants had with that regime. Johore was another place to which Coromandel trade continued to flow in the 18th century. To the north of the Malay Peninsula, Perak and Kedah prove to be

the places where Chulia Muslim trading interests became firmly entrenched in this period. In Kedah, their influence spread into the interior and they drew close to the sultan and his nobles whose trade by the middle of the century they were managing and controlling. The trade to the ports of Tenasserim and Pegu was also intense in the 18th century.

The Portuguese were the first European nationals who settled down in India as traders in 1498. The Portuguese enjoyed monopoly of Indian trade to the extent that no other European nation daredto break their monopoly throughout the sixteenth century. Vasco da Gama got certain facilities for trade fromthe then ruler of Calicut, Zamorin**(Diary and Consultation Book 1733).**The Portuguese established their factories and forts at different places on the sea coast of India. The Portuguese enjoyed the monopoly of trade even after Albuquerque had left Goa, and they enlarged their sphere of influence. They succeeded in capturing Goa, Daman, Diu, Salsette, Bassin, Chaul, and Bombay on the western coast,Hooghly on the Bengal coast and San Thome on the Madras coast andenjoyed trade benefits(**Antony Wild 1920?)**

Portuguese Trade and Porto Novo

About fifteen miles south of Cuddalore is Porto Novo. It was one of the most consistently flourishing ports of the entire coast, also known as Parangi Pettai and Mohammad Bandar. It rivalled Masulipatnam in its significance for the trade of the region though it had characteristics different from those of Masulipatnam. It had little or no contacts westwards, except up to the Malabar Coast. Its primary strength was in the coastal trade and the trade eastwards in which it was probably the preeminent port of Coromandel **(Arasaratnam 1994: 21-8).**

As a port it was probably the most naturally endowed on the coast. An early nineteenth century account called it 'the smoothest and safest on the coast'. Its early history is somewhat obscure, as is also the name by which it was known in the period, Parangipettai, had obviously Post- Portuguese origins. Though it was under Portuguese possession in the beginning, later both the Dutch and English established their factories there. It was one of the new port-towns of the Coromandel Coast. Porto Novo and Cuddalore were the strongholds of the Chulia Muslim trading community, but there was considerable Hindu shipping there as well**(Alalasundaram1998).**

San Thome

One of the flourishing trading centres of the Coromandel Coast was San Thome. It was four miles south of Fort St. George, and was developed by the Portuguese. Mylapore occurs as a port of significance in the trade to South East Asia long before the Portuguese came to San Thome. Despite Portuguese presence, possibly because of it, Indian shipping continued to ply from this port across the Bay of Bengal, and continued unaffected by the English settlement of Madras. The flourishing trade of San Thome severely made obstacle to the trade of Madras which was under the English control. Statistical evidence of trade of San Thome in the year 1711-1712 valued 251, 000 pagodas. In 1712-1713 the value of imports was 143,000 pagodas and in 1713 — 1714, 285,000 pagodas**(Baliga 1960).**

By 1720s, the trade figures show a decline in the overall trade of Coromandel including that of Madras. Bengal imports had gone down in value to 100,000 pagodas in 1720-1721, the main decline being registered in the trade of the Pathans. The trade itself continued into the 1730s when Pathans and other Coromandel merchants were importing from Bengal and South East Asia. European free merchants bought tin and Bengal goods for their China trade in San Thome, much to the regret of the Madras authorities. Likewise, ships of the King of Thailand were sailing to SanThome and not to Madras in 1730s**(Alalasundaram 1998).**

This growth of San Thome was asource of great concern to the English at Madras, and even more to the directors in London. In the early eighteenth century English company servants put a bold front on this development and assured their superiors in London that soon the superior facilities and 'just' administration of the English in Madras would result in the liquidation of

trade in San Thome. They fed the superiors in London, as they often did in other matters, with soothing words which belied the real position that in the first decade of the eighteenth century San Thome was under Mughal administration, growing as a serious rival to Madras. It was soon realized that more positive action was required than the native belief in the superior drawing power of Madras. So, succeeding Madras Governors negotiated with the Pathans, the major trading group to induce them to leave San Thome and settle in Madras. Some incentives were given, such as a drawback on duties on goods re-exported, a longer term for payment of duties, though the English could not match the fiscal concessions that the Mughals had given in San Thome(Chaudhury1978).

Strict rules were promulgated to make sure that merchants domiciled in Madras did not trade from San Thome, merchants whose ships anchored at San Thome were not allowed to bring their goods to San Thome, and transporting them inland was threatened with fines and expulsion.For instance two Telugu merchants of Madras who imported rice at San Thome in 1734 werefined 1000 pagodas each and ordered to enter into a bond to ensure that theydid not repeat this. Ships at San Thome were not allowed to purchase cordage, anchors and other marine equipment at Madras. Merchants ofMadras were prohibited from dealing with ships on San Thome roads as well**(Public Consultation 1733).**

These measures were being taken right up to the end of stagnation period. It was recognized by 1733 that there was nothing that the Madras government could do to stifle the trade of San Thome. After a slump in the 1720s,which was a recurring feature throughout Coromandel, the trade of San Thome picked up in the 1730s and Madras officials looked on helplessly as the San Thome road was busy with ships from Bengal, South East Asia, West Asia and North Coromandel. In 1732-33 a total of 88 vessels of all description traded at that port and in 1733-34 98 vessels called there. Thus SanThome appears as the only port that saw any substantial growth in the first half ofthe eighteenth century while trade suffered and declined in all other ports on the coast**(Furber 1990)**.

The Dutch Trade

The Dutch were the largest European trading company in Coromandel and their cargoes exported from Coromandel exceeded three million guilders, during the end of the seventeenth century. The importantarticles which the Dutch exported were indigo, diamond, species, copper,raw cotton from Coromandel to Europe. Dutch in Coromandel were still preeminent in the consistency, versatility and breadth of their trade, and they still led the English in the wide area of their interests and the extent of their markets. They held into the eighteenth century their positions of advantage in respect of certain articles of the import trade, which they enjoyed during the stagnation. Their ability to provide consistently the capital in bullion needed for the trade remained still superior to the English at least for thefirst two decades**(Manual 1885).**

Sadraspatnam

The so called Seven Pagodas was an important port of oceanic trade in the seventeenth century, known to Europeans as ‘Sadraspatnam or Sadras. The port derived its strength from a well-populated hinterland, with numerous weavers’ villages and with good access to internal markets by road. Indian shippers carried on an export trade from here across the Bay of Bengal. Its importance persuaded the Dutch to take the port and neighbouring village in lease in 1705, after which native shipping seemed to have moved elsewhere. About twenty miles south of Sadraspatnam is Alambaram, from which ships operated in that period. It was an important centre of regional administration, and mint was located there, coining pagodas with theAlambaram stamp. It was under the Dutch possession. But the English tooestablished their factories there. There is little evidence of the nature of thetrade carried on from these ports, but there is every indication that both the English and the Dutch were dealing with a substantial number of merchantsand shippers of this area.

Progress of Dutch Trade

The beginning of the eighteenth century saw the increased Dutch investment in the Coromandel trade compared to other trading companies. From 1700-1704, the Dutch investment ranged from 1,400,000 guilders to 1,700,00 guilders (250,000 to 300,000 pagodas). Due to the lack of quality, they moved away from north and central Coromandel in order to invest more in the south. Simultaneously they kept their attention to the Madura and Tinnevely districts, where costs were still low and competition not intense. Thus in 1701, they invested 1,400,000 guilders (250,000 pagodas) in Madura, almost as much as they had invested in the rest of Coromandel. This entry into Madura markets stood them in good stead in the year 1704-6 when there was a great turmoil and unsettled condition in most of the Coromandel, compounded by a dispute between Europeans andthe Mughal Empire which had led to an imperial prohibition against allEuropean trade in the empire.

After the problems with the Mughal Empire were sorted out, trade improved again in 1707, and set for a period of expansion in Dutchinvestment in Coromandel and ushered in what are seen in retrospect as the best years of Dutch trade in this region in the eighteenth century. From 1707to 1717, textile investment peaked up to 2,2155,00 guilders (580,000 pagodas) and the number of bales exported also ranged from 40387 **in 1/07t §007 in** 1709 and exports over 500 bales were made in every year except1707 and 1711.

Apart from this, the Dutch exports from Madura which ran atan average of 150,000 pagodas, the Dutch were investing around 500,000 Pagodas in the weaving centres of southern India in the time of stagnation. Thus, it was amply clear that the Dutch stole the show, by overtaking the other rival European companies especially theEnglish in the Coromandel trade.

Factors Responsible for the Success of theDutch

The success of the Dutch in securing goods on such a large scale year after year is attributable to a number of factors. When the price hiked in the market, they willingly conceded increased prices to their merchants instead of trying to hold down prices. Their agency networks took them to all major weaving centres spread right across Coromandel. When production peaked in the north they were able to reactivate their agents in the north Coromandel ports of Bimilipatnam, Masulipatnam and inland centres such as Srikakulam. They had a steady supply assured from Pulicat and the Amiand Nellore districts.

There was a revival of trade and activity in and around Sadraspatnam, from which they benefited as they had taken a lease of that port and neighbouring villages. They had purchasing agents at Kunimedu,Lastly, there was the produce of Madura and Tinnevely, where they faced little European competition at Porto Novo and in the weaving centres of Cheyoor districts. From 1716 -1737the succession of good years came to an end in 1716, marking a down-turn in investment and volume of exports from Coromandel, and it continued till 1719. From 1715, when 5052 bales were exported at a cost of 1,840,000 guilders, exports declined to 3160 bales at 1,175,000 guilders in 1716, 1313 bales at 723,000 guilders in 1717, 2661 bales at 1,038,000 guilders in 1718 and 2737 at 1,077,000 guilders in 1719. Conditions werenot so bad in Madura where exports were better.

The main cause of this decline of trade was a famine that seems to have extended through the entire Coromandel, particularly severely in the interior, interrupting communications and land transport. The decline in exports was arrested in 1720 when the famine eased and exports in that year rose to 4022 bales at a value of 1,403,000 guilders. In the following years, itcontinued to rise to 5429 bales at 2,134,000 guilders.Thus good export trend continued till 1728, when again the coastal areas especially to the south, were stricken by conditions of scarcity and approaching famine. The drought and crop failure continued for about six years, during which period there were large increases in prices of cotton,food grains and essentials**(Rajaram 1997).**

Dutch exports from Coromandel began falling in 1729 and this downward trend continued till it reached 1922 bales in 1732, the second lowest on record in the first four decades of the eighteenth century, and continued till 1737. During these years the value of investments rangedfrom 1,053, 000 guilders to 1,278,000 guilders. The growth in trade from 1737conditions eased somewhat and production and export picked up in 1737, when 4952 bales were exported at a value of 1,901,000 guilders. In 1738 a record 6718 bales costing 2,574,000 guilders were exported. This, however, seems to have been a freak year and in 1739 and 1740, the quantity exported were 3728 and 3386 balesrespectively.The exports of the Dutch from Coromandel for the Asian trade were kept at a steady level. In fact, officials were instructed to give precedence to the Asian demand above Europe's. Hence the rise in the proportion oftextiles for Asian trade above those for European market.

The basic commodities of the import trade like spices of cloves, nutmeg, mace and cinnamon remained the same. The Dutch continued to strive for the highest possible benefits from their monopoly in the sale of thespices of cloves, nutmeg, mace and cinnamon. In all these articles their hold on the market was pretty effective in the first four decades of the eighteenthcentury.

Though there were alarming rumours of a breach by English private traders bringing small quantities of one or the other of these commodities from South East Asian Islands,the Dutch dominated in import of copper, by overtaking the English competition in the copper trade, which they imported from Japan to Coromandel. The export and import trade of the Dutch as it developed in the eighteenth century showed a much larger adverse balance. The rising price of textiles put the total cost of the annual investment at around two million guilders. Dutch export of gold coin fromCoromandel revived in early eighteenth century. These coins were sold inTuticorin and Nagapatnam at considerable profit.Thus in 1740, the Dutch were a significant element in the economy of the Coromandel. Their investments were still substantial and contributed to stimulating production. Yet, despite all this investment and activity, by what was arguably still the largest trading enterprise, no Dutch settlements in Coromandel, let alone Nagapatnam, presented a picture of throbbing commerce and enterprise. This was because of the very monolithic trading organization of the company, which left no room for participation by other individuals or groups, as was in other European rival companies. Thus, Nagapatnam, once a flourishing port of the Indo-South East Asian trade, was squeezed dry of this traffic to keep it a Dutch preserve.However, the Dutch company appeared to contemporaries in Europe or to some of its discerning officials that it was not a declining force in the Coromandel during the stagnation period..

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From Suffrage to Senate: A Historical Analysis of Indian Women's Political Participation in the 21st Century

V. Kayalvizhi

Introduction

The Jakarta Declaration highlighted "empowerment of women is not only an equity consideration; it is also a necessary precondition for sustainable economic and social development. Participation of women in the political arena and in decision -making roles in an important tool for empowerment as well as monitoring standards of political performances"[2.]

In India which is the world's largest democracy, equal rights and status for women are enshrined in the constitution adopted in 1950 after freedom was won from the British colonial powers, the constitution effects the spirit of the freedom movement, which is focused on individual rights and non-discrimination on the basis of caste, class and gender. It also incorporates affirmative action practices to overcome discrimination against women's equality guaranteed under Articles 14, 15, 15(3),16,39 (a), 39(b),39(c)and 42 of the constitution [3.] Nevertheless, even in freedom and democracy. Indian women do not enjoy full and equal rights of citizenship.

The 72nd and 73rd Constitutional Amendments to the Indian Constitution I in 1993 on Panchayat Raj and Nagarpalika with 33 percent reservation for women has created political space for women. But in most cases, they exercise "proxy" power on behalf of men. In reality women have never been able to get more than ten-percent seats in parliament or other bodies of decision – making. It is hoped that 31st Constitutional Amendment when passed will give 33 percent reservation of seats in parliament and state legislatures. This will go a long way to have active involvement and participation in political bodies to have their say.

This remains a major challenge to the realization of true democratic governance. In addition, patriarchal values are deeply embedded in many of India's social political and cultural structures, which lead women to face discrimination and apathy in their public and private lives. In India 36%of ever married women reported having experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence by their husbands in their lifetime.

Barriers to women's effective participation in politics. Throughout the electoral cycle, women can face numerous barriers to their effective participation and the fulfillment of their electoral rights.

Although this is not an exhaustive list, some of the obstacles mentioned below: - As a candidate, political party members and political activists lacking as voters, as electoral administrators as civil society representatives like electoral observers, mediators, human rights defenders' social activists etc. Not only all that, even traditional gender roles, gender- based stereotypes and discrimination's attitudes and norms.

Lack of party support and of exclusion from decision making party structures. Lack of campaign funds, gender blind legal framework, lack of political experiments. The dual burden and a disproportionate share of domestic work. Violence from within and outside of the party because of lack of information and awareness about voting electoral processes and overall political rights. Lack of ID and documentation required for voter registration centres that are not accessible, near on open in adequate time and Lack of information and awareness about voter registration procedures [6].

As voters, as electoral administrators, as civil society representatives like electoral observers, mediators, human rights defenders, social activists etc.

Women Power

41, 63, 11,240 women electors out of 97, 97, 51,847 in 2024 compared to 43857911 in 2019.

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48.62% Female Electors in 2024 compared to 48.09% in 2019.

State with the highest percentage share of female electors in 2024 Puducherry (53.03%) followed by Kerala (51.56%).

In 2024 the number of female electors per 1000 made a new high ie-946, as compared to 926 in 2019[7].

Voting:

Around 65.78% of female electors voted in 2024 (excluding surat) as compared to 65.55% of Male electors.

Female outnumbered men in 2024 again like in 2019, this is only the second time in history of general elections to Lok Sabha.

The Parliamentary Constituency with higher VTR of female voters: - Dhubri (Assam) with 92.17% female voting, followed by Tamluk (west Bengal) with 87.57%.[8]

Contesting Candidates: -

The number of female contesting candidates was 800 compared to 726 female contesting candidates in 2019. State with the highest number of female contesting candidates Maharashtra (111) followed by Uttar Pradesh (80) and Tamil Nadu (77). No female contesting candidates in 152 pcs out of all 543 pcs.[9]

Steps taken for increasing women political representation: -

Nari Shakthi Uandan Adiniyam, 2023 (126th Amend Act) to reserve one-third of seats for women in Lok Sabha and state legislative assembly Delhi.10

The 73rd and 74th constitutional Amendments made reservation of 1/3~rd seats in Panchayat and Municipalities for women. India pledged to achieve SDG target 5.5, which calls for women's full and effective participation at all levels of decision making in politics and public life. 74 women elected to 18th Lok Sabha accounting for 13.6% representation in Lok Sabha were as it was a light dip in women representative as 78 women were elected to 17th Lok Sabha (14.4%).[11]

Status of women representation in Legislature: -

9.7% of 792 women contestants won in 28th LS election while in 17th LS election 10.74% of726 women contestants won. Women representation in LS increased from 5% in the first LS to its highest in the 17th LS (14.4%) presently women members constitute 14.05% of Rajya Sabha members. Globally share of women in national parliament is 26.9%.12

In the 28th Lok Sabha, seven women have been inducted into the Union Council of ministers. This includes two with Cabinet rank Nirmala Sitharaman and Annapurna Devi. The other women ministers are Shobha Karandlaje, Raksha khadse, Savitri Thakur, Nimuben Bambhaniya and Anupriya Patel, who have been sworn in as 'ministers of State'(MOs). Nirmala Sitharaman continues to be the Cabinet Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs while Annapurna Devi has become the Minister of Women and Child development. The representation of women in India's Union Council of Ministers has improved since the country’s first government.13

From the pioneering role of Indira Gandhi to the contemporary MP's Nirmala Sitharaman and Annapurna Devi, women have held significant ministers positions across various portfolios. Despite the notable presence of women in ministers like women and child development, health and family welfare, social justice and empowerment, there remains a disparity in their representation in other ministries and by rank. This low representation of women in the council also stems from the poor share of women MP's out of all as well as their poor participation in elections. Nonetheless, with about 1.4 million elected women representation or sarpanches at the grassroots. India became a part of a cohort of 20 countries with more than 40% of local seats held by women at the local levels of government. With the passage of the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam ' legislation that aims to reserve one third of seats for women in the Assembly of Lok Sabha, its effects remain to be seen till after the next election.[14]

Conclusion

The topic of affirmative for women in the parliament and State legislative, which revolves around two primary issues., First overlapping quotes for women in general and women of lower castes, is still dividing the women's movement and gender politics in India today. Second, these lingering worries about elitism. After the general election in 2024 the political parties that actively undermined the Women's Reservation Bill in the past Lok Sabha were no longer needed. By giving 7 Cabinet Ministerial seats to women, the present administration has sent a favourable message for gender inclusion politics, encouraging expectations that it will eventually forge an all- party agreement and approve the stalled Bill.

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Social Welfare Schemes in Tamilnadu Under M.G. Ramachandran with Special Reference to Welfare Schemes for Women

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Introduction

Women are facing a number of problems not only in India but in the world wide from the medieval period. They were affected by the dominance of men in the society. Their rights and equal rights are denied in society. They were affected socially, economically and politically. The socio - political movements and leaders took various reforms for the empowerment of women. They believe that empowerment is a multi - dimensional process, which ought to empower women or gather women to understand their full personality and power in all circles of life1. Nations like India witnessed reformation of such practices.

During British colonial rule, they implemented various acts like the Abolition of Sati in 1829, the abolition of the practice of Devadasi system and Hindu Widow Remarriage Act 1857. English Leaders, social reformers and freedom fighters argued for more rights to women which ultimately expanded a space for actualizing their potential. The Constitution of India guaranteed gender equality is included in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive

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Principles. The Directives Principles of State Policy allows the state governments to bring the welfare measures.

Tamil Nadu has a long history of social justice in broader perspective. The ideological evolution of Dravidian movements includes women rights and equality as well. The Dravidian movement always supported for providing new ideas for women empowerment. All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) initiated and implemented welfare schemes for women empowerment during its tenure.

Various Welfare Schemes introduced by Dr. MGR.

Indeed, after becoming the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Bharat Ratna Dr. Maruthur Gopalamenon Ramachandran continued the above ideologies to a great extent and implemented various welfare schemes for the integrated growth of Tamil Nadu, especially towards the upliftment of poors including the women. A snap-shot of the schemes implemented by him are given below: He ordered 20 kg of rice to be given through the Public Distribution System through TUCS and reduced the rate of rice to Rs.1.75/- per KG. MGR is the reason for the development of the PDS system in Tamilnadu; He introduced a scheme for assistance to the destitute women for their marriage expenses. MGR developed Hosur as an industrial estate that had resulted in the development of Bangalore city; he introduced women-centric buses and freebies such as sewing machines for women; M.G.R opened Vandalur Zoo, the largest zoological garden in India. M.G.R created a Tamil University in Thanjavur. M.G.R conducted the 5th Tamil World Conference in Madurai. He also established six new Universities such as Mother Therasa Women's University, Bharathiar University, Bharathidasan University, Tamil University, Alagappa University and Anna University of Technology.MGR gave emphasis to the preservation of heritage buildings and monuments, such as temples, historical sites and so on. This in turn led to a boost in tourism.

AIADMK and women Empowerment:

All India Anna Dravida Munetra Khazhagam (AIADMK) was founded by M. G. Ramachandran (MGR) a popular Film star of Tamil Nadu in the Year 1972. During the 1940s, MGR was attracted by the ideology of Dravidian movement at his film college. The revolutionary ideology of E.V.Ramasamy, known as Periyar, and his socio - political thoughts drew MGR to the Dravidian movement. In 1946, through CN Annadurai's social reforms drama and cinemas, he came into contact with C N Annadurai. His association with C N Annadurai and the ideals of DMK made him join the party in 1953. The DMK party leaders like CN Annadurai, M. Karunanidhi used drama and cinemas to depict the position of women. They stood for women liberation and their empowerment. MGR acted in Movies which depicted removal of social inequalities. He made 'Annaism' which is the blend of socio - political ideas of E.V.Ramasamy (EVR) and C.N.Annadurai (CNA) as the ideology of AIADMK. The MGR's AIADMK Government was very much concerned with the welfare of the women. When the AIADMK came to power in 1977 it was for the leadership to consider the ways and means to practice its ideological promises through legislation and governance.

Education Schemes between 1977 - 1987 :

MGR named the ideology of the party as Annaism which covers various spheres of society, party and government. It includes, the welfare of the economically and socially backward communities, special concern for the SC and ST and the poor and the weaker sections of the people, uplifting the weaker sections of the society. Education is one of the powerful tools for women empowerment. The AIADMK government introduced various schemes in the educational section. From 1978-79, higher secondary education, the 10+2 system was introduced and the old pattern of 11 std was put an end. Enrolment of girl students was on the increasing scale. Book Banks have been established in all Technical Institutions with the assistance from the government and Voluntary Organizations to help the poor students. Every year two sets of uniforms one at the beginning of the academic year and another at the time of Pongal festival were supplied free of cost to all girl pupils irrespective of community who were either studying in Schools or

residing as boarders in Government Hostels. The AIADMK government decided to implement the programme in a modified form 1981-82. The Modified Applied Nutrition Programme consists of the following components: Consequent on the introduction of Chief Minister's Noon Meal Programme from 1st July 1982 all the Child Welfare Centres started under the Applied Nutrition Programme were integrated with Chief Minister Noon Meal Programme and the activities under the previous Applied Nutrition Programme came to an end. The Chief Minister's Nutritious Meal Programme was extended to the voluntary Institution during 1982-83 6. Balwadies functions under Tribal Sub-Plan were also merged with the scheme. The scheme was also introduced in the rural areas of Tamil Nadu from 1st July 1982 to tackle the problems of malnutrition and to provide facilities for pre-school education and health care for the children in the age group of 2 plus to 4 plus. Under the scheme, employment opportunities were created for 68,738 women. During the tenure of MGR, schemes of the five year plans were implemented effectively. Fifth, sixth and seventh five year plans were functioning during his tenure. Women education was given importance in the plans. In the period of the fifth five year plan (1974-79) a number of steps were taken for the education of girls. These included creation of separate cells in the State Directorates of Education to look after the programmes of girls' education, establishment of polytechnics for girls, construction of staff quarters for women teachers in rural areas and girls hostels, introduction of condensed educational courses, assistance to voluntary educational organizations working in the field of women's education and holding of seminars in different states to discuss problems and programmes of girls education. The seventh five year plan (1985-90) initiated several schemes for expanding women education. It initiated 100 percent coverage for education of girls up to the age of 14 years. Priority was given to retain girls in schools. Incentives like uniforms, text-books and attendance scholarships were continued for the needy girls in all schools. Nonformal education was expanded to benefit girls in 6-14 age groups. Economical Welfare Schemes : Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women was incorporated as a public limited company on the 9th December 1983. The primary objective of the corporation is to contribute to the upliftment of the poor and downtrodden women in all spheres from education and health to enterprise and management. During 1984-85, a full fledged entrepreneurial development programme for women was organised in consultation with industrial and technical consultancy organisations of Tamil Nadu and in association with several leading banks and financing institutions and public sector undertakings of Tamil Nadu. An industrial estate was proposed to be set up exclusively for women. The prospective women entrepreneurs will be allotted sheds in the industrial estate to set up their units. Schemes aimed at generation of income and employment to women. Supply of milch animals, supply of shop units, promoting employment opportunities for women in non-traditional vocations, carpentry units, manufacturing loud speaker kits, screen printing, plastic mould units were promoted. Projects were assisted by the world bank and the central government as well. The Corporation sets its aims and programmes with the broad framework of economic empowerment of women. In order to provide opportunities for needy and deserving women between the age group of 16 to 30 years, the Social Welfare Board started a vocational training programme through Voluntary Welfare Institutions by giving them financial assistance and technical guidance. Training programmes which have employment potential are selected and girls according to their educational background, aptitude, etc., are chosen for the relevant course. In Tamil Nadu, more than 100 courses such as training of girls in Needle Work and Dress Making ,Government Examination, Embroidery, Shorthand, Typewriting, Accountancy Courses, Business Management Course, Training in Printing such as Proofreading, Composing, Book-Binding, Nurses Aid Course, Housekeepers Course, Radio Mechanism and Television Maintenance Course, Creche and school Training Course and Photography Course are run under the scheme. Most of the schemes are Government recognized courses having employment potential. This programme has taken its root from 1978-79 onwards. This has benefitted about 2,500 girls so far. During

1982-83, 76 institutions were aided for different courses with a total grant of Rs. 14.49 lakhs. 1,580 women are benefitted under this programme

Marriage Assistance Scheme :

E.V.R. Maniammaiyar Ninaivu Marriage Assistance Scheme for Daughters of Poor Widows was started in the year 1981 with an intention to help the poor mothers who are widows by providing financial assistance of Rs.1000 for marriage of their daughters. The Government launched a marriage assistance scheme during the year 1984-1985 to help the orphan girls to get married.

Conclusion

The AIADMK government initiated several welfare schemes and empowerment measures pertaining to women. It continued the measures of the previous government as well depending on their emphasis on welfare and empowerment. The government believed that these measures have improved the life of the women. These measures also cost the exchequer heavily. However, welfare assumes priority over the cost of implementation. M.G.Ramachandran are better known for their welfare schemes in general and women empowerment programmes in particular. He has created history in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly but also created numerous noble deeds in the administration as well. Following the ideology of his political guru Peraringer Anna i.e. one should see God in the smile of the poors Puratchi Thalaivar ruled this state. He took upon the above ideology and ruled the state so that significant benefits go to the poors and thus hailed as a protector of the welfare of the poors. He still lives in the houses and hearts of the people of Tamil Nadu.

Domestic Violence Against Women In Present Scenario

C.Rajeswari

Current Scenario of Domestic Violence

Global and National Trends

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about one in three women worldwide experience physical or sexual violence, mostly perpetrated by an intimate partner. Reports from the United Nations Women (UN Women) indicate that during the COVID-19 pandemic, domestic violence cases surged by up to 30% in many countries due to lockdowns, economic stress, and restricted mobility.

In India, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reported over 450000 cases of crimes against women in 2022, with domestic violence constituting a significant proportion of these incidents. Although the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA), 2005 is in place, its implementation remains weak, primarily due to societal pressures, stigma, and the reluctance of victims to report abuse.

Challenges in Addressing Domestic Violence

Domestic violence continues to be underreported due to various challenges, including stigma and fear of retaliation. Victims often hesitate to come forward because of societal shame, guilt, fear of not being believed, and possible backlash from the abuser or community. Lack of awareness is another major issue—many victims are unaware of their legal rights, available protections, and support services.

Judicial delays and gaps in legislation further discourage victims from seeking justice. Lengthy legal proceedings, limited comprehensive laws, and poor enforcement mechanisms often lead to frustration and withdrawal. Alarming statistics show that only 14% of women and girls worldwide live in countries with strong legal protection for their fundamental human rights.

Financial dependency is a significant barrier, particularly for women who rely economically on their abusers, making it difficult to leave abusive

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environments. In some societies, cultural norms may even tolerate or justify violence as a form of discipline or control, normalizing abuse and silencing victims.

With the rise of digital technology, technological abuse has also emerged as a growing concern. Cyber harassment, digital surveillance, and breaches of privacy present new forms of control and intimidation, complicating efforts to seek help safely. Furthermore, specific vulnerable groups such as immigrants, older women, and LGBTQ+ individuals face unique challenges. These include fear of deportation, age-related dependence, and discrimination, which create additional barriers to accessing justice and support systems.

Current Trends in Interventions

Recent approaches to addressing domestic violence emphasize multi-sectoral and coordinated responses, involving close collaboration among the criminal justice system, social services, and healthcare providers. This integrated method ensures that victims receive holistic support from various sectors.

Another key trend is the adoption of trauma-informed approaches by mental health professionals. These approaches prioritize safety, empowerment, and healing, and focus on understanding and addressing the psychological effects of violence, rather than simply treating symptoms. In healthcare settings, universal screening has become more common. Healthcare providers are now encouraged to routinely ask all patients about relationship safety, regardless of whether they show signs of abuse. This strategy helps reduce stigma, encourage early detection, and extend support to those who may otherwise remain unnoticed.

Technology-facilitated interventions are also gaining ground. These include online counseling, 24/7 helpline numbers, and awareness campaigns delivered through digital platforms. Additionally, there is growing attention on combating technology-facilitated violence such as cyberstalking and digital harassment.

Recognizing financial dependency as a major obstacle, several programs now focus on economic empowerment for women, helping them achieve financial independence through vocational training, employment opportunities, and access to credit. Finally, there is a growing emphasis on prevention initiatives. These include primary prevention strategies that aim to build healthy, respectful, and non-violent relationships and communities. Many of these initiatives specifically target men and boys, aiming to reshape gender norms and encourage positive masculinity from an early age.

Recent Legislative Changes (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, several countries have introduced and strengthened legislation to combat domestic violence and related offenses. In 2023, countries such as Lesotho, Togo, and Uzbekistan enacted new laws specifically aimed at protecting women from various forms of domestic violence. Additionally, Armenia, Equatorial Guinea, Jordan, Moldova, and Suriname passed legislation addressing sexual harassment in the workplace, marking significant progress in gender-based legal reforms.

In India, recent efforts have focused on legal reform, financial support initiatives, and expanding access to helplines. The introduction of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, brought stricter penalties for sexual offenses, including higher minimum sentences for rape and a broader legal definition of sexual crimes. Furthermore, Fast Track Special Courts are being established to expedite the processing of such cases, ensuring swifter justice for victims.

Effects of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence has severe and far-reaching consequences, not only for the victims but also for families, communities, and society as a whole. Its impact extends beyond immediate physical harm, affecting mental health, social relationships, economic stability, and the well-being of future generations.

Physically, victims of domestic violence often endure a wide range of injuries, including bruises, fractures, burns, and internal damage. In many cases, prolonged abuse leads to chronic health conditions such as hypertension, heart disease, and gastrointestinal disorders. Additionally, domestic violence can seriously affect a woman's sexual and reproductive health, resulting in unwanted pregnancies, miscarriages,

sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and complications during childbirth.

The psychological and emotional effects are equally devastating. Victims frequently suffer from depression, anxiety, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), characterized by flashbacks, nightmares, and emotional numbness. The constant emotional abuse often damages a victim's self-esteem, leading to feelings of worthlessness and loss of confidence. In extreme cases, the emotional burden may lead to suicidal thoughts or attempts, as victims feel trapped and hopeless.

From a social perspective, domestic violence often results in isolation, as abusers commonly control victims by severing their connections with family, friends, and social support networks. Victims may also face stigma and victim-blaming from society, making it even harder for them to speak out or seek assistance. One of the most concerning social effects is the intergenerational cycle of violence—children who witness domestic violence are more likely to become victims or perpetrators of abuse in their own relationships as adults.

The economic consequences are also significant. Victims may experience job loss and financial instability, either due to physical injuries or psychological stress, or because the abuser restricts their ability to work. This often leads to continued economic dependence on the abuser, making it harder to escape the abusive environment. Additionally, the cost of medical treatment, therapy, and other long-term health services places a further financial burden on victims and their families.

Children who grow up in abusive households are particularly vulnerable. Exposure to domestic violence can result in a range of emotional and behavioral issues, including aggression, anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal. These children often struggle with academic performance due to trauma-related concentration difficulties. Most alarmingly, children raised in violent environments face a higher risk of becoming involved in violence—either as victims or as perpetrators—later in life. In summary, the effects of domestic violence ripple far beyond the immediate act, leaving lasting scars on individuals and society. Addressing these impacts requires not only legal and medical support but also deep social reform and psychological intervention.

Measures to Combat Domestic Violence

To effectively combat domestic violence, a comprehensive approach involving legal, social, economic, and psychological measures is essential. First and foremost, strict law enforcement is critical. This involves ensuring speedy justice for victims and imposing stringent punishments on offenders to serve as a deterrent. Alongside legal measures, widespread awareness campaigns are necessary to educate women about their rights and the support systems available to them. Such campaigns empower victims to seek help and reduce societal stigma.

Economic empowerment plays a vital role in breaking the cycle of abuse. Providing victims with skill development programs and job opportunities helps them gain financial independence, which is often a key factor in leaving abusive relationships. In addition, strengthening counseling services and helplines, such as the 181 Women's Helpline in India, is crucial. These services offer victims immediate emotional support and guidance, helping them navigate their options safely.

Finally, building a supportive community environment is important. Encouraging a society where victims feel safe and supported in reporting abuse can significantly reduce underreporting and enable timely intervention. Community-based initiatives that promote gender equality and challenge patriarchal norms can foster this environment, ultimately contributing to the prevention of domestic violence.

Conclusion

Domestic violence against women remains a grave and pervasive issue in today's society, cutting across all social, economic, and cultural boundaries. Despite the existence of laws and growing awareness, many women continue to suffer in silence due to deep-rooted patriarchal attitudes, economic dependence, and social stigma. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the vulnerabilities of victims, highlighting the

urgent need for stronger legal frameworks, better enforcement, and comprehensive support systems. Addressing domestic violence requires a multi-dimensional approach that combines strict law enforcement, economic empowerment, mental health support, and community engagement to create a safer and more equitable environment for women. Ultimately, ending domestic violence is not only a matter of protecting individual rights but also a crucial step toward achieving gender equality and social justice in the modern world.

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Historicization of Women's issues and Future Prospects for Gender Equality in Tamil Nadu

Sharmila. T

Introduction

The historicization of women's issues in Tamil Nadu requires situating gender relations within the broader transformations of polity, economy, and culture that have unfolded over centuries. Women's roles, rights, and resistances have not been uniform or static; rather, they have been mediated through caste hierarchies, kinship networks, ritual practices, colonial interventions, and reformist movements. To trace this trajectory is to recognize that women's agency and subordination must be understood as historically contingent and structurally embedded phenomena. In the pre-colonial era, epigraphic sources from the Chola and Pandya periods demonstrate that women were not

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merely confined to domestic roles but also acted as temple patrons, land donors, and participants in agrarian administration. These forms of agency, however, coexisted with ritual and caste-based restrictions that constrained autonomy. The colonial encounter reconstituted gender relations by introducing codified laws, missionary education, and social reform initiatives. While legislation such as the Child Marriage Restraint Act and the promotion of female education sought to "modernize" women's roles, these measures often reflected the ambivalent position of women as both subjects of reform and symbols of cultural authenticity.

In Tamil Nadu, the discourse on women's uplift was shaped by these tensions between colonial modernity and indigenous cultural norms. The twentieth century marked a decisive rupture with the emergence of the Self-Respect Movement under Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, which directly attacked patriarchal practices such as enforced widowhood, dowry, and caste-based marriage customs. By linking gender emancipation with broader struggles against caste oppression, the movement situated women's equality within the framework of social justice. Subsequent Dravidian political mobilizations further institutionalized this critique by expanding women's access to education, employment, and political representation through state-driven welfare policies. In contemporary Tamil Nadu, women have gained visibility in local governance, higher education, and the labor force, both organized and informal. However, persistent issues—gender-based violence, wage disparities, and the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work—highlight ongoing structural constraints that limit the impact of legal and welfare measures. Historicizing women's issues reveals the continuity of caste-patriarchal control alongside reformist ruptures, showing that women's struggles are historically embedded, shaped by state power, community structures, and cultural politics. Post-Independence, the institutionalization of Dravidian ideology facilitated welfare interventions under DMK and AIADMK governments—subsidized education, mid-day meals, maternity benefits, and reservations in local governance—which increased women's public visibility. Yet, these measures often positioned women as beneficiaries rather than autonomous political actors, highlighting the persistent paradox of empowerment through welfare.

Societal Stigma around Women's Choices and Ambitions in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu records a female literacy rate of 86.8 percent, well above the national average of 77.9 percent, reflecting significant investment in women's education. Girls' enrolment in higher education stands at nearly 49 percent, with female students outnumbering males in several arts and science colleges. Despite these gains, professional autonomy remains limited. According to AISHE, women are underrepresented in engineering, law, and managerial studies, accounting for less than 30 percent of enrolment, and only 7.8 percent of women hold regular salaried jobs (Periodic Labour Force Survey 2023–24), with most engaged in informal or self-employment. Over the past three decades, secondary education completion among women has risen dramatically, with Class XII pass rates consistently around 95 percent across districts. Yet, the transition to higher education and employment is uneven. In Madurai, 95.7 percent of girls passed Class XII in 2025, but only 69 percent pursued higher studies, and just 30 percent secured salaried employment. Virudhunagar shows near-universal higher education enrolment (95%), yet employment outcomes remain poorly tracked. This trajectory highlights a paradox: while Tamil Nadu has achieved near-universal secondary education for women, the structural translation into higher education, postgraduate study, and secure employment remains uneven. Cultural expectations around marriage and domesticity continue to influence educational and career choices, emphasizing the need for systematic tracking and targeted interventions to convert educational attainment into genuine professional autonomy.

Labour Force Participation and Economic Autonomy of Women in Tamil Nadu (2005–2025)

Tamil Nadu's female labour force participation rate stands at approximately 43 percent, well above the national average of 35 percent. However, disparities persist: male participation remains at nearly 75 percent, creating a gap of more than 30 percentage points. Within the state, rural women show a higher participation rate (35.5 percent) compared to urban women (24.4 percent), indicating stronger cultural constraints on mobility in urban households. Despite high participation, the quality of work remains unequal—only 7.8 percent of women hold regular salaried positions, while the majority work in informal or self-employed sectors. Tamil Nadu also accounts for 42–43 percent of India's total female factory workforce, yet wage gaps remain considerable, especially among women with higher qualifications. The result is a paradox: women are numerically visible in the workforce but remain economically undervalued and structurally insecure. The trajectory of women's labour force participation in Tamil Nadu over the last two decades reflects both progress and paradoxes.

On the one hand, Tamil Nadu stands above the national average in women's education, literacy, and health outcomes; on the other hand, these achievements have not translated into proportionate economic autonomy. According to the National Sample Survey (NSS) and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)data, women's Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) in Tamil Nadu has fluctuated significantly. In 2005, the female LFPR hovered around 38–40 percent, which was above the national average but largely driven by agriculture and informal sector work. By 2011–12, this figure declined to around 32 percent, reflecting the national trend of withdrawal of women from the workforce during a period of structural shifts in the economy.

However, more recent PLFS rounds (2022–23) indicate that Tamil Nadu's female LFPR has risen again, reaching 37.5 percent, marginally higher than the national figure of 36.2 percent. Yet, within this aggregate, disparities remain: urban women record far lower participation (around 23 percent) compared to rural women (above 40 percent), where self-employment and family-based agricultural work predominate.

Women with Postgraduate Education and Workforce Engagement in Tamil Nadu (2005–2025)

Over the last twenty years, Tamil Nadu has seen substantial growth in women's access to postgraduate (PG) education and their subsequent engagement in the labour force. According to Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data, the proportion of women with education at the postgraduate level or higher who are working rose from approximately 34.5% in 2017–18 to 39.6% in 2023–24, indicating a modest but meaningful increase in professional participation among highly educated women Although state-specific longitudinal data over the full 2005–2025 period is limited, national trends suggest that Tamil Nadu—with its comparatively high female literacy (86.8%) and higher education enrolment (>49%) rates—has mirrored these upward movements in women's PG-level employment. In 2017–18, approximately 34.5% of women with postgraduate qualifications were engaged in the workforce.

By 2023–24, that figure rose to 39.6%, reflecting a ~5-percentage-point increase in participation among PG-educated women. Tamil Nadu stands out nationally for employing a large share of women in its industrial workforce. As of 2021–22, the state accounted for 42% of India's women factory workers—about 6.3 lakh out of 14.9 lakh registered women industrial workers nationally While this includes women of varied educational backgrounds, PG-qualified women are increasingly entering managerial and technical roles in manufacturing, services, and education sectors. While the number of PG-educated women entering the workforce has grown, economic autonomy remains constrained.

Over the past twenty years, Tamil Nadu has witnessed better educational access for women—including at the postgraduate level—and modest improvements in professional participation. The share of PG-educated women in the workforce increased from

approximately 34.5% in 2017–18 to 39.6% in 2023–24 Yet, structural gaps persist: female labour force participation remains lower than male, especially in urban settings, and regular salaried employment among women stays under 8% While advanced education has opened new possibilities, Tamil Nadu still needs policies that convert learning into stable, dignified, and autonomous employment for highly educated women.

Sectoral Distribution of Employment

The composition of women's employment has undergone gradual change. In the early 2000s, a majority of women in Tamil Nadu were engaged in agriculture, either as cultivators or casual labourers. Over the last twenty years, there has been a steady shift towards non-farm sectors—particularly textiles, garment industries, construction, domestic work, and increasingly, the services sector. Tamil Nadu's textile and garment hubs in Tiruppur, Coimbatore, and Erode employ lakhs of women, but mostly under exploitative conditions marked by low wages, insecure contracts, and practices such as the Sumangali Scheme, which tied adolescent girls into bonded labour-like arrangements.

In contrast, in urban centres like Chennai, a growing share of women have entered IT/ITeS, banking, and healthcare, though their representation in leadership roles remains limited. Despite Tamil Nadu's female literacy rate of 86.8 percent (2023) and nearly 49 percent share of women in higher education enrolment, the transition from education to regular salaried employment remains weak. PLFS 2023–24 data reveals that only 7.8 percent of women in Tamil Nadu are in regular salaried jobs, while the majority remain in self-employment or informal work. This indicates that rising education levels have not yet dismantled societal expectations that prioritize marriage and domestic responsibilities over professional careers. Families often support women's pursuit of degrees but treat them as symbolic capital for marriage alliances rather than as pathways to economic independence.

Economic Autonomy and Wage Inequality

Economic autonomy for women in Tamil Nadu remains circumscribed by both structural and cultural constraints. Wage gaps persist across sectors: women in regular salaried jobs earn approximately 25–30 percent less than men with similar qualifications, while in informal work the disparity is even starker. Access to land, credit, and property ownership remains limited, with women holding only a small fraction of land titles, constraining their bargaining power within households and markets. Even in sectors with high female participation, such as garments and services, women occupy lower rungs of the occupational hierarchy, while managerial and decision-making positions are predominantly male. Tamil Nadu, often portrayed as a socially progressive state with a female literacy rate of 86.8 percent and one of the country's highest female enrolment ratios in higher education at nearly 49 percent, presents a paradoxical landscape where women's educational achievements coexist with persistent vulnerability to violence. Over the past decade, emblematic incidents have revealed the limitations of institutional frameworks in ensuring women's autonomy and safety, despite formal advancements in literacy and professional training.

The Pollachi Sexual Assault Case (2019–2025)

The Pollachi sexual assault case exemplifies this contradiction. What began as a seemingly isolated complaint soon exposed an organised criminal network that lured women through social connections and social media, subjected them to sexual assault, and used video recordings for blackmail. The scale of the exploitation, involving dozens if not hundreds of victims including college students and professionals, shocked public conscience. Initial mishandling by local police delayed justice, but public protests forced the transfer of the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation. In 2025, after years of delay, a CBI court sentenced several perpetrators to life imprisonment. The case underscores the emergence of digital-era sexual violence, the failures of early policing, and the enduring stigma that deters survivors from reporting crimes.

Acid Attacks in Tamil Nadu (2016–2020)

Parallel to this, acid attacks in Tamil Nadu reflected another violent form of gendered vengeance. According to NCRB data, 24 cases were officially

recorded between 2016 and 2020, with most victims being young women targeted for rejecting marriage or romantic advances, or for challenging patriarchal authority. The consequences were devastating: physical disfigurement, blindness, psychological trauma, and long-term social exclusion. Though Tamil Nadu facilitated emergency medical care, the inadequacy of long-term rehabilitation—reconstructive surgery, psychological counselling, and economic reintegration—remained glaring. Some non-governmental initiatives, such as livelihood projects in Chennai, attempted to restore survivors' dignity, yet the low conviction rate of acid-attack cases nationally (3–4 percent) mirrored systemic weaknesses in justice delivery.

Domestic and Community-Based Violence (2015–2025)

Domestic, community, and honour-related violence between 2015 and 2025 further illustrated the pervasiveness of patriarchal control across Tamil Nadu's districts. The notorious Udumalai case of 2016, where Shankar was murdered for marrying across caste lines, symbolised the deadly intersection of caste, honour, and gender. Thousands of complaints under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005) were lodged annually with Tamil Nadu Police, yet enforcement remained inconsistent. Reports indicated a sharp escalation during the COVID-19 lockdown, when restricted mobility heightened women's vulnerability to household abuse.

Street harassment and public space violence also persisted, though under-reporting was widespread due to stigma and fear of retaliation. Across districts, a pattern emerged wherein industrialised and urbanised regions such as Coimbatore and Tiruppur showed higher incidences of both acid attacks and sexual exploitation, while rural districts continued to struggle with honour-related crimes and entrenched domestic abuse. These cases collectively highlight the education–violence paradox in Tamil Nadu: women attain high levels of education but remain constrained by structural violence and cultural norms that limit the translation of literacy into autonomy. Judicial delays and low conviction rates weaken faith in institutions, while survivors often endure ostracism from their own families and communities. The geographic variation in violence patterns, with western districts experiencing higher visibility of crimes, and the increasing role of digital media in sexual exploitation, as seen in the Pollachi case, further complicate the landscape of women's safety.

Policy and Institutional Interventions

The state government of Tamil Nadu has introduced several welfare measures aimed at improving women's economic autonomy—ranging from free bus travel for women (2021) to enhance mobility, to marriage and maternity assistance schemes that provide financial security. The introduction of 33 percent reservation for women in local bodies has also increased political participation, indirectly strengthening women's bargaining position within communities. Skill development programs and self-help groups (SHGs), particularly under the Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women (TNCDW), have played a role in expanding women's access to microfinance and entrepreneurship. Yet, these efforts have not fully countered the persistence of low labour force participation in formal sectors. Over the last two decades, Tamil Nadu has made visible strides in enhancing women's literacy, higher education, and access to welfare schemes.

However, these gains have not translated into proportionate increases in labour force participation or sustained economic autonomy. Structural barriers in labour markets, wage inequality, and cultural norms around marriage and domesticity continue to limit women's professional advancement. The challenge for the next decade lies in creating gender-sensitive labour policies, incentivizing female participation in high-growth sectors, and dismantling societal stigma around women's economic ambitions, thereby ensuring that Tamil Nadu's social development achievements are matched by genuine economic empowerment. Policy responses have included regulations on acid sales,

promises of fast-track justice, and partial rehabilitation measures, but implementation remains uneven.

The research further identifies critical gaps, including the absence of longitudinal district-level data on gendered violence, lack of disaggregated conviction records, and the silencing effect of under-reporting due to stigma. Emerging forms of digital crime such as sextortion remain inadequately studied in the Tamil Nadu context, leaving policymakers without a full picture of new vulnerabilities. Ultimately, between 2015 and 2025, Tamil Nadu reflects the paradox of women's advancement amid vulnerability. The Pollachi case symbolises the hidden scale of sexual violence enabled by technology, acid attacks reveal the extremities of gendered vengeance, and honour-related and domestic crimes show how caste and patriarchy continue to dictate women's lives. Unless Tamil Nadu addresses structural constraints through stronger policing, judicial reform, survivor rehabilitation, and societal transformation, its impressive achievements in female literacy and higher education will remain undermined by persistent exposure to violence and the denial of genuine autonomy.

Sexual Harassment and Crimes against Women in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu, widely acknowledged for its relatively high female literacy rate of 86.8 percent and significant enrolment of women in higher education, paradoxically continues to exhibit a high prevalence of gender-based violence. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB, 2022), the state registered 9,207 cases of crimes against women, marking a notable increase from 8,501 cases in 2021. Within this total, 4,906 cases were reported under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, positioning Tamil Nadu among the top three states in India for such offences. Distressingly, the statistics indicate that a girl was sexually assaulted approximately once every two hours, while a woman faced sexual harassment or abuse every hour across the state, highlighting the frequency and systemic nature of such crimes. The persistence of sexual harassment in Tamil Nadu reflects deep structural and sociocultural factors. Despite high literacy and educational attainment, patriarchal norms continue to regulate women's autonomy in both public and private spheres. In many districts, particularly in urban-industrial zones such as Coimbatore, Tiruppur, and Chennai, the concentration of working women in informal and formal sectors exposes them to workplace harassment and public-space abuse. Rural districts, while reporting fewer incidents numerically, often demonstrate high levels of under-reporting due to social stigma, fear of reprisal, and lack of access to effective grievance redressal mechanisms. This duality underscores the limitations of educational empowerment in the absence of structural, social, and institutional safeguards. Historical and recent high-profile cases amplify the visibility of these issues.

The Pollachi sexual assault and blackmail case (2019–2025) revealed how organized networks exploited social media to target women systematically, resulting in dozens, potentially hundreds, of victims. Similarly, acid attacks between 2016 and 2020, though smaller in number (24 cases reported), illustrate extreme forms of retaliatory violence against women challenging patriarchal authority. Domestic and honour-related violence remains widespread, with incidents reported in nearly every district over the past decade, indicating the pervasiveness of gendered control within familial and community structures. A critical feature of sexual harassment in Tamil Nadu is its under-reporting and uneven judicial response.

The NCRB data likely underrepresent the true prevalence due to fear, stigma, and family pressure discouraging complaints. Conviction rates remain low, with protracted legal processes often failing to deliver timely justice. This is compounded by insufficient policing in public spaces, limited surveillance mechanisms, and inadequate workplace grievance redressal frameworks. Emerging forms of digital harassment, including sextortion and social-media-facilitated abuse, further exacerbate vulnerabilities and demand updated investigative protocols. Policy responses in Tamil Nadu have included legal measures

such as enforcement of the POCSO Act, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005), and regulations governing acid sales. The state has also implemented women's helplines, fast-track courts, and police-women units in several districts. Nevertheless, implementation remains uneven, and survivors often report gaps in medical, psychological, and economic rehabilitation. NGOs and civil-society organizations play a critical role in bridging these gaps, but resource constraints and systemic barriers limit their reach. For research and policy development, several gaps remain: (i) the absence of district-wise longitudinal data on sexual harassment and related crimes limits trend analysis, (ii) disaggregated conviction data are unavailable, preventing assessment of justice delivery efficacy, and (iii) under-reporting continues to obscure the true scale of abuse, particularly in rural and semi-urban regions. While Tamil Nadu demonstrates commendable educational and literacy outcomes for women, these achievements have not eliminated the prevalence of sexual harassment and related crimes. The frequency of sexual assault, the persistence of domestic and honour-based violence, and the emergence of digital-era sexual exploitation illustrate that structural, institutional, and sociocultural barriers continue to undermine women's safety. Comprehensive interventions — encompassing effective policing, judicial reform, survivor-centric rehabilitation, societal awareness, and district-level monitoring — are critical to translating educational empowerment into genuine autonomy and security for women in the state.

Marriage, Sexuality, and Personal Autonomy

In Tamil Nadu, marriage remains the most stigmatized site of women's autonomy. Legal provisions allow inter-caste unions, delayed marriages, and independent marital choices, but societal acceptance is limited. Women who postpone or reject marriage are often labeled defiant or immoral, while those in inter-caste marriages may face ostracism or violence. Between 2020 and 2022, at least 18 incidents of caste-based violence against inter-caste couples were recorded, highlighting persistent societal resistance. Although inter-caste marriages have risen from 1.9% in 1990 to 3.8% in 2023, acceptance remains uneven, stronger in urban, educated middle-class populations than in rural areas. Delayed marriages, often linked to education and careers, attract social scrutiny, reflecting patriarchal norms that equate early marriage with respectability. Conversations on sexuality and reproductive rights remain culturally silenced, keeping women's bodily autonomy under moral and patriarchal control. Consequently, marriage functions as a mechanism through which women's ambitions and choices are monitored and curtailed. Addressing this requires not only legal safeguards but also a cultural shift that recognizes and respects women's autonomy in both private and public spheres.

Political Participation and Public Life

Tamil Nadu has a notable history of women attaining political prominence, exemplified by leaders such as J. Jayalalithaa, whose career demonstrated both the possibilities and constraints of female leadership in a patriarchal society. Reservation policies, particularly the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, have significantly increased women's representation in local governance bodies, including Panchayats and municipal councils. These measures have formally enhanced women's visibility in decision-making processes and local administration. Despite these institutional gains, ordinary women aspiring to political roles continue to confront pervasive stigma that mediates their public participation. Female candidates and office-holders are frequently subjected to gendered criticism and character assassination, with their professional competence undermined through moralistic or personalized narratives. Reports and media coverage often emphasize appearance, family life, or perceived "morality" over administrative ability, effectively delegitimizing women's authority. This stigmatization has profound psychological consequences, including anxiety, self-doubt, and reduced political ambition, thereby discouraging sustained engagement in political life. The persistence of stigma illustrates that the public sphere is not neutral; it mirrors the private negotiation of patriarchal control, extending societal surveillance over women's actions into politics. Participation is tolerated

but not fully normalized, creating an environment where women's ambition is continuously questioned and policed. Consequently, the structural and cultural barriers that ordinary women face are not merely procedural—they are deeply psychological, shaping not only career trajectories but also self-perception and social legitimacy. In this context, policy interventions must go beyond quotas and formal representation. Efforts to normalize women's political participation require targeted media literacy, campaigns addressing gendered narratives, mentorship networks for aspiring female politicians, and community-level sensitization that challenges entrenched biases. Without such measures, the psychological burden of stigma will continue to constrain women's political agency, even in a state with exemplary female leadership and formal institutional support.

Future Prospects for Gender Equality in Tamil Nadu

The experience of stigma is not uniform but shaped by caste and class. Dalit women who assert autonomy in marriage, education, or property rights often face harsher violence and exclusion compared to their upper-caste counterparts. Middle-class women encounter stigma more subtly, through reputational policing, restrictions on mobility, and expectations to "balance" professional ambitions with domestic duties. While 79 percent of employed women in Tamil Nadu report autonomy in managing their earnings, this economic independence coexists with cultural resistance to broader forms of self-determination. Thus, caste and class stratification deepen the complexity of women's struggles against stigma. Tamil Nadu represents a paradoxical case in India's gender landscape. On one hand, women are statistically visible in education, labour markets, and governance, supported by a legacy of reformist and Dravidian interventions. On the other hand, stigma around women's choices and ambitions persists, restricting autonomy in both private and public domains. Structural inequalities, wage gaps, marriage norms, and political delegitimization illustrate that legal reforms and welfare measures alone cannot dismantle entrenched patriarchal and caste-based anxieties. Genuine transformation requires cultural change that normalizes women's independence and redefines autonomy as a legitimate social value across all communities.

A robust legal and policy framework underpins Tamil Nadu's pursuit of gender equality. Fast-track courts for gender-based crimes under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005) and enhanced cybercrime vigilance, including digital literacy initiatives, aim to expedite justice and protect women from online harassment. The Tamil Nadu State New Policy for Women (2021) seeks a gender-neutral society by eliminating violence and promoting equal rights, while the State Policy for Transgender Persons (2025) guarantees access to education, employment, healthcare, and public services for gender minorities. The 2025 Budget allocates ₹8,597 crore for Social Welfare and Women Empowerment, supporting HPV vaccinations, new hostels for working women, and skill-development programs. Coalitions like the Textile Industry Coalition (TiC) address gender-based violence in factories, particularly protecting migrant women workers. Education and political engagement remain pivotal for women's autonomy. Initiatives like free bus travel, the Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thittam, and mentorship programs aim to increase mobility, skill development, and leadership opportunities. Reservation policies ensure women's representation in local governance, while Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under TNCDW, TNSRLM, and TNULM enhance economic independence. Grassroots campaigns, such as those by the Thendral Movement and Rural Women Development Trust, focus on equal pay, capacity building, and social inclusion for marginalized women empowerment, enabling women to exercise full autonomy over their bodies, careers, and public roles.

Conclusion

Tamil Nadu's excursion toward comprehensive gender equality, rooted in pioneering reforms, remains dynamic and incomplete. With the 2025-26 budget's emphasis on welfare, infrastructure, and inclusivity, the

state is poised for transformative progress. By converging institutional enforcement, cultural change, active social engagement, and technological innovation, women can fully exercise autonomy over their bodies, careers, and public roles. Addressing structural, social, and psychological barriers simultaneously—through policies like transgender inclusion and women-led industrial growth—will not only elevate Tamil Nadu but set a national benchmark. As Periyar envisioned, a society of dignity and equality awaits, powered by empowered women driving sustainable development. .Despite progress, structural challenges persist. Women face a persistent **wage gap** (earning 74 paise per rupee for salaried jobs), occupational segregation, and high exposure to workplace harassment, especially in textiles and informal sectors. Only **12% of women occupy white-collar roles** in Tamil Nadu's industrial economy, despite comprising a significant portion of the workforce. Social norms, caste hierarchies, stigma around delayed or inter-caste marriages, and persistent violence further constrain autonomy. Achieving substantive gender equality requires **convergent strategies**: rigorous legal enforcement, cultural change, economic incentives, and data-driven interventions. District-wise tracking of violence, employment, political participation, and education—aligned with **SDG Goal 5**—will guide targeted policies. Expanding safe hostels, skill bootcamps, AI-enabled governance, and women-friendly workplaces in sectors like GCCs and R&D can create higher-value opportunities. Normalizing inter-caste unions, promoting political leadership, and enforcing equal pay are critical for transforming formal legal and educational achievements into genuine, sustained.

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Transforming Identity: The Progression of Women's Rights and Reforms in Travancore

Reeja J N[1] and R Edwin Sam[2]

Introduction

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries attempts were made to define and extend human rights. But most of these struggles ignored or denied the rights of half the human race – women. The twentieth century has been marked by struggles to bring to women the full range of human rights. "Women's rights" means equal rights for women and men., but it goes beyond equality – it means first recognizing the particular problems and difficulties confronting women, and then finding ways to overcome these barriers. Establishing "women's rights" means seeking opportunities for women to use their skills and experience and allowing them to participate as equals with men in society.[1]

The evolution of women's rights in Travancore is a crucial chapter in India's broader narrative of gender equality. Historically constrained by socio-cultural norms, women in this region began to experience transformative changes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Influenced by reformist movements, colonial rule, and an emerging educated elite, significant reforms in marriage customs, inheritance laws, and education reshaped women's identities and roles in society. This paper examines these legislative measures and societal shifts, highlighting how they empowered women to reclaim their narratives and assert their place, contributing to a deeper understanding of women's rights movements across India.

The Unique Status of Women in Matrilineal Travancore

Traditionally, matrilineal women in Travancore enjoyed certain advantages compared to their counterparts in other parts of India. The *marumakkathayam* system ensured economic security and emotional integration within the *tharavad*, freeing them from the burdens of dowry and widowhood that plagued many other societies. Their access to education not only prolonged their time in school but also fostered a broader perspective on societal roles, enhancing their status in the community.[2] While *matrilineality* does not universally elevate women's status, it provided Travancore women with a unique sense of influence and independence.

However, this high status cannot solely be attributed to the *Marumakkathayam* system. For example, among Muslim matrilineal communities, women faced lower status and educational attainment compared to their Hindu counterparts, illustrating the role of religion in shaping gender dynamics. Moreover, even within patrilineal castes, women in Travancore, particularly Namboodiri Brahmins, held relatively high status, evidenced by their rejection of Sati and higher marriage ages.

The 20th century brought significant changes, particularly through the reform of inheritance laws influenced by colonialism, socio-reform movements, and missionary activities. The British and reformists criticized the existing inheritance system, labelling it as "savage." This spurred younger members of matrilineal families to advocate for change, seeking autonomy from traditional family structures dominated by the *karanavan.* The demand for individual claims to wealth within joint families intensified, challenging the authority of elder family members. Recognizing the need for reform, progressive Nair leaders aimed to enhance community cohesion and economic stability, ultimately reshaping gender roles in Travancore.

Shifting Inheritance: From Matrilineal to Patrilineal Nair Laws

In South Travancore the majority was chiefly inhabited by the tribe of Nair's. They were all Hindus.[3]

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A group of Nair men, influenced by Western education and ideas, sought to reform their marriage and inheritance practices.[4]They began organizing efforts to transition from matrilineal to patrilineal laws, advocating for the division of collective family wealth into individual shares. Mannath Padmanabhan the fearless leader of the Nair Community, the immortal founder of the 'Nair Service Society'. One of the chief aims of the NSS was to bring reforms in the traditional matrilineal system of inheritance. The NSS wanted this reform because the joint family system had failed to work harmoniously.[5] Between 1896 and 1976, at least 20 pieces of legislation were enacted to modify and ultimately abolish matrilineal inheritance practices.[6] Under the *Marumakkathayam* system, property and assets of the *tharavad* were collectively held, preventing any individual from claiming personal ownership this was a significant limitation of the system. In 1912, legislation was passed in Travancore to recognize legal marriages among Nair's, defining and clarifying the laws of marriage, succession, and family management. For the first time, wives and children were granted rights to a portion of the self-acquired assets of their husbands and fathers. The 1912 Nair law also established legal rights for partition along maternal lines, entitling wives and children to half of the self-acquired property of fathers who died intestate, while the other half was allocated to nephews.

1925 Second Nair Act: Key Advancement for Women's Inheritance Rights

The Second Nair Act of 1925, or the Nair Regulation Amendment Bill, represented a pivotal moment in the social history of Travancore, affecting not only the Nair's but also others who followed the *marumakkathayam* system.[7]Introduced in the Travancore Legislative Council to rectify the limitations of *marumakkathayam*, the Act included two essential provisions: inheritance rights for children of non-Nair's marrying into Nair families and the establishment of individual property rights through the partition of *tharavad* assets. It specified that children of a non-Nair father and a Nair mother would enjoy equal rights and privileges as their Nair counterparts. Furthermore, the wife and children were recognized as the sole legal heirs to the husband's entire self-acquired property. This legislation effectively dismantled the matrilineal joint family system, paving the way for an individualistic structure known as *Makkathayam*, which curtailed the absolute authority of the *karanavars* and eliminated nephews 'claims to their uncles' property. As a result, the Nair Regulation made significant strides in enhancing women's social and economic standing.[8]

1925 Ezhava Regulation: Inheritance and Individual Rights in Travancore

Ezhavas came originally from Ceylone where they belonged to the military caste. The Ezhava Regulation emerged as a result of the Nair Regulation. Among the Ezhavas of Travancore, three forms of inheritance existed: *Makkathayam*in the extreme south, *Marumakkathayam* in the taluks north of Quilon, and a mixture of the two around Neyyattinkara. In March 1916, the Government of Travancore appointed a committee to draft a bill to regulate marriage and inheritance laws for the Ezhava community.[9] This committee was reconstituted in 1918 with four members. It proposed legal recognition of the existing forms of marriage, prohibited polygamy and polyandry, and ensured the devolution of self-acquired property to wives and children in cases of intestacy. It also addressed *thavazhi* partition for *Makkathayam*property and granted full power of testation over self-acquired property. The Travancore government accepted the Law Committee's report, and the draft bill was finally passed on February 12, 1925. This regulation effectively ended the matrilineal system among some Ezhavas, leading to widespread acceptance of the patrilineal system within the community. It facilitated the subdivision of property among *tharavad* members, abolishing the *Karanavar's* monopoly on one hand while establishing individual rights and property ownership on the other.

1931 Regulation: Reforming Namboothiri Succession and Practices

The Namboothiris, who had established themselves as the "intellectual aristocracy of Travancore," underwent significant changes alongside other communities such as the Nair's, Ezhavas, and Syrian Christians, albeit somewhat later. The *Karanavar*

did not help the young men by giving money for education and also for meeting their daily needs. Influenced by Western education, the educated Namboothiris began to recognize the challenges facing their community.[10] They viewed the traditional practice of elder members marrying within their caste as detrimental to broader societal interests.[11] When Nambudiri women ever had to go outside her house, she was to take *marakkuta* or palm leaf umbrella to hide her from others and wear loin cloth that would not reach beyond knee. Additionally, there was a pressing need for social rehabilitation and a complete reorientation of the lifestyle of Namboothiri women, who had long lived in seclusion. On 20th February 1931, the Travancore Brahmin Regulation was passed. This Regulation defined and amended the law of succession and family management of the Namboothiri community.[12]

1932 Regulation: Reforming Muslim Succession Laws in Travancore

The Muslims of Travancore were also active in demanding social reforms, though the community faced significant challenges due to low literacy rates, which contributed to their overall backwardness.[13] The collective ambition of the Muslim community was to abolish the *marumakkathayam* system of inheritance and adopt the Mohammedan Law of Inheritance.[14] On 31st December 1932, the Maharaja of Travancore enacted the Muslim Succession Regulation, effectively separating Muslims from the *marumakkathayam* system and aligning them with Mohammedan inheritance laws, fulfilling their longstanding goal. In recent years, Muslim women have made remarkable progress in modern education, and the substantial advancements in secular education achieved by Muslim women in subsequent decades can be attributed to the tireless efforts of reformers like Vakkom Abdul Khadar Moulavi.

The Evolution of Inheritance Rights for Christian Women in Travancore

The Indian Succession Act of 1925 provided for equal distribution of an intestate's property among children, after allocating one-third to the widow. However, this Act was not applicable in Travancore, where the Patriarchal Christian community opposed its introduction due to these provisions in Section 37. Unlike Travancore, Malabar fell under the Madras presidency, allowing the 1925 Act to apply there. In Travancore, succession laws among Christians were inconsistent. In July 1911, a six-member commission led by P. Cherian was established, culminating in the Christian Succession Regulation Act of December 20, 1916. This Act notably denied women equal rights, treating all property as inherited without distinguishing between self-acquired and ancestral property. Particularly discriminatory was Section 28, which allowed sons to inherit the entire estate while relegating daughters to claims for dowry, reflecting deep-rooted patriarchal traditions.

Mary Roy was denied her share of the familial property due to the Travancore Christian Act of 1916. She sued her brother after her father's death for equal inheritance. Mary Roy challenged the constitutional validity of Sections 24 and 28, highlighting their discrimination against Christian women. She won the case against her brother. Despite the Syrian Christians resistance to Western ideals, the Supreme Court's ruling in the Mary Roy[15] case of 1986 marked a pivotal change, granting equal inheritance rights to Christian women across India, and prompted the Court to address succession rights more thoroughly in the aftermath.

Findings

The findings on women's rights and reforms in Travancore reveal a significant transformation over the decades. Key developments included the introduction of educational initiatives, legal reforms that improved property rights, and increased participation in public life. The ultimate impact of these changes was a shift in societal perceptions, allowing women to assert their identities more confidently. Overall, these reforms marked a pivotal progression towards gender equity in the region.

Conclusion

The progression of women's rights and reforms in Travancore marks a significant evolution toward gender equality, driven by legislative changes and social reform movements. While milestones such as inheritance rights

and widow remarriage laws represent substantial progress, challenges persist, particularly for marginalized communities like Adivasis and Dalits. This disparity underscores the ongoing gap between legislative intent and practical implementation. To truly transform identities and achieve comprehensive gender equality, it is crucial to adopt inclusive approaches that address the needs of all societal groups. Continued advocacy and reforms are essential for ensuring that all women can fully realize their rights and potential.

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Salt: Spicing up Human Civilization from Antiquity to Modernity.

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Salt from antiquity :

Peng-Tzao-Kan-Mu was the first Chinese medical text written around 2700 BC, which contains references to forty types of salts and the technology used to make them. This is the first historical reference to salt.The surprising thing is that this method of production is still followed today.

Ancient Egypt was a much wealthier country than European countries because of salt. The Egyptians mined salt from the Sahara Desert, loaded it on camels, and sold it to surrounding countries, making a fortune.

Salt is not only used to flavour food, but also to preserve it for a long time. The next step in evolution was the realization that salt can help preserve food for a long time. Food preservation is a technology that dates back thousands of years. The ancient Egyptians used it to preserve duck meat by storing it in jars and pouring salt on it.

Similarly, it is very important to note that the salt mixture called *Natron* was mainly used to preserve the bodies of the dead, that is, to create mummies.

In the first century BC, new roads were built from the areas surrounding Rome towards the city of Rome to transport salt in carts. For centuries, those roads had been used by thousands of camels carrying loads of salt across the Sahara Desert in Africa.

The city Timbuktu is located on the southern border of the Sahara Desertruled under the Mali empire situated in west Africa was the world's largest salt market for manyyears .From Egypt,Timbuktu isthe longest route which is said to be the most used salt route in the world.Slaves were also sold in the Timbuktu

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market. History even records slaves being bartered.[1]

In the 6th century, an ounce of salt was literally exchanged for an ounce of gold in the Saharadesert.Salt exports from the African coast to the Middle East were extensive. Arab merchants exchanged salt for jewellery and silk fabrics. They also used Ten inches long and two inches thick salt cakes as coins.

Salty Wars:

Many political events and wars between countries have been fought over salt.This was a war between Venice and Genoa that took place between 1482 and 1484 AD. Although many political reasons have been given for this war, the main reason was the growing enmity with Genoa due to the lack of a Venetian college as a salt trade monopoly. This war is therefore called the *Salt War (1540)*.In the sixteenth century, Poland was a major exporter of salt, but the introduction of sea salt eroded Poland's influence. Before the discovery of oil, Germany had built its political empire around salt. The tax on salt has been a painful burden for mankind for centuries. This salt tax was one of the main factors that led to the French Revolution. It was also the non-violent weapon that Gandhi used in the Indian freedom struggle. [1]

Monopoly to Mahatma:

Salt helped the British Empire to gain power in the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century, and to lose power through tyrannical practices during the second part of the 18th century and the 19th century. This research was enlightening because it showed how, in big history, something as seemingly unnoticeable in our daily routine engineered the map of the world. Salt is an essential mineral not only because it gives taste to food, but also because it spiced up the history of humanity.

The problem started in 1835 when a Salt commission had recommended that the Salt prepared in India had to be taxed and as a result the Salt became such an commodity which was beyond the reach of poor people. Hence Gandhiji rightly felt the nerve of the people and expressed that the Salt tax oppressed all the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsees, the Christians and the Jews. In this respect a considerable number of officials both in England and India condemned the Salt laws and held them outrageous and unjust. Gandhi decided to fight against this kind of injustice and planned to violate the Salt laws along with members of his Ashram at Sabarmati.[1]

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the British East India Company had brought almost all the salt mines under their control. Manufacturers were now required to sell salt only to the government, at a price determined by the government. Selling salt to outsiders was illegal, the British declared in 1805 AD. In addition, making salt from saline soil, i.e. collecting salt from dry soil and extracting salt from rocks, were also declared punishable offenses.

As a result, the price of salt continued to rise. In 1888, the excise duty on salt was increased from two rupees to two and a half rupees per manang. At that time, one manang was equal to about 11 kg of salt. In 1888, if a family of five had a monthly income of five rupees, they had to pay four paise per rupee as income tax and six paise per rupee as salt tax. This was a very painful matter for the people. The leaders of the Indian National Congress strongly condemned this. But since these protests and statements of protest were only on paper and in words, the British government did not pay any attention. The British made good profits from the import of salt. It was only when a political struggle using salt as a weapon emerged in 1930 that the British government found itself in a crisis. The next phase of Gandhi's struggle against the British government through the Non-Cooperation Movement since 1920 was the Civil Disobedience Movement. A part of it was the Salt Satyagraha.

The then Viceroy of India, Irwin, joked that Mr. Gandhi was planning a mad scheme to intimidate the government with a pinch of salt. Gandhi replied, "With this salt I am going to shake the British Empire."

Salt and the shores of Tamilnadu:

Gandhi announced that Indians could produce or take their own salt as per the British government's Salt Act, which prohibited the production of salt without a license. Not only did he announce this, he also walked

485 kilometers from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi in Gujarat. He spoke at meetings along the way, which caused a great stir among the people. On April1930, Gandhi took salt in Dandi against the Salt Act. [1]At the same time, the Salt Satyagraha was held inThirumaraiKaduofVedaranyam, Tamil Nadu.

The repercussions created there also spread strongly in the Thoothukudi region. The salt workers in that area cut down the telegraph poles from Kulasekarapatnam to Udangudi against the British government. In addition, the British officer Lone, who was the salt inspector, was also killed. In that case, known as the Lone murder case, many martyrs from the soil of Thoothukudi were severely punished.

Salt in Tamil Cultureand Politics:

InTamil culture, the first thing to be served after cleaning the plantain leaf, sprinkling water on it, and cleaning the leaf is salt. Vengalamiltham' and 'kadalvilaiamilthu' are both descriptive words for the salt found in Akananuru. Akananuru celebrates salt as *amiltham*. Salt was a highly valued commodity in ancient Tamil Nadu, where transportation facilities were very limited. Salt grown in the coastal areas was sold to other parts of the country on donkeys or in carts pulled by oxen. Those who traded in salt were called Umanars. Watching the salt carts passing from town to town was a pastime for the people of that time. In the markets, one could buy one pound of salt for one pound of paddy.

நெல்லும்உப்பும்நேரேஊரீர்...
நெல்லின்நேரேவெண்கல்உப்பு...

These are the internal taxes mentioned in Agananooru that say that rice and salt were of the same value. It is also known that the salt sellers in the markets at that time were generally women. Those who could not afford to buy the salt sold in the market were known to be poor. Saltless Tax. உப்பில்லாவரி,This is the external taxin Purananooru.

An ancient Tamil inscription from the 1st century BC has been found on the Azhagar Hill. It contains the words UppuVanigan,Viyakkan, Kanathikan.

A major change took place in the salt trade during the Pallava Empire. That is, since salt was a major source of income for the government, the government brought salt production under its control. As a result, a situation arose where the salt pans belonged to the government and only those who leased them could do the business. It was during this period that salt production shifted from the hands of the Bharatavaras to the hands of the Umanaras. Because the Umanaras were wealthy, they started engaging in salt production in addition to the salt trade, says A. Sivasubramanian, a prominent social science professor in Tamil Nadu. The book Uppittavarai written by him is the most important record in Tamil on the salt trade.

There are references to the tax imposed on this salt in a 14th century inscription in the Sokkanathar temple in Pranamala.

"One paise for a bag of salt,Halfpaise for a sack of salt,Halfpaise for a head load of salt, Ten paise for a cart of salt"[1] Wherein, a bag means a large bundle and a sack means a small bundle.The word 'salary', which most people in the world look forward to every month, was born from salt and rice. The name of the field where salt is grown is alam. *Salt plusalam, uppalam.*In those days, people gave samba rice and salt grown in alam as wages for their labour. The combination of that *samba and alam* is the origin of the word *sambalam* means salary. Similarly, in ancient Rome, soldiers were given salt as their salary.[1]

The Gandhi-Irwin Pact was formed on March 5, 1931, in which the British government agreed to bring some relaxations in the Salt Act. That is, people could produce only the amount of salt they needed in their area and should not sell it outside. They should only carry it on their heads. They should not carry it in carts.

This agreement restored the right to produce salt, which benefited the poor. This was the practice until 1948 AD. After that, the Indian government repealed the Salt Act and announced that individuals could also engage in production to make India self-sufficient in salt production. In 1955 AD, a law was announced that there would be taxes on salt pans with more than ten acres. In 1981, India became self-sufficient in salt production and started exporting.[1]

Salt in Tamil Tradition:

Manu Dharma says that if one wants to get rid of one's sins, one should eat unsalted rice. It is a Tamil tradition to take salt and turmeric in hand first when moving into a new house. The Jews also follow this practice. They enter the new house with salt and bread. The British take only salt with them during religious ceremonies. In Madurai district, a section of the community has a custom of taking salt and rice from the groom's house to confirm the marriage. Some sections also carry a straw basket full of salt when the bride enters the house where she has entered as a daughter-in-law. Salt also plays a role in auspicious events. Some communities cook the food prepared for the funeral processions held for the deceased on the eighth or tenth day after the death of a person without adding salt. Cooking without salt is a sign of severing the connection with the deceased.[1]

History says that in British India, Indian soldiers who were recruited for the British army swore an oath on salt to 'be loyal to the British government' as a sign of their loyalty.If you dream of salt or of buying salt from someone, it means that wealth will increase in the house.[1]

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The Ladies Recreation Club of Madras: A Social And Cultural Study

Lipika J

Introduction

In the early twentieth century, women in Madras had limited access to exclusive recreational spaces, as most clubs remained male preserves. Against this backdrop, the founding of the Ladies Recreation Club in 1911 marked a significant moment in the social history of the city. Established through the joint initiative of both European and Indian women, the Club became a vibrant hub for cultural exchange, leisure, and service.[2] It not only provided recreational activities such as tennis, croquet, and badminton but also engaged actively in wartime relief and philanthropic initiatives.[3] Over time, the Club evolved into a symbol of women's participation in public life, reflecting both colonial hierarchies and emerging nationalist identities.

Founding of the Club

A few European ladies in Madras who genuinely wanted to interact with and understand their Indian counterparts were responsible for the founding of the club. The Club was established in 21st August, 1911

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with the goal of "promoting social and friendly intercourse between European and Indian ladies and between Indian ladies of all classes and creeds; also, to provide healthy recreation suitable to the members of the Club".[4] This was done at the joint initiative of Mrs. Madeley, wife of the Madras Corporation's engineer, Mrs. Seethamma Tiruvenkatachariar (daughter of renowned lawyer and judge Sir V. Bhashyam Iyengar, and wife of renowned lawyer C.R. Tiruvenkatariar), and a Mrs. Subramaniam.[5]

Early Venue and Leadership

The Club's inaugural location was the grounds of Justice Sir David M. Devadoss's residence in Mylapore, Sylvan Lodge. The Club was actively supported by his wife, Lady Masilamoney Chellammal, who would go on to play a significant role in women's education and serve as a Corporation Councillor.[6] The Club convened every Friday, and the yearly subscription was set at Rs. 5.

Committee and Patronage

Mrs. Ayling (wife of High Court Justice W.B. Ayling), Mrs. A. Davies (wife of Arthur Davies, ICS), Mrs. Glyn Barlow (her husband worked in the Department of Education and authored the book The Story of Madras), Miss C. Lynch (who later became Mrs. C. Drysdale, an Inspector of Schools), Lady Desikachari (wife of Sir V.C. Desikachari, a legal luminary), Mrs. (later Lady) Sankaran Nair (wife of C. Sankaran Nair, Judge of the High Court of Madras), Mrs. T.V. Seshagiri Iyer (the spouse of Justice Seshagiri Iyer of the High Court of Madras), and Mrs. Seethamma Tiruvenkatariar made up the first committee. Mrs. Madeley and Mrs. Subramaniam served as the Club's first secretaries. Lady Carmichael, the wife of the Madras governor at the time, was appointed president in what would eventually become a convention.

Early Recreational Activities

The Club initially provided croquet and badminton as its facilities. Then tennis arrived, and it surely have been a delightful sight to watch women in nine-yard sarees playing alongside those wearing skirts.[7]

Expansion and Growth

The Club's membership grew significantly by the end of its first year. In response to a request for donations, the Maharani of Pithapuram donated Rs. 1000. The Club started holding meetings every Tuesday and Fridays twice a week. It relocated in 1913 to S. Srinivasa Iyengar's home, The Luz, which is still standing on Oliver (formerly Musiri Subramania Iyer) Road. Winifred, Lady Hardinge, the Vicereine, was given a reception here. The club started the Lady Hardinge Library after the esteemed guest gave a check for Rs. 300 upon her return to Delhi.

Wartime Service during the First World War

Members of the Club helped the Red Cross throughout the Great War by sewing, knitting, crocheting, and rolling bandages in addition to raising funds for the war effort.[8] With a fresh and vibrant lady in office taking over at Government House at the conclusion of the war, the Club's fortunes shifted into high gear. This was Marie, Lady Willingdon, the assertive wife of a man who, in great part because of her, held the longest term in Government Houses under the Raj. He served as Viceroy of India, Governor-General of Canada, Governor of Bombay, and Governor of Madras. He also gradually rose through the ranks of British peerage throughout that period, beginning as the humble Mr. Freeman - Thomas MP and ending as the Marquis of Willingdon. In India, his (and her) name is still honoured in several kinds of structures and organizations. The Ladies Recreation Club was one of them.

Acquisition of Permanent Premises

As the First Lady of Madras, Lady Willingdon assumed the role as President of the Club and determined that it required a separate residence.[9] Lady Todhunter (wife of Sir Charles, Governor's Council member) found and negotiated a rental deal for a big property with a cottage on Marshall's Road, Egmore, with Alice's help. She quickly determined that an outright purchase was the only option and began to gather the necessary Rs. 2.50 lakh. The Maharajah of Travancore contributed Rs. 25,000, the Rajah of Bobbili contributed Rs. 10,000, and S.Rm.M. Annamalai

Chettiar, who would go on to become Sir and eventually Rajah, contributed Rs. 2 lakhs. Member's donations covered the remaining amount, and the land was bought within the year. The Club building should be renamed after the Willingdon's, which was a requirement for Annamalai Chettiar's contribution.

Governance and Administration

By this point, the Club was meeting three days a week, and it was agreed that it may rent out the space for social events on the other days. One day a month, the Indian National Association, a mixed-race society for Indians and Europeans, gathered on the grounds. The Willingdon Trust, which had the Governor of the Province, the Administrator-General, and the Secretary of the Imperial Bank (later State Bank) of India as its trustees, received full ownership of the property because the First Lady believed that women could not manage it on their own. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer, a member of the Governor's Executive Council and a close friend of the Willingdon's, prepared the trust deed. Sir Arthur Knapp, the Secretary of the Government of Madras, Sir C.P., Mrs. (later Lady) Wright, the wife of a senior Parry's member, Mrs. C.V. Krishnaswami Chetty, whose husband was the Corporation's Electrical Engineer and is still better known for bringing radio to Madras, Mrs. Madeley, Mrs. Ian Fraser, Mrs. Zynuddin, the wife of the then-Judge of the Small Causes Court, Alexander McDougall of Simpson & Co., and Raja Raghava Varma were among the first members of the Council that managed the property.

Inspirational Leaders

Although the Club benefited from Lady Willingdon's leadership, two more inspirational figures were Mrs. Seetha Tiruvenkatachariar and Miss Gerrard. During their tenure, the Club continued to operate every day of the week and extended its activities. The Club's guardian angel was said to be Seetha, or Seethakka as she was more often known. Miss Gerrard became a paid secretary of the Club at the end of World War I, and it profited immensely from her leadership. She started a number of children's activities. Despite having limited mobility in her later years, Miss Gerrard remained involved in Club activities until her retirement and departure to England in 1945, following a heartbreaking farewell. She survived to a good age, and when the Club celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1961, she was healthy enough to send a note of remembrance. The ladies of the Club benefited the Victoria Technical Institute. On some mornings, the members of the committee, which included Lady Wright, Lady Todhunter, and Mrs. Sitapathi Iyer, manned the VTI counters and handled the sales of handicrafts and laces. Mary Clubwalla recalled how, soon after arriving in Madras as bride to be in 1926, she was introduced to the Club. She initially went to an 'At Home' at the Banqueting Hall, which was hosted by Lady Goschen. Mrs. Ameen Khaleeli suggested her name in 1931.

Second World War Contributions

The Club convened on September 2, 1939, to discuss the declaration of World War II. Among those in attendance was Mary Clubwalla, who was to remember that the Club was where the St. John's Ambulance's Nursing Division was established. The members served in hospitals and established a section to handle the Air Raid Patrol Posts. They instructed other women in the use of firefighting apparatus and received instruction in its usage. Under the guidance of the Indian Hospitality Committee responsible for the Armed Force's Welfare, the members managed canteens and provided medical care for ailing and injured soldiers. A number of the Club's members later joined Mary Clubwalla's Guild of Service as active members.

Unfortunately, the Club lost its home during World War II, and the Willingdon, as it was known, was converted into a military transit camp. The Mail's editor's wife, Mrs. A.A. Hayles provided the Club her house and tennis grounds. It thereafter moved to Montieth Road and joined the Indian National Association as a sub-lessee. The Club wanted to reclaim its space after the war, but the government blocked their plans and turned it into the Prohibition Department's headquarters instead. After significant campaigning, the Club was able to reclaim its former location only in 1949. By then, most of the European ladies had fled, left it to the Indians to administer the institution.

Post-Independence Sporting Culture

The Club made significant efforts to encourage women's interest in sports in the years after independence. The members competed in state and national sporting events and returned with awards in badminton, snooker, carrom, tennis, table tennis, and bridge.

Golden Jubilee and Decline

In 1961, the Club celebrated its golden jubilee with great vigor. However, some kind of degradation had already begun by that time.[11] 'The men's only clubs' had started loosening their membership requirements, and the club's purpose was severely undermined. Membership started to decline. An item in the commemorative memento from the Club's diamond jubilee celebration in 1971 disclosed a lot. T. Satya Srinivasan pondered, "Oh, where are the open shuttle court, the badminton court, and the tennis courts?"[12]

When Mrs. Madhuben Shah, the wife of K.K. Shah, the governor of Madras in the 1970s, visited the Club, she said, "Surely such large grounds could be turned over to the slum clearance board and made into dwellings for the poor!"[13]Perhaps this was a reflection of the times. Soon after, the Club abandoned the custom of electing First Ladies to serve as its presidents. During tough times in the 1980s, the Club collapsed. Ironically, the Club decided not to market or capitalize on the exclusivity that had contributed to its success at an era when women were establishing themselves in a variety of fields. The sporting facilities suffered as a result of the Willingdon Trust's decision to develop the grounds, which was mostly directed by the Chettinad family.

The Club in Contemporary Times

On the estate, a variety of structures appeared. But the Club continues to exist. It functions from the basement and first floors on one among the buildings that were given space as part of the new development. The only leisure accessible now is cards. Additionally, it provides needy students with scholarships. But it's only a shell of what it used to be.

Conclusion

The Ladies Recreation Club of Madras stands as a historical testament to the evolving role of women in public and social life during the colonial and postcolonial eras. From its beginnings as a rare shared space for European and Indian women, it became a platform for sports, philanthropy, and wartime service. While the Club thrived for decades, its decline after independence reflected broader social changes, particularly the opening of male-only clubs to women and shifting priorities in urban development. Today, though reduced in scale and purpose, the Club's legacy endures as part of the city's cultural memory, reminding us of the early struggles and achievements of women seeking spaces of leisure, solidarity, and social engagement.

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The Social Status of The Munda, Oraon And Santal Tribal Communities Before 1858

***B. Manikandan[1] and B Karthikeyan[2]**

Introduction

The Mundas, Oraons and Santals went through experiences before 1858 that were broadly similar. Thus it is not immediately obvious why the Sardar and Kherwar movements were so different. The main aims of this paper are to describe these movements and explain this difference between them. The issues raised in this paper are of interest to social scientists for a variety of reasons. First, the social history and social movements of the Mundas, Oraons and Santals between 1858 and 1895 have not been systematically described in detail in the published literature (even though much has been written about these tribes‟ history and movements before and after the period 1858-95). Second,among the Mundas, Oraons and Santals, movements – have been strongly influenced by the Sardar and Kherwar movements. (I elaborate briefly on this point at the end of this paper.) Third, these movements constitute an important part of the process whereby adivasis sought to adapt to changing conditions. Since the changes were similar to those experienced by other groups in India and elsewhere, similar pre – colonial situations, our analysis has relevance to analyses of the adaptation of other adivasi – like groups to colonial rule. Not only did adivasis have similar experiences before 1858, but our two districts are separated by some fifty miles. Nor is there any evidence that the Sardar and Kherwar movements and their participants were influenced by each other. We may then make a quite tightly – controlled comparative analysis, since we have controlled for some key variables such as the nature of pre–British economy, social structure and culture in two independent cases

Munda, Oraon and Santal Society Before 1858

By the time British rule was established in Ranchi District in 1770, the Munda and Oraon tribes had been in contact with each other for centuries. While the two tribes had mutually – unintelligible languages, they did have very similar economics, social structures and cultures, and they had always interacted peacefully. The Mundas, Oraons and Santals lived on an infertile plateau, quite distinct from the rich Gangetic plain to the north and east. The three tribes mainly depend for their livelihood on settled rice cultivation. Adivasi villages were economically self – sufficient, and village authorities had much control over the use of villagers‟ land. If a village‟s population grew, there was enough virgin forest to enable families to clear new land, and perhaps found a new village. All the lineages in adivasi villages possessed virtually the same economic and political rights (e.g. access to the produce of rice land and forests, and rights to speak at village assemblies.)

Headmen, priests and other village officials had hereditary rights to their positions, but received minimal compensation. The Mundas, Oraons and Santals believed in hierarchy of deities, and their devotions were most frequently directed to various spirits of nature, of their villages and of their ancestors. The adivasis adopted many Hindu religious beliefs and rituals, but they did not hire specialized priests, ritually subordinate themselves to members of clean Hindu castes or consciously relate these Hindu rites and dogmas to any larger body of Hindu thought. Thus adivasi society was, before the British conquest, very different from Hindu society. Above all, adivasi social structure was not organized on the basis of religiously – legitimated hierarchy. Rather, the major feature of

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adivasi society was that it consisted of isolated, egalitarian villages.

However, Munda and Oraon society in Ranchi District were different in one important respect,which we will now describe. Among the Mundas and Oraons, as among the Santals, there were headmen who possessed authority over whole groups of villages. Many centuries before the British assumed control over Ranchi District, one of these superior headmen emerged as the chief of such headmen. This headman, who came to be known as the Maharaja (or chief) of Chotanagpur, was paid nominal rents by adivasi villagers, and seems to have occasionally provided them with military protection. However, the Maharaja‟s position changed markedly in the seventeenth century, after one Maharaja came into closer contact with the Moghul empire. Maharajas began to aspire to high caste–Hindu status, and to bring non–adivasis from the Gangetic plains to serve as priests, artisans and soldiers. These newcomers were supported economically by the adivasis, through higher rents, forced labour and the expropriation of adivasi lands by the newcomers. None of these changes affected the Santals, and only a minority of even the Mundas and Oraons, or of their land, was affected by the changes before 1770.

During Company rule, 1770 – 1858

Ranchi District: Between 1770 and about 1810, the British increasingly extended their form of administration over Ranchi District. During this period, and during subsequent decades, the non – adivasis whom we mentioned in the last paragraph flooded into the district. Thanks to the British administrative and judicial system, these people, whom the Mundas, Oraons and Santals called *dikus*, were able to greatly increase rents payable by adivasi villagers, and the amount of land they controlled.Many adivasis also incurred debts to the dikus, most petty officials were dikus and the latter often usurped *de facto* and *de jure* power in adivasi villages. The Mundas and Oraons frequently revolted against this domination by the dikus, most importantly in the Kol rebellion of 1832. The British had to bring in hundreds of soldiers to quell the rebellion, and in its aftermath the British initiated agrarian and political reforms. For the first time a few senior British officials were posted in Ranchi District. They were encouraged to develop much closer contacts with the adivasis than hitherto, and empowered to prevent further alienation of adivasi lands and use adivasi village assemblies for routine judicial business involving adivasis. Those reforms proved ineffective, since there were not enough senior officials in Ranchi District, and they lacked many of the necessary powers. Ranchi District was far more peaceful in the period 1832 – 57 than it had been between 1770 and 1832. However, in 1857 – 58, soldiers posted near Ranchi town joined in the great Indian Mutiny – rebellion. None of the rebels was adivasi and some of them, together with some landlords and diku officials, turned on the Mundas andOraons. In 1845 German Lutheran missionaries began working in Ranchi District, but they did not play a significant role in the district‟s history until after 1858.

Santal Parganas District:

In the late eighteenth century, today‟s Santal Parganas District had no Santal inhabitants. It was settled by Hindus, most of whom owed allegiance to a handful of chiefs. In 1770, this area was ravaged by the great Bengal famine, and in subsequent years much land went out of cultivation. This famine did not affect Ranchi District. During the following eight decades, much of this vacated land was occupied by Santals who had previously lived to the south and southeast. The Santals at first paid virtually no rents to their nominal Hindu landlords. But as the density of the population increased, dikus entered the area and took control of Santal lands and village life, in a manner very similar to that occurring during the same period in Ranchi District. Diku penetration even occurred in the Damin-i-Koh. This was a special area, comprising about one-third of Santal Parganas, where non – adivasis were prevented from settling or doing business. This policy was administered in the Damin-i-Koh by Pontet, a resident British official who enjoyed cordial relations with the Santals, but lacked the powers to effectively exclude the dikus. Outside the Damin-i-Koh, British officials were as remote from adivasis‟ daily lives as in Ranchi District before 1832. The Santals did not engage in any

collective protest against diku incursions until 1855,when they rose in violent revolt. Like the Kol rebellion of 1832, the Santal insurrection of 1855 required the introduction of hundreds of British troops, and was immediately followed by agrarian and administrative reforms. Their aims were very similar to those of the reforms in Ranchi District after the Kol rebellion, but the specific provisions were much more far-reaching in Santal Parganas. (The reforms were not modeled on those introduced in Ranchi District after 1832, but rather on those obtained in the Damin-i-Koh before 1855). In the latter area, special forms of administration were employed after 1855. More officials were posted in the interior of the Santal Parganas District than in Ranchi, and they were given much wider powers over adivasi indebtedness, the appointment of village headmen, etc.

Adivasi Movements and their Environments, 1858 – 95

In this section, we will first spell out for each district, in turn, the main events that occurred, and then describe certain other aspects of the adivasi movements, especially their participants, goals and social backgrounds. We will divide the history of this period into phases, each of which is characterized by particular crises in the adivasi movements and related policies of the administration and / or the missionaries.

Ranchi District: history

1) 1858 – 69. Immediately after the Mutiny – Rebellion of 1857 – 58, the Mundas and Oraons who had suffered gained relief from the government and from the Lutheran mission. The mission was seen by many adivasis as a powerful institution, so it is hardly surprising that many Mundas and Oraons became Christian: the number of Munda and Oraon Christians increased sevenfold between 1859 and 1869, to over 1,000 in 1868.

2) The growth of a significant Christian minority among the adivasis is the first notable feature of this phase. The other is the occurrence of the first instances of Sardar activity. In 1858 – 59 some adivasis seized diku land, and there were scuffles. In an attempt to reduce tension, the government between 1858 and 1862 reinstated a few hundred adivasi families on traditional low – rent tenures in the southeastern part of Ranchi District. The adivasis in these areas were pacified. But agrarian unrest broke out anew in other adivasi areas in the middle 1860s, and in 1867 the Sardars (as participants in the movement were called) submitted a petition seeking restoration of low – rent holdings.

3) 1869 – 80. The most important event that sets this period off from the preceding One is a new government land survey that lasted for the whole of the period. This survey was instituted in response to pressure of the Sardars and the missions in the middle and late 1860s. The survey covered more categories of adivasi landholdings and a much larger area than the survey of 1858 – 62. Senior officials visited villages throughout the area involved to ascertain and then restore low – rent adivasi lands. The officials were greeted with many extreme claims to such lands, many of them instigated by Sardar activities. The area covered by this survey was somewhat more peaceful after the survey.Sardar leaders toured adivasi villages to raise money, gather signatures for their petitions and encourage adivasis to make claims to the visiting officials. Sardar leaders took the petitions and the money raised, to lawyers in Calcutta, who were supposed to have the ear of high officials, but proved to be fraudulent.

In 1876 the Lutheran missionaries submitted a petition of their own on the adivasi– land question to the government. The government, in reply, warned the mission not to become involved in converts‟ agrarian problems. The number of Christian adivasis continued to grow in the 1870s, but more slowly than in the previous decade: the number increased three – and – a – half – fold between 1870 and 1877 (because of a schism in the Lutheran mission, a separate Anglican mission was founded in 1869). During the 1870s a few Christian leaders of the Sardar movement left their churches, but did not form any significant separate churches of their own.

4) 1880 – 89. In 1880 the government finally completed its survey of low – rent adivasi lands. Notwithstanding, the issues of levels of rents and of forced labour for landlords were not resolved to the adivasis‟ satisfaction.

As might be expected, Sardar activity continued for a further decade and a half. During the 1880s Sardars submitted several petitions to high – level British authorities. Even though the petitions were rejected, the Sardars continued to submit them. The Mundas and Orans also asked the Lutheran mission to help them on the land issue, but the mission refused. Partly because of this refusal, the number of adivasis abandoning the churches, or forming their own independent sects, was somewhat larger during this period. The number of Protestant Mundas and Oraons barely increased between 1880 and 1886. However, a Jesuit Catholic mission started serious work in Ranchi District in 1881, and This constitutes the main new development during this decade. In 1886 the mission began to devote much more effort than hitherto to helping individual adivasis resolve their land problems. Such help was especially often given when a whole village converted to Catholicism. The number of Catholic converts rose prodigiously – there was a fivefold increase, to 11,291, between 1885 and 1888. Some converts were former Lutherans and Anglicans. Between 1887 and 1889 many adivasis, especially those in contact with the Catholic mission, redoubled their efforts to seize lands and refuse rents.Serious tension between landlords and tenants built up in the far west of Ranchi District, and the government responded by imprisoning some forty adivasi militants.

5) 1890 – 95, In 1890, the Lieutenant – Governor of Bengal was induced by the Catholic missionaries to visit Ranchi District and deal personally with the grievances raised so forcefully by the adivasis, especially in the preceding three years. The Lieutenant – Governor undid the harsh treatment of the adivasis meted out by the local authorities in 1889. But the Catholic mission no longer actively involved itself in the land question. During 1890 – 95 the government took no new steps to deal with agrarian problems. There was relatively little overt unrest, but the adivasis, especially the leaders of the Sardar movement, increasingly felt they could not expect any help from the government or the missions in dealing with their land problems. Many Mundas and Oraons began to lose faith in Sardar leaders. Adivasi discontent burst into flame in the Birsa movement of 1895 – 1900, but that movement was very different from the Sardar movement, and lies beyond the scope of this paper.

Ranchi District:

Literally „sardar" means „leader". The Sardars (participants in the movement) thought that as the original settlers of Ranchi District, the adivasis had an inalienable right to free (or virtually free) use of all of the land in the district. The Sardars felt that the dikus had no right to make heavy impositions on them. Thus the Mundas and Oraons wanted to regain low – rent or rent – free lands that they had lost. They sometimes demanded in addition the right to govern their villages by themselves. The Maharaja of Chotanagpur and the local government were accused of complicity in the oppressions of the dikus. But the authority of the Viceroy of India and the Queen was never questioned, and it was to them that many of the Sardars" petitions were addressed. Some of these sentiments were expressed in a petition which some

Mundas and Oraons submitted in 1867 to the Lieutenant – Governor of Bengal

Province. This read in part: "The thikadars (village landlords and rent – collectors) exact far more rent than they are entitled to receive, and not merely rent for lands held by the (Christian adivasi)converts under rent payable to the Raja (Chief) but also for lands that have been held rent – free by them and their ancestors of time immemorial; and when by their demands they are unable to obtain the amount asked for, they resort to forcible means, and sell the houses, etc., till, to prevent their losing their all they (the converts) are compelled to submit to these exactions. Your petitioners are therefore desirous that some means should be taken to set out definitely and clearly the boundaries of the rent – free lands, and so distinguish them from the lands liable to rent to the Raja that in future neither thikadars nor (rent-) collectors shall be able to dispute their right to a free and peaceable possession of their ancestral holdings; and furthermore, that the customary rate or nitik of the district should be fixed. Your petitioners are likewise desirous of paying the revenue into the (local government) Collectorate

without the intervention of the thikadars as there are no other means by which they can be saved the annoyance and oppression of paying their rent twice over."

The leaders of the Sardar movement were mainly Mundas, many of whom had received a primary education and were Christians. However, many Oraons and non-Christian adivasis took part in the movement. Despite their apparently fruitless sacrifices of time and money, many Mundas and Oraons supported the Sardar leaders year after year, at least until the 1890s. Some of the leaders took advantage of this trust, to embezzle the money they had raised to pay for preparing petitions and hiring lawyers in Calcutta.

Santal Parganas District: history

1. 1858 – 71. We saw that in 1855 new administrative arrangements were introduced in Santal Parganas District. The laws and regulations in force in the plains of Bengal were no longer operative, so that local officials could protect the Santals‟ economic and political institutions. However, during the 1860s a series of decisions by the provincial government of Bengal resulted in the reintroduction of many of the regulations applied in the plains. Local officials in Santal Parganas were increasingly tied down in their offices by litigation and paperwork. As a result of these developments, dikus ousted many Santal headmen, frequently increased rents on Santal holdings, and obtained court decrees sanctioning these actions. Thus, during this period, the Santals had similar experiences to those of the Mundas and Oraons in 1832 –57. Despite the deterioration in their position, the Santals did not engage in any significant acts of collective protest until 1871. In that year, however, the Santals held many large meetings, at some of which they pressed local officials to redress their agrarian grievances.

2. 1872 – 79. The first main feature of this period was the government‟s response to the Santal unrest of 1871, which consisted of serious efforts to restore the reforms of 1855. Armed with the authority of an Act of Parliament, the administration of Santal Parganas was once again withdrawn from the operation of the ordinary regulations applied in the plains, and local officers were given broad powers to administer the district. To give these policies specific content, civil court procedures introduced in 1855 were restored, whereby Santals could argue cases informally before British officers. In addition, land rights were surveyed and settled between 1872 and 1878 throughout the district. Specially – appointed British officers visited Santal villages, reinstated many Santal tenants and headmen, and gave Santal tenants security of tenure and certainty as to their rentals. The second main feature, of the years 1872 – 79 was the first major episode of Kherwar religious revitalization. Even though, Santal agrarian unrest died down after 1872, largely because of the land settlements, many Santals in 1874 – 75 followed one of their headmen, named Bhagirath, in changing their religious practices. Santals flooded to Bhagirath‟s residence to worship him, and he was anointed chief raja. He ordered his followers to slaughter their pigs and their chickens. Some participants in this movement refused to pay their rents, and instead paid them toBhagirath. The movement was given added impetus, by the serious famine that struck Santal Parganas in 1874. The Santals received relief from the government during this famine, but some Santals objected that they received too little relief compared to some dikus. (No famine of comparable severity affected Ranchi District between 1858 and 1895.

The government arrested Bhagirath and other leaders of the movement. The mass unrest then died down, but a few thousand determined followers continued to practice Bhagirath‟s teachings through 1879. These devotees called themselves Kherwars (an old name for Santal).

3) 1880 – 95. In 1880, a new religious leader began to attract the Santals, devotions. He was Dubia Gosain, a Hindu ascetic, and thousands of Santals made the pilgrimage to his shrine. Some of Dubia‟s followers were former disciples of Bhagirath. At almost the same time, in the winter of 1880 – 81, the government began its preparations for the census of 1881. When officials visited Santal villages in this connection they met with stubborn refusals to cooperate. Rumours abounded that a millennium was coming, that those who cooperated with the census would be deported, that landlords would

be „exterminated", etc. Some agrarian grievances were aired bySantals. The leaders of all these activities were usually followers of Dubia Gosain or Bhagirath. The authorities rushed over 5,000 police and troops into Santal Parganas, together with some senior officials from outside the district. This was the largest show of force since 1855. Thereupon the agrarian and political protests collapsed, and the work of the census was completed peacefully. Between 1882 and 1895 the history of Santal Parganas District was relatively uneventful. The government felt betrayed by the Santals, and introduced a new police system. Santal headmen possessed fewer police powers than before, and they now usually reported not to senior European officers, but to junior Hindu officials. As in the previous period, a few bands of Santals continued to follow the new ritual and dietary practices laid down by Bhagirath and Dubia Gosain. However, the size of these groups seems to have dwindled in the 1890s. In 1884 the government gave serious attention to the possibility of further reforms in the laws regulating Santal indebtedness. Many Santals became aware of this, and proceeded to hold many meetings, and bring many suits against diku moneylenders in attempts to regain alienated land.

Santal Parganas District: The Kherwars seemed to hold that certain individuals had received a divine calling to reform Santal religious practices. This was, in many cases, seen as a way of improving the lives of the Santals, and even sometimes of bringing on a millennium. In the area of ritual practice, the Kherwars" main innovation was the killing of pigs and chickens, and abstention from eating them. Groups of Kherwar devotees met weekly to observe the new practices. Some Hindu elements were incorporated into these practices, such as devotion to gurus and recitation of incantations (mantras). This adoption was more thorough and conscious than in previous centuries, but there is no evidence that Kherwars or their Hindu guides sought to establish a lasting relationship of personal dependence between leader and follower, such as characterizes relationships between superior and inferior Hindu castes. When they were concerned with agrarian issues, Kherwars believed that the Santals, were the original tillers of the soil, and as such had the right to pay (at most) a low rent. These beliefs were very similar to those of the Sardars in Ranchi District. When they challenged the authority of the British, for example, in refusing to cooperate in the census of 1881, the Kherwars on occasion wanted to replace British officials by their own leaders (such as Bhagirath). However, these goals were not spelled out clearly in any detail. Some Kherwars felt that external forces like the British government might try to frustrate their goal of revitalizing Santal religion, and this helps explain their frequent hostility to officials.

Conclusions

The primary objective was to regain ancestral adivasi lands through over whelming pressure on the dikus and the British government. In Santal Parganas, many Santals had similar goals, but their protests directed to such ends were more sporadic than those by the Mundas and Oraons. Many Santals apparently thought their primary need was to purify their religion, and/or challenge the authority of the British. Moreover, the only actions by the Santals, which continued as long as the Sardars"petitions and rent refusals, were the performance of new rituals by small groups of Kherwar devotees.

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Tradition In Transition: Socio-Cultural Shifts among the Kani Tribes of Patthukani Settlement

Abila Rajan

Introduction

Human society has gradually evolved from hunter-gatherers to a civilized state, but this cultural evolution has not beenuniformed everywhere. Even today, many tribal communities live in forests and mountains, distinct from the mainstream population. Tribes are close-knit social groups bound by shared customs, traditions, language, and ancestry, with a strong sense of collective identity and kinship ties.Tribes have their own unique cultural, social, and economic systems that have developed over generations.

The Kani tribes of Kanyakumari, known for their deep connection with forests and unique traditions. They have long lived through nature and community-based practices. Today, modernization, education, and social change are reshaping their lives, bringing both benefits like improved health and livelihoods, and challenges such as the erosion of traditional knowledge and cultural practices. This paper explores how the Kani tribes are navigating these socio-cultural transitions.

Settlement and Lifestyle of the *Kanikkars*

In Kanyakumari district, the *Kanikkars* are a major tribal group. They are living across 48 settlements in both Kanyakumari and Trivandrum, mainly in Vilavancode, Kalkulam, and Thovalai taluks. Once nomadic, they became settled due to forest acts, shifting from food crop to cash crop cultivation. Their unique culture and language remain distinct, though communication and contact with other communities have brought social changes.

Patthukani Village

Patthukani is a village in Vilavancode taluk of Kanyakumari district, located between the Perunjani I and II dams. It is known for its natural beauty, with forests, trees, medicinal plants, and water bodies around it. The village is home to 56 Kani families. Most people here speak Tamil and work in farming, fishing, or as labourers in rubber estates.

Traditional Social Structure and Practices of Patthukani Settlement

The socio-cultural practices of Patthukani settlement were deeply influenced by their tribal beliefs, traditions and customs. The traditional socio-cultural practices followed by them are social kinship, modes of worship, rites and rituals, festivals, etc. From the field visit, we came to know that some practices of the settlement are still followed by the people.

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Social Kinship

Mootukani:The Kanikkars follow a matrilineal kinship system, where inheritance passes through the mother's line. The head is called the Mootukani, who takes care of settling disputes in the community. His wife, the Moottukanikarichi, leads important women's ceremonies like birth and puberty rituals. In earlier times, important news was shared with the villagers through a custom called ValliMudichu.

Vilikkani:After the Mootukani, the Vilikkani is the next important person in the community and works as his assistant. He passes news and problems to the Mootukani and is in charge of carrying the ValliMudichu and messages to people in the village and nearby areas. He also collects tax money for ceremonies and gives it to the Mootukani. His wife is called the Vilikanikarichi.

Pilathi:After the Vilikkani, the Pilathi holds an important role in the community. He is respected as a priest, doctor, and warlock, serving under the Mootukani. The Pilathi helps people with problems like illness, witchcraft, and demon possession by using mantras. Among the Kanis, there is a saying *"*Noykumpaar, Peikkumbar*"*, which means diseases are believed to be caused by evil spirits and can be cured through medicine, witchcraft, or rituals.

Religion

Religion has been an important part social and cultural lifeof the Kanis. In the past, they did not have formal temples or organized religious practices and often worshiped trees as deities. Only a few years ago they started building temples. They practise the worship of the Sun, the Dead, Vadakanpei worship, Kalatuthamburan worship, Sasta worship etc. are significant. Mostly their worship is based on nature.

Festivals

Kani people of ancient times did not hold separate festivals for humans, but they did for their gods.In the month of February, they celebrate a festival called Kodai. During this festival, goats and fowls are sacrificed. They celebrate other popular festivals such as Onam, Deepavali, Kaarthigai in the months of Meenam and Kanni.

Rites and Rituals

Rites related tochildbirth:The Kanikkar community follows rituals that mark every stage of life from birth to death. During pregnancy, women avoid temples and return to their mother's home in the seventh or ninth month, receiving gifts from relatives. Iron and neem leaves are placed on the mother's forehead to protect her from evil. Childbirth happens at home with help from experienced women, including the Pilathi's wife and Moottukanikarichi. The Mootukani names the child, and later rituals include tonsure at the temple, ear piercing for girls, and wearing palm-leaf ear studs.

Puberty Rites:Puberty rites are conducted when the girl attains maturity. The girl is seated in an individual room or a temporary hut built in front of her home. She has to remain alone for 15 days to a month. On the day of the ceremony, the maternal uncle gifts her presents as. Amark of her attaining womanhood.

Marriage Rites: The Kani tribes follow the different kind of marriage system. Both adult and child marriage prevail in the society. If the girl is below 16 years the *Minnu* or ceremonial *thaali*is tied by the groom and if she is an adult the *Minnu*is tied by the groom's sister. After the marriage ceremony, the groom stays in bride's house for 3 days. When she leaves her natal home, a chopper is given by the bride's father as a dowry.

Funeral Rites: The Kanikkar tribes follow funeral rites similar to other Hindus, mostly cremating their dead, though a few are buried. When someone dies, the Mootukani spreads a towel in the hut, and people place small amounts of money for the family to use for the funeral. The body is bathed, dressed in new clothes, and rituals begin with *Vaikarisipoduthal*, placing wet rice in the mouth before taking it to the cremation ground. The eldest son lights the pyre, carrying a pot of water on his head, which is broken on the third round. On the fifth day, the ashes are collected in an earthen pot and hung on a jack tree for 15 days, then immersed in a river or lake on the sixteenth day. Neighbours and relatives are

served vegetarian food, and barbers and washermen are brought for purification rituals.

Medicinal Practices

The people of this settlement were well versed in traditional medicines followed by their ancestors. The Mootukani and Pilathi are experts in folklore medicines. They use herbs to cure every disease. In the hilly areas as there are no hospitals, the knowledge of traditional medicines alone helps the Kani people. There is a herb they eat to use as a contraceptive and another that they eat to start a family.

Socio-Cultural Changes in Patthukani Settlement:Socio-cultural changes refer to the changing of a traditional structure to evolving gender roles, cultural diversity and the adaption of new social norms. Here in present day context, Patthukani settlement changed a lot. From semi-nomadic tribes to settled cultivators is one of the massive changes in the society.

Migration: Circular or rural-urban migration is becoming common among tribes in India. They migrate due to threats from animals, declining agriculture, loss of tribal identity, poverty, and low income. Moving from hills to villages offers them better education, jobs, healthcare, safety, and higher income. As a result, hunter-gatherer tribes now work in rubber estates and as daily wage labourers in construction, like other communities.

Shifting Cultivation:Earlier, the tribes grew food crops like black rice, banana, and tapioca, which gave good harvests but little money. Now, they grow more cash crops such as pepper, nutmeg, areca nut, clove, and cardamom, and many are major rubber plantation cultivators. Some work as rubber tappers on other people's land and continue shifting agriculture to support their livelihood.

Educational Level:People in this settlement are generally less educated. In the past, education meant learning mantras from the Pilathi and knowledge of medicinal plants. Even today, many do not focus much on formal schooling. Boarding schools for tribals were set up in Manalodai and Patthukani since 1957–1958, and special government schemes provide free food, clothing, shelter, books, and allowances to tribal students. Programs like the District Primary Education Programme, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, and Navodaya Vidyalaya support tribal education, with girls also learning weaving and sewing Some tribals, like the granddaughter of Mootukanicompleted M.Sc. and B.Ed.in Mathematicsand Mr. Suresh Swamiyar Kanihave achieved Ph. D and started initiatives like the Tribal Cultural Research Institute. Tribal knowledge and life lessons are still passed down through beliefs and rituals.

Alternate Profession:Despite socio-cultural changes, some Kanis are still skilled in witchcraft and dealing with demon possession, which they take up as an alternative profession. People from other communities come to their settlement and hire them to perform these rituals against their enemies. They are paid well for this work, making it a source of income for the Kanis.

Introduction of Dowry System: Earlier period, the marriage system of Kanis was entirely different from other community marriages. But now, they have adopted the marriage traditions similar to other communities. The bride's father gives a dowry of jewels, money, brass vessels, choppers, grains, pulses, property of land and houses. Inter-caste marriages also begun amaong the Kanis.

Medical Facilities:In the hills, there was no hospitals but there is a government hospital in nearby town which is becoming more popular these days. Some tribes people have begun to approach the hospitals during childbirth.The special medical facilities arranged for the tribes is known as 'The Mobile Outreach Programme for the Tribes', which consists of a van with a doctor, a head nurse and the lab technician.

Influence of Christianity:The Kanis were originally devotees of Hindu deities, but in the 20th century, Kani's began embracing Chistian faith. Migration from the hills to villages was partly due to this influence. Christian missionaries helped the Kanis by providing awareness and acting as a link to the government, bringing welfare benefits. Some Kanis converted to Christianity, and churches were built in the settlement. Christian Kanis no longer follow the

superstitions of their ancestors and celebrate festivals like Christmas, Easter, and Good Friday.

Position of Women:Women in the Kanikkar community enjoy equal status and are treated well by their husbands. They take part in self-employment activities like rubber tapping, cattle and honeybee rearing, and growing crops like pepper and nutmeg. They also make baskets and mats from bamboo and produce manure by collecting earthworms, keeping them with cow dung for four months, and selling the manure at the Horticulture Research Centre.

Conclusion

The Kani tribes of Patthukani traditionally followed customs, rituals, and beliefs that shaped their social and cultural life. Over time, external influences brought many changes. Education, exposure to the outside world, and better transport and communication have altered their jobs, lifestyle, dress, and daily routines. Despite these changes, they still follow traditional customs like kinship, social hierarchy, and worship. Today, it is observed that as 'when resources decrease, socio-cultural changes increase', which is true for the Kanis as well.

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The Historical Evolution of Economic Census in India- A Study

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Introduction

India's economy is mostly made up of a large unorganized and informal sector. India has moved from being mainly agricultural in the early stages to a strong public sector focused on industries and later to a fast-growing service sector, due to the rapid growth in the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Today, agriculture's share in GDP has gone down, and the industrial sector has grown. Conducting an economic census is one of the important activities of the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) of the Government of India. A census helps to collect numbers and information about the system. The Economic Census collects statistical data from all economic units involved in different productive activities across the country, which helps us better understand the economic system and make policies and strategies more effective and useful and also improves the quality of future findings and outcomes, and it also helps us measure and understand valuable activities, employment, and occupations. Collecting this data is a challenging task because India's economy is divided into two sectors: the agricultural sector and the non-agricultural sector. The numerical data for the agricultural sector is easy to collect; gathering data for the non-agricultural sector is much harder.

History of the Economic Census

The Indian Economic Census is a census of the entire Indian economy. It estimates and measures all entrepreneurial units in the country involved in all types of economic activities. In 1925, the Economic Enquiry Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Shri Visvesvaraya. Later, in 1934, the Bowley-Robertson Committee was established, which played an important role in setting up an Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) and the Economic Adviser to the Government of India as its Chairperson. The IDC proposed the creation of the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) in 1976 through a planned program called 'Economic Census and Surveys.' This scheme covered the whole country and aimed to record all economic activities (except crop production and plantations). In India, the first Economic Census was conducted in 1977 in collaboration with the States and Union Territories[1].

First Economic Census – 1977

In India, the first Economic Census was initially planned for 1976 when the government launched the scheme called "Economic Census and Surveys." In 1977, the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) conducted the first Economic Census throughout the country except Lakshadweep. This census collected data on the number of persons usually working, type of ownership, and description of the activities. Based on the framework provided by the first Economic Census, two detailed sample surveys were conducted in India.

1. In 1978-79, focused on the unregistered manufacturing sector, the survey

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2. In 1979-80 covered trade, hotels and restaurants, transport, storage and warehousing, and services[2].

Second Economic Census—1980

The Second Economic Census was carried out in 1980 along with the house-listing operations of the 1981 Population Census in order to save resources, manpower, time, and money. 1.2 million enumerators and supervisors were enlisted for this work. The Second Economic Census covered all establishments engaged in economic activities, both agricultural and non-agricultural. All states and union territories were covered except Assam, where the 1981 population census could not be conducted. The information collected in the Second Economic Census included the location of the establishment, the description of the economic activity carried out, the nature of operation, the type of ownership, the social group of the owner, the use of power or fuel, the total number of workers usually engaged along with the hired component, and the breakup of male and female workers. The data processing of the economic census was decentralized; it was done through computers. Based on the frame provided by the 1980 Economic Census, three follow-up sample surveys were undertaken: the first in 1983-84 on hotels and restaurants, transport, storage and warehousing, and services; the second in 1984-85 on unorganized manufacturing; and the third in 1985-86 on wholesale and retail trade. The Second Economic Census revealed that there were 25 million enterprises in the country, of which 14.72 % were located in rural areas and 10.28 % in urban areas, employing a total of 55%[3].

Third Economic Census -1990

The Third Economic Census was conducted in 1990 and was combined with the house-listing operations of the 1991 Population Census to ensure convenience and cost-effectiveness. The coverage of the Third Economic Census was similar to that of the Second Economic Census. All States and Union Territories were included except the state of Jammu and Kashmir, where the 1991 Population Census could not be undertaken. The census was carried out under four broad categories: (i) Agricultural own-account enterprises, (ii) Agricultural establishments, (iii) Non-agricultural own-account enterprises, and (iv) Non-agricultural establishments. The Third Economic Census revealed that there were 25 million enterprises (excluding Jammu and Kashmir) engaged in various economic activities, employing 18.41 million people. Of these enterprises,61% were located in rural areas and 39% were located in urban areas.

Based on the frame generated by the 1990 Economic Census, three follow-up surveys were conducted: 1. An Establishment Survey covering the sectors of mining and quarrying, storage, and warehousing in 1992-93. 2. An Establishment Survey covering the sectors of hotels and restaurants and transport in 1993-94. 3. A Directory Trade Establishments Survey in 1996-97[4].

Fourth Economic Census -1998

The Fourth Economic Census was carried out in 1998. It was originally planned in 1996 but due to financial constraints, financial approval was granted by the Expert Finance Committee in November 1997, and the census work started in 1998. Extensive preparatory work was undertaken to organize the Economic Census Programme of 1998. To ensure proper technical guidance, a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was formed under the chairmanship of Professor J. Roy, Research Professor Emeritus at ISI Calcutta, and included experts from both the Central and State Governments. The TAG finalized the concepts of the census and also approved the four schedules to be used: the House List Schedule, Enterprise Schedule, Enterprise List Abstract, and House List Abstract. Three regional-level meetings were held at different centers to discuss various technical and operational aspects in detail. At the State level, a Steering Committee was set up under the chairmanship of the Census Commissioner, with the Director of Economics and Statistics, Additional Census Commissioner, Regional Executive Officers, Deputy Census Commissioners in the respective regions of Karaikal, Mahe, and Yanam to monitor and coordinate the work.

Based on the frame generated by the Economic Census 1998, the following follow-up surveys were conducted: 1. Special Establishment Survey in the unorganized sector in 1998-99. 2. Survey on Unorganized Manufacturing Sector in 2000-01. 3. Survey on Unorganized Establishments in the Services Sector (excluding trade and finance) in 2001-02. 4. Survey on Unorganized Manufacturing Sector in 2005-06. 5. Survey on Unorganized Establishments in the Services Sector (excluding trade) in 2006-07.

During the Fourth Economic Census, all establishments and workers found within the country were counted. A total of 30.35 million enterprises were recorded, of which 17.71 million (58.3%) were in rural areas and 12.48 million (41.7%) were in urban areas. The growth rate of enterprises during 1990-1998 was 2.38% per year. The total number of persons employed was 83.30 million, with 39.90 million (47.9%) in rural areas and 43.40 million (52.1%) in urban enterprises. It was initially proposed to complete the census by April 1998; the fieldwork had to be postponed due to the general Lok Sabha elections and was finally started on 23 March 1998[5].

Fifth Economic Census -2005

The Fifth Economic Census was carried out in 2005. It covered all economic activities except agricultural crop production. The main objective of the Fifth Economic Census was to create a complete record of all establishments engaged in various economic activities. For the first time in the history of Economic Censuses, Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR) technology was used for data collection. This was done to reduce possible errors in transcription and improve the quality of data. The Fifth Economic Census was conducted in all States and Union Territories of India. It recorded a total of 41.83 million establishments, of which (61.05%) were in rural areas and (38.95%) were in urban areas. The total number of people employed in these establishments was (49.51%) employed in rural areas and (50.49%) employed in urban areas. Based on the frame generated by the Fifth Economic Census, two major follow-up surveys were conducted[6].

The Sixth Economic Census -2013

The Sixth Economic Census was conducted from January 2013 to April 2014 in all the States and Union Territories of the country, in collaboration with the State and UT Governments. It provided detailed data at the all-India, State, district, and village ward levels for a comprehensive analysis of the structure of the economy at micro, macro, and regional levels. For the first time, data on handicraft and handloom establishments were included in the Sixth Economic Census. The census found a total of 58.47 million establishments in operation, of which 77.55% were engaged in non-agricultural activities and 22.45 % were engaged in agriculture. 51.71% of people employed in these establishments were in rural areas, 48.29% were in urban areas[7].

Seventh Economic Census -2019

The Seventh Economic Census is the latest census and has been conducted since 2019. For the first time, the entire census is being conducted on a digital platform. The Government of India decided that, from the Seventh Economic Census onwards, the census will be conducted every three years. The coverage in this census includes all households and establishments engaged in non-agricultural economic activities, including construction, but excluding public administration, defence, and compulsory social security. The primary geographical units for enumeration are the blocks used in the 2011 Population Census. One of the main objectives of the Seventh Economic Census is the preparation of a National Business Register[8].

EC	Year	No. of Enterprises - All India	No. of Enterprises in rural India (%)	No. of Enterprises in urban India (%)	Agriculture (%)	Non Agriculture (%)	Employment (%)
1.	1977	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.	1980	25 million	14.72	10.28	14	86	55
3.	1990	18.41 million	61	39	8	92	27

4.	1998	30.35 million	58.3	41.7	11.4	88.6	47.9
5.	2005	41.83 million	61.05	38.95	14.54	85.46	53.89
6.	2013	58.47 million	59.9	40.52	22.45	77.55	34.35
7.	2019	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going	On going

Source: All India Report of Economic Census from 1977-2019

Committee and working group of Economic Census

A Standing Committee was formed under the chairmanship of the Director General of the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO). The members of this committee included the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, advisers from the Planning Commission, the Chief Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance, and representatives from several central ministries and departments such as the Ministry of Small-Scale Industries, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Women & Child Development, and Ministry of Labour.

The Standing Committee was assisted by three Working Groups, which focused on:1. Developing concepts and definitions. 2. Planning the strategy for fieldwork. 3. Handling data tabulation, publicity, and dissemination of results[9].

Conference and workshops

A workshop on ICR (Intelligent Character Recognition) technology for processing Economic Census data was conducted in August 2005 in New Delhi. The purpose of this workshop was to familiarize State and UT Government officers with the step-by-step use of ICR technology. Detailed demonstrations and discussions on ICR technology were conducted by officers of the Registrar General of India (RGI), and were organized to discuss various issues related to the implementation of the Economic Census scheme in this workshop. All India conference took place on 22nd December 2004 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. Another Economic Census conference was held on 20th December 2011 in New Delhi[10].

Conclusion

Economic Censuses cover the entire economy and all establishments involved in economic activities. They collect detailed information on every type of establishment, which is essential for policy making and preparing developmental plans for the whole country as well as for all sectors of the economy. They provide detailed information on the operations and characteristics of units engaged in economic activities. In India, the Economic Census is conducted, collected, and analysed regularly to meet this need. The shift towards digital platforms in the recent Census highlights its move towards greater efficiency and accuracy.

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Contribution of Transportation and Its Impact on Agriculture In Kanniyakumari District

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Agriculture in Kanniyakumari

Kanniyakumari district is primarily an agricultural district with a sizable population depending on food crops and commercial crops. Soil in Kanniyakumari district is mostly of the red loam variety. In Kanniyakumari district three main soil groups are present. However on the sea coasts, the sandy type of soil prevails and near the mountain ranges gravelly soil is generally seen. Laterite soil predominates in the blocks of Thiruvattar, Munchirai, Kurunthencode, Rajakamangalam, Killiyoor, Thuckalay and Melpuram. Mixed types of red and alluvial soil is predominant in Agasteeswaram and Thovalai Blocks. Along the coastal line there is a narrow belt of sandy coastal alluvial soil, where coconut and rice are mainly cultivated. In the plains, deep red loam is observed. Along the hilly regions lateritic type of soil is present in which Tapioca, Rubber, Coconut and other spices are the main crops. The District can be divided into three regions, namely the uplands which is comprising of hills and hill bases suitable for growing crops like rubber, cloves, nutmeg, pepper and pineapple etc., The middle comprising of plains and valleys fit for growing crops like paddy, tapioca, banana, coconut and the low lands comprising the coastal belt ideal for growing coconut, cashew etc.,

This District produces paddy and tapioca and oil seeds such as groundnut and coconut besides commercial crops like cashew, rubber, fruits and spices. The important features of this District is the production of off season mangoes. Paddy is the main crop of this District. It grows in two seasons. The first crop is sown in the months of April to June (Kannipoo) and the second crop is raised in the month of September to October (Kumba Poo). Tapioca is raised as a subsidiary food crop in this district. The main planting season is April-May.

Medicinal Plants

The District is known for important medicinal plants in a corner of the field like “Vallarai” , an important medicinal plant found in plenty alongside the irrigation channels. They also raised medicinal and aromatic plants namely, Arrow Roof, Kachalam, Aswagantha, Aloe, Coyyee, Tea, Vallarai, Betal Wine, Cocoa, Thulasi, Sandol, Musilli and Manjam.

Irrigation:

Kanniyakumari district is endowed with five rivers and eight dams constructed across them. The rivers are Thamiraparani, Pazhayar, Valliar, Ponniavaikal and Paraliyar. The major river in the district is Thamiraparani, locally known as Kuzhithuraiar. This river has got two major distributaries namely, Kodayar and Paraliar.

The main irrigation channels of Kodayar system are KLBC Channel, Thovalai channel, Ananthanar channel, Padmanabhapuram Puthanar Channel, Pattanamkal channel, Pazhayar channel, Nanchilnadputhanar channel, Radhapuram channel, Thiruparappu channel and Aruvikarai channel. Ananthanar channel starts at surulode and runs to a length of 24 kilometres. There are nine branches to this channel. The total ayacut of this channel is 4452 hectares. Thovalai channel starts at chellanthurithi and runs to a length of 48 Kilometres. This channel branches into two. They are the M.M. Channel and the Nilapparai channel. The Radhapuram channel starts at Nilapparai head works and runs to a length of 28,800

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Kilometers. The total ayacut of Thovalai channel is 5208.00 hectares and that of Radhapuram channels is 6638.00 hectares. N.P. The channel takes from Chattuputhuranicut and runs to a length of 38,400 Kilometers. The total ayacut of this channel is 3640 hectares. P.P.Channel runs to a length of 128.77 Kilometers and 819 tanks are benefited. The total ayacut benefited is 8275 hectares. The dams in the district are Pechiparai dam, Perunchani dam. Pandiyan dam, Puthen dam, Poigai dam, Mampalathar dam, Pothigai dam, Chittar dam I and Chittardam II.

Role of Transportation in Agriculture

Kanniyakumari District is fairly well served by a network of roads. The National Highway No.47, connecting Kanniyakumari and Trivandram passes. Through the Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam and Vilavancode Taluks. The state highway No.14 also passes through the above three Thaluks. There are a number of major district roads, Panchayat Union roads and Panchayat roads. The total length of roads in the district is 3107 kilometres of which 53 kilometres of cement concrete. 1135 kilometre bituminous road, 846 kilometer state highways, 48.9 kilometer National Highways and balance come under other types. The transport network improves connectivity and provides linkage between industries and agriculture. It incentivizes the directly productive activities and accelerates the process of economic development.

In agriculture, transportation plays a crucial role in moving products from farm to markets and processors, involving primary types. Such as road transport and the waterway system. Barges, trucks and shipping vessels are most commonly used for transportation, each playing a vital role in the agricultural supply chain.

Farm machinery hauling is essential for the growing development of technology in agriculture. Farmers may transfer massive agricultural machinery and equipment between locations using the specialized trailers and class 7 and 8 heavy duty tractors, facilitating agri-logistics and allowing agricultural operations and allied industries to expand. However, the focus is now on finding alternatives to these heavy-duty vehicles by shifting to more eco-friendly solutions, like electric tractors and exploring cutting – edge modes of transportation that advance the modernization of agriculture systems.

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Agricultural and Cultural Legacy of Matti Banana in Kanyakumari District

Dr. P. Ramesh[1] and Dr. S. Regi[2]

Kanyakumari District, situated at the southernmost tip of Tamil Nadu, represents one of the most distinctive regions of the state in terms of both natural landscape and cultural heritage. The district is characterized by extensive stretches of fertile paddy fields, dense forest cover, widespread coconut groves, and mineral-rich coastal sands, which collectivel contribute to its ecological and economic significance. A notable geographical feature of the region is Cape Comorin, the southern extremity of the Indian peninsula, where the waters c the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Bay of Bengal converge. This tri-junction of sea enhances the district's uniqueness and establishes it as a prominent tourist destination national importance. The nomenclature of the district is derived from Goddess Kuma Amman, a revered local deity whose cultural and religious influence continues to play central role in shaping the identity of the region. Geographical Features of Kanyakumari District

Kanyakumari District extends over a total geographical area of 1,672 square kilometers (167,184 hectares), making it one of the smaller but densely populated districts of Tamil Nadu. According to demographic records, the district has a total population of 1,870,374, comprising 926,345 males and 944,029 females, reflecting a balanced gender distribution. For administrative purposes, the district is divided into two revenue divisions:

1. Padmanabhapuram Division, with its headquarters at Thuckalay
2. Nagercoil Division, with its headquarters at Nagercoil

Further, the district is subdivided into six taluks, namely: Agastheeswaram, Thovalai, Vilavancode, Kalkulam, Killiyoor, and Thiruvattar. This administrative division facilitates effective governance and resource management across both rural and urban regions of the district.

Agriculture in Kanyakumari District

Agriculture plays a central role in shaping the economy and livelihood patterns of Kanyakumari District, which continues to remain largely agrarian in character. With very little industrial development, the district's economy depends primarily on farming and allied activities. The agricultural potential of the region is closely linked to its varied topography, which can be divided into three distinct zones: the mountainous terrain, the plains, and the undulating valleys. Each of these zones supports different types of cultivation depending on soil, rainfall, and elevation. The mountainous tracts are most suited for plantation crops, benefiting from abundant rainfall and fertile soils, while the plains provide favorable conditions for the large-scale cultivation of paddy, bananas, and vegetables. The undulating valleys, by contrast, are often utilized for mixed farming practices, which combine food crops and horticulture to meet both subsistence and commercial needs.

Within this agricultural framework, several crops dominate the district's production profile. Paddy remains the staple food crop and occupies a major share of the cultivated land.

Banana cultivation also plays an important role, with the Matti Banana emerging as a distinctive variety of national importance, recently recognized with Geographical Indication (GI) status for its unique taste, fragrance, and nutritional qualities. In addition, coconut is cultivated extensively across the plains and coastal regions, contributing both to the household economy and to the commercial sector. A wide variety of vegetables is also grown, ensuring food security for the local population while providing surplus for markets

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within and beyond the district. Thus, agriculture in Kanyakumari is not only the foundation of itseconomy but also a defining feature of its social and cultural identity. The district's fertile soils, favorable climatic conditions, and diverse physiography together sustain an agricultural system that has remained resilient, despite limited industrial growth.

Matti Banana Cultivation

The cultivation of the Matti Banana occupies a distinctive place in the agricultural profile of Kanyakumari District and is often regarded as the pride of the region's farming tradition. Its uniqueness has been formally recognized through the conferment of a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, which highlights its cultural and economic significance. Among the banana varieties cultivated in the district, six principal types of Matti Banana are noted for their individual qualities: Chematti, ManjalMatti, Neyimatti, Karumatti, Thenmatti, and Malaimatti. Together, these varieties not only reflect the biodiversity of the region but also underscore the specialized cultivation practices that have been sustained over generations. The historical origins of Matti Banana cultivation can be traced to tribal communities inhabiting the foothills of the Western Ghats. These groups were the first to identify and propagate the crop, which has since become integral to the district's agricultural identity. The Matti Banana is widely celebrated for its distinctive characteristics, including exceptional sweetness, pleasant fragrance, and a honey-like taste. A further morphological feature that distinguishes it from other banana varieties is its elongated tip, which serves as a unique marker of this fruit.

The quality and flavor of the Matti Banana are closely tied to the agro-climatic conditions of Kanyakumari. Gentle and well-distributed rainfall, the fresh and cool air descending from the Western Ghats, fertile soils enriched by organic matter, and mineral-laden water resources together create an environment particularly conducive to banana cultivation. Researchers suggest that this combination of ecological factors contributes significantly to the superior taste and texture of the fruit, making it incomparable to other banana types grown in different parts of the country. Beyond its agricultural and climatic distinctiveness, the Matti Banana is also valued for its nutritional and medicinal properties. Owing to its soft texture and easy digestibility, it is traditionally administered as the first solid food for infants, a cultural practice that underscores both its dietary and symbolic importance. In local medical traditions, the fruit is employed as a natural remedy for ailments such as colds, stomach disorders, ulcers, and kidney-related problems. Moreover, it is believed to enhance immunity and stimulate brain activity, thereby contributing to overall health. Certain varieties, such as Semmatti, have comparatively low sugar content, rendering them suitablefor diabetic patients. Additionally, the fruit is rich in ascorbic acid (Vitamin C), a nutrient rarely present in other banana varieties, further establishing its nutritional superiority. Taken together, the Matti Banana exemplifies the intersection of ecology, culture, and health within Kanyakumari's agricultural system. Its recognition as a Gl-tagged product underscores the need for conservation and wider promotion, ensuring that this unique variety continues to thrive as both a regional staple and a potential global commodity.

Cultural Importance of Matti Banana

The Matti Banana holds not only agricultural and nutritional value but also deep cultural significance within the socio-cultural fabric of Kanyakumari District. One of the most notable traditions associated with this fruit is its role as the first solid food given to infants. This practice, rooted in local custom, symbolizes both trust in its digestibility and recognition of its health-enhancing properties. The fruit's soft texture, natural sweetness, and medicinal qualities make it an ideal choice for introducing children to solid food, thereby linking agricultural produce directly to cultural identity and family life. Such a tradition highlights the intimate relationship between food, health, and cultural heritage in the region. It underscores the way in which agricultural products like the Matti Banana transcend their role as commodities to become integral elements of local rituals and daily practices. By positioning the fruit at the intersection of nutrition and tradition, the people of Kanyakumari have embedded the Matti

Banana within a larger cultural framework, ensuring its continuity across generations.

Need for Promotion and Protection

The Matti Banana, a distinctive variety cultivated in the Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu, represents not only a vital agricultural product but also a cultural and nutritional treasure. Its unique flavor, texture, and adaptability have earned it a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, underscoring its significance as a heritage crop with centuries-old cultivation practices. Given its exceptional qualities, there is an urgent need to implement strategies for both its promotion and protection. The Tamil Nadu Government, in collaboration with the Kanyakumari District Administration, plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the legacy of Matti Banana. One crucial area of intervention is the promotion of its export to international markets. By creating robust supply chains and facilitating trade networks, authorities can enhance the visibility of Matti Banana globally, positioning it as a premium agricultural product and generating additional income for local farmers.

Equally important is the support for farmers in adopting modern agricultural techniques while preserving traditional cultivation methods. Integrating scientific approaches such as precision farming, pest management, and soil enrichment with time-tested local practices can ensure higher productivity, sustainability, and quality without compromising the banana's inherent characteristics. The protection of Matti Banana's unique attributes is another key consideration. Its centuries-long cultivation has shaped a variety that is not only distinct in taste and texture but also rich in nutritional and medicinal values. Preservation efforts must therefore focus on safeguarding genetic purity, preventing adulteration, and maintaining environmentally sustainable cultivation practices. Finally, the global promotion of Matti Banana should emphasize its suitability as an ideal first food for infants. Its high nutritional content, digestibility, and medicinal properties make it a culturally significant and scientifically beneficial choice for early childhood feeding. By highlighting these attributes in marketing campaigns and health-oriented initiatives, stakeholders can elevate the banana from a regional specialty to a globally recognized symbol of nutrition and heritage.

Conclusion:

Kanyakumari, renowned for its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, is also the birthplace of the globally celebrated Matti Banana. This unique variety, cultivated for centuries, embodies not only nutritional and medicinal value but also a deep connection to the region's agricultural traditions. The promotion and protection of Matti Banana demand a comprehensive, multidimensional strategy that integrates governmental support, scientific innovation, cultural preservation, and strategic marketing. Government initiatives can provide the necessary infrastructure, subsidies, and policy frameworks to facilitate modern cultivation techniques, enhance productivity, and open access to international markets. Simultaneously, scientific interventions such as precision farming, soil health management, and pest control can complement traditional farming practices to maintain the banana's distinctive quality while ensuring sustainability. Cultural preservation efforts are equally critical, as they safeguard the heritage and identity of the fruit, reinforcing its significance as a symbol of Kanyakumari's agricultural legacy.

Through coordinated promotion, the Matti Banana can be positioned not merely as a regional specialty but as a globally recognized agricultural brand. Its high nutritional content and suitability as an ideal first food for infants further amplify its international appeal. By leveraging marketing, export facilitation, and awareness campaigns, Kanyakumari's iconic banana can transcend local boundaries, contributing to the socio-economic upliftmentoffarmers while projecting the district's identity on the world stage. In essence, with deliberate care, strategic promotion, and robust government support, the Matti Banana has the potential to emerge as a global emblem of Kanyakumari, intertwining heritage, nutrition, and economic prosperity in a single, cherished fruit.

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Art as a Cultural Dialogue across Time

Dr. I. Jalaja Kumari

The history of human civilization cannot be understood without an appreciation of art. Every society, from the earliest hunter-gatherer communities to today's globalized world, has used art to express its values, aspirations, and collective experiences. Unlike written texts, which appeared relatively late in human history, art predates literacy and offers one of the earliest forms of communication. It speaks a language that transcends words and is capable of uniting communities across space and time. Art has often been considered a dialogue that takes place not only between artist and viewer but also between different cultures and historical epochs. This dialogue is dynamic, reflecting shifts in religious ideas, political structures, social hierarchies, and technological innovations.

Historical Roots of Art as Dialogue

The origins of art can be traced back to prehistoric cave paintings found in sites such as Lascaux in France and Bhimbetka in India. These works demonstrate that art was never merely decorative; it had communicative and ritualistic purposes. Early humans used images of animals, hunts, and symbolic forms to record their experiences and beliefs. These depictions were both expressions of creativity and tools for survival, carrying meanings related to food, fertility, and spirituality. Ancient civilizations like Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, and China transformed art into a powerful medium of religious and political authority. In these societies, monumental architecture, temple carvings, and sculptures were intended not only to please the divine but also to display the might of rulers and consolidate collective identity.

Medieval and Renaissance Perspectives

In the medieval world, art took on distinctly religious and spiritual tones. In Europe, the Gothic cathedrals with their stained-glass windows told biblical stories to largely illiterate populations. In India, temple art flourished, with sculptures and paintings that depicted gods, goddesses, and mythological narratives. Art became a vehicle through which religion shaped cultural identity. The Renaissance period in Europe marked a profound transformation, as artists rediscovered classical ideals and humanist thought. Figures such as Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo emphasized realism, anatomy, and perspective, reflecting a renewed faith in human potential. The

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Renaissance also facilitated cross-cultural dialogue, as global exploration brought exposure to diverse cultures, materials, and artistic techniques.

Art in Early Modern India and Beyond

Early modern India witnessed the flourishing of Mughal miniature paintings, temple murals, and folk traditions. These works represented a unique synthesis of Persian, Islamic, and indigenous Indian styles, highlighting how cultural encounters shape artistic expression. Mughal art, with its attention to detail, delicate brushwork, and refined aesthetics, reflected the grandeur of the empire while simultaneously preserving cultural plurality. The colonial era brought new dimensions to Indian art, as European techniques and themes merged with traditional practices. Art in this period also became a subtle tool of resistance, as Indian artists began to question colonial authority and assert indigenous identity.

Modern and Contemporary Dimensions

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw revolutionary changes in art worldwide. The Industrial Revolution altered social life and created new possibilities for artistic production. Modernist movements such as impressionism, cubism, and surrealism broke away from traditional notions of realism, experimenting with abstraction and symbolism. In India, artists like Raja Ravi Varma attempted to bridge traditional mythological themes with European naturalism, while the Bengal School of Art promoted indigenous aesthetics as part of the nationalist movement. In the contemporary world, art has expanded into diverse forms such as photography, cinema, installations, and digital media. Today's artists use technology to create immersive experiences that question reality, identity, and globalization itself.

Art as Communication and Identity

Art continues to be one of the most powerful forms of communication. It speaks across languages and cultural barriers, addressing universal human emotions such as love, suffering, hope, and resistance. At the same time, it allows individuals and communities to assert their unique identities. Throughout history, art has been a medium of protest and resistance against oppression. Murals, graffiti, and performance art have been used to challenge political authority, expose social inequalities, and amplify the voices of marginalized communities. Art also intersects with issues of gender, caste, and class, offering a space where marginalized perspectives can be represented and acknowledged.

Cross-Cultural Exchanges through Art

One of the most significant aspects of art is its ability to foster dialogue between cultures. Trade, migration, and conquests have historically facilitated the exchange of artistic techniques, motifs, and materials. Indo-Islamic architecture, for example, represents the blending of Persian and Indian traditions, while colonial encounters produced Indo-European hybrids in painting and architecture. Global art exhibitions, biennales, and festivals today continue this tradition of exchange, providing platforms for artists from different cultures to share ideas and engage in dialogue. Such exchanges help societies appreciate diversity while building shared values.

Art as Heritage and Memory

Art is not only an expression of the present but also a record of the past. Heritage sites, paintings, and artifacts serve as collective memory, preserving traditions and cultural practices. Institutions such as museums and organizations like UNESCO play a vital role in safeguarding these artistic treasures for future generations. Yet preservation faces challenges, particularly in the digital age, as questions of authenticity, ownership, and accessibility emerge. Digital technology, while raising these challenges, also provides opportunities by allowing artworks to reach global audiences through virtual exhibitions and archives.

Contemporary Relevance of Art

In today's globalized and digitalized world, art remains as relevant as ever. It functions as a form of soft power, shaping international relations and diplomacy through cultural exchanges. Nations use art and cultural

festivals to project their identity and values globally. Furthermore, the rise of artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and virtual reality is reshaping the way art is produced and experienced. These technological innovations promise to expand the boundaries of artistic expression while also raising questions about authorship, originality, and ethics.

Conclusion

Art has always been more than an aesthetic pursuit; it has been a dialogue across time and space. From the first strokes on cave walls to the latest digital creations, art reflects the human desire to communicate, to preserve memory, and to connect with others. It serves as a bridge between the past and the present, between local identities and global heritage, and between tradition and innovation. By studying art as a cultural dialogue, we gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of human history and the possibilities of human creativity. Art will continue to evolve, but its role as a vital force in shaping societies, identities, and global connections will remain constant.

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Kalakshetra

Dr.Vinitha N. Vijayan

Tamil Nadu became the epicenter of a cultural revival. Central to this movement was the work of Rukmini Devi Arundale, whose establishment of Kalakshetra in 1936 institutionalized the revival of Bharatanatyam and Carnatic music, thereby shaping the cultural identity of Tamil society and contributing to the nationalist project.

The idea of cultural renaissance has been deeply tied to the reawakening of traditions, values, and artistic expressions within societies. In the Indian context, cultural renaissance is often associated with the early decades of the 20th century, when colonial subjugation, nationalist movements, and reformist zeal brought about a renewed interest in heritage.

Cultural nationalism is a powerful ideological current that emphasizes the role of shared traditions, language, religion, art, and heritage in shaping collective identity and fostering unity among a people. Unlike political or economic nationalism, which is often tied to statehood and material progress, cultural nationalism draws its strength from the deep reservoirs of historical memory and symbolic continuity.

It seeks to revive and protect indigenous values, customs, and intellectual traditions from the pressures of foreign domination, modernization, or homogenization. In India, for example, cultural nationalism played a significant role during the freedom struggle, as leaders and thinkers turned to ancient texts,

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The twentieth century in Tamil Nadu was marked by cultural upheavals shaped by colonialism, modernity, and nationalist revival. Within this context, Rukmini Devi Arundale's contributions stand out for their depth and vision. Though born into a Brahmin family in Madurai and married into the Theosophical Society circle, she went beyond the boundaries of caste, gender, and colonial constraints to reimagine Tamil cultural expressions, particularly Bharatanatyam, which was at the time stigmatized as a "devadasi dance."

Rukmini Devi's worldview was deeply shaped by her engagement with The Theosophical Society at Adyar, Madras, and her close association with Dr.AnnieBesant, one of its leading figures. Theosophy emphasized the unity of all religions, the pursuit of truth, and the role of culture in spiritual development. These ideals left a lasting impression on Rukmini Devi, nurturing in her a vision that combined spirituality with cultural expression. As scholar AvanthiMeduri observes, "her initiation into the Theosophical Society provided the philosophical foundation for her later cultural activism[3]."

Annie Besant's encouragement also instilled in her the conviction that women could play a pioneering role.

A decisive turning point in Rukmini Devi's life came with her friendship with the celebrated Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova, whom she met during her travels abroad in the 1920s. Pavlova's dedication to classical ballet and her global artistic stature inspired Rukmini Devi to recognize the transformative power of dance as both an aesthetic and cultural force. Pavlova encouraged her to explore India's own classical traditions, suggesting that she study the richness of Bharatanatyam."

This encounter not only awakened Rukmini Devi's deep interest in dance and aesthetics but also gave her the confidence to envision Indian classical dance on par with global artistic forms.

Through these experiences, Rukmini Devi gradually developed the conviction that India's classical arts had to be restored to their rightful dignity. At a time when Bharatanatyam was stigmatized due to its association with the declining devadasi system, she saw in it a profound spiritual heritage that had been misunderstood and marginalized under colonial and social prejudice. She believed that the revival of Bharatanatyam, rooted in bhakti (devotion) rather than sensuality, could not only restore cultural pride but also become a medium of moral and spiritual elevation for society. This conviction laid the foundation for her lifelong work as a cultural reformer and the establishment of Kalakshetra. in national and cultural revival.

The founding of Kalakshetrain 1936 at Adyar, Madras (now Chennai), was the culmination of Rukmini Devi Arundale's vision of cultural revival. Conceived as a "cultural laboratory," Kalakshetra sought to restore dignity to India's classical arts while situating them in a

modern institutional framework"..Kalakshetra was founded in 1936 in Adyar, Madras, with the support of the Theosophical Society. The institution's philosophy was to revive classical dance and music through disciplined training and a return to traditional sources. Unlike casual learning models, Kalakshetra offered a gurukula-style system, emphasizing dedication, humility, and spiritual grounding".

Kalakshetra became the space where Rukmini Devi redefined and restructured Bharatanatyam into a respected and spiritually oriented art form. Alongside dance, the institution nurturedCarnatic music, traditional crafts, and the ideals of cultural self-reliance. Rukmini Devi infused the school with Gandhianvaluesofsimplicity, discipline, and service, creating an environment that was both artistic and ethical",

Over the decades, Kalakshetra trained and produced generations of artists who carried forward Tamil and Indian cultural traditions. Its alumni dancers, musicians, and teachers-brought global recognition to Bharatanatyam and Carnatic music, ensuring their survival and flourishing in the twentieth century15.

The institution thus became not only a center of performance but also a custodian of heritage.Kalakshetra's pedagogy consciously combined the gurukula system of intimate teacher-student transmission with a modern institutional framework. Students lived and learned under the guidance of masters, absorbing discipline, aesthetics, and spirituality as part of everyday practice". At the same time, its structured syllabus, repertory productions, and formal recognition allowed the classical arts to thrive in a modern nation-state context. This hybrid model ensured both continuity and adaptability, securing Bharatanatyam's place in the cultural nationalism of twentieth-century India".

One of Rukmini Devi Arundale's most significant contributions was her role in transforming the social position of women in the performing arts. At a time when Bharatanatyam was stigmatized because of its association with the devadasi system and perceived as morally suspect, women from "respectable" families were discouraged from pursuing it as a vocation.

By founding Kalakshetra in 1936, Rukmini Devi created a new institutional and cultural environment in which women could learn, perform, and teach dance without stigma"..

The gurukula-style training, rooted in discipline and spirituality, emphasized Bharatanatyam as a path of devotion (bhakti) rather than as a form of sensualicile State Domicile Districtentertainment. This redefined the art in ways that made it socially acceptable for middle- and upper-class women to participate in.

Kalakshetra empowered women to become teachers, choreographers, and culturalleaders, breaking away from restrictive gender norms.

The foundation of Kalakshetra coincided with the Indian freedom movement. The revival of classical arts was not a detached cultural project but a deeply political one. Nationalists understood that reclaiming cultural pride was essential for building political self-confidence.

Kalakshetra embodied this cultural nationalism by demonstrating to the world that Indian art forms were not remnants of a decadent past but living, sophisticated traditions worthy of respect. International tours of Kalakshetra productions, such as the Ramayana Series, projected India's cultural wealth globally and aligned with the diplomatic goals of post-independence India".

The legacy of Kalakshetra lies in its pioneering role in redefining Indian classical arts for the modern world while staying rooted in tradition. Founded by Rukmini Devi Arundale in 1936, the institution not only rescued Bharatanatyam from the margins of social disrepute but elevated it into a respected and global art form. Its carefully codified pedagogy, integration of dance, music, and theatre created a holistic model for cultural education. Generations of artists trained at Kalakshetra have carried its discipline and style across India and abroad, ensuring the continuity of classical traditions in contemporary contexts. Recognized as an

institution of national importance, Kalakshetra symbolizes India's cultural renaissance, serving as both a guardian of heritage and a platform for innovation. Its enduring influence reminds us that art, when nurtured with integrity and vision, can transcend time, community, and geography to become a shared expression of humanity. Rukmini Devi, a pioneer in the twentieth century revival of BharathaNatyam, and examined her work selectively from with in the local temporality of Indian Nationalism and hailed her as Indian Nationalist. But Rukmini Devi was not Just a nationalist but also a global theosophist who worked on behalf of the transnational world view of the theosophical society through her long and distinguished career between 1920-198622

Conclusion

The cultural renaissance in India was not merely about reviving the past but about creating a bridge between tradition and modernity. Kalakshetra represents this synthesis, where classical art forms were preserved with reverence, adapted for modern education, and projected onto the global stage. Through Kalakshetra, she laid the foundation for a renaissance that continues to inspire generations of artists. As India negotiates the complexities of globalization, institutions like Kalakshetra remind us of the power of cultural heritage to define identity, inspire creativity, and contribute to the dialogue between tradition and modernity.

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Dr. M. Anandakrishnan Reforms in Engineering Education

Mohamed Iqlas T[1] and K. Murugan[2]

Introduction:

Dr. M. Anandakrishnan, a Padma Shri awardee, was born in the small village of Chettiyappanur in the Vaniyambadi Taluk, Madras Presidency on July 12, 1928. He got his primary education from Hindu Higher Sec School, Vaniyambadi and he finished his SSLC from Islamiah Boys Hr Sec School, Vaniyambadi and he studied PUC in Islamiah College, Vaniyambadi. For further study he went to College of Engineering (presently Anna University), Guindy, Madras and completed B.E Highway Engineering in 1952 and for advanced study he went to University of Minnesota, USA and finished M.S (Civil) in 1957 and Ph.D (Civil) 1960.

While studying for his Ph.D he worked as the teaching assistant(Part-Time) in University of Minnesota and gained teaching experience. He also worked as the Research Engineer in Twin City Testing Lab.

He returned to his homeland in 1962 and served as the Senior Scientific Officer (Grade I) in CRRI, New Delhi for 1 year and moved to IIT Kanpur in 1963 and joined as the member in the Faculty of Civil Engineering serving there till 1974 in different positions starting from Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, Senior Professor, Chairman Civil Engineering Dept, Chairman Central Recruitment Committee for Staff Members and so on. In 1974 he went on 5 year deputation to Dept of Science and Technology, Govt of India and worked on the post of First Science Counsellor, Embassy of India, Washington D.C. after this he went to United Nation worked in the positions like the Chief of New Technology, Deputy Director, Centre for Science and Tech for Development. He retired from UN Service at age of 62 in 1989.

He was associated as the International Expert in the Committee for Strengthening Science and Tech in Brazil from 1990 to 1997 which was supported by the world bank for this service he was awarded the order of scientific merit by the President of Brazil. Then he served as the Vice Chancellor of the Anna University for two terms from 1990 to 1996, he also served in the different academic bodies. In this article let us see about the suggestions given by him to reform Engineering Education.

Structural Change in Curricula:

In order to enhance the quality of Engineering Education the first requirement should be to adopt flexible curricular frame work[1]. Curricula should provide career goals and individual aptitude to students and it should adjust accordingly to the emerging trends in scientific and technological development. Academic Curricula should be based on the credit system and credit requirements should be defined based on the system followed by the institution. Curricula should also have contents from arts, humanities, social, management sciences, engineering sciences, workshops, technical arts etc., rigid uniformity should be avoided.

Size and Quality of Faculty:

Effective delivery of curricula depends on the competence of faculty but unfortunately there is an acute shortage of qualified faculty in colleges. There is an urgent need to launch a special drive to create a sufficient number of well trained teachers. A sufficient number of teachers produced will be of great help to the premier institutions.

Effects of Privatisation on Higher Education:

The character of Education totally changed drastically in India when compared to the world. Rapid growth of education happened because of Privatisation. Creating additional capacity in the government and government aided sectors in higher education greatly diminished and slowly the burden shifted towards private investors to double the higher education capacity, it is good that the private sector has been allowed to participate in the development of higher education but the government cannot totally abandon its responsibilities, more steps should be taken to develop

the government and government aided institutions, if we become fully dependent on private sector for education then definitely poor students will be deprived of educational opportunities.

Teaching and Learning Process:

Students who have special aptitude in the Industry related project should be identified and be given special mentoring. Theory and Practical Class should be synchronized and project work should not be treated in a casual manner. Every institute should have a language resource centre which would help students in sharpening their communicative skills and learn foreign languages. There should be more usage of technology in the teaching and learning process.

Qualification Pathways:

The UG Programme of study should focus on alternative pathways for obtaining degrees. Candidates should be allowed to fulfil the credit requirements for degree in less or more time within bounds. Candidates should be allowed to pursue 2nd degree concurrently if it fulfils all credit. The facility to transfer credits from one university to another within India should be widened.

Financial Reforms:

The Central Government should devote 6% of GDP for Education as per the Kothari Commission Recommendations, in this 1% should be earmarked for Higher Education and 0.5% for Technical Education, State Governments can also adopt similar criteria. Research Funding for the Indian Universities should be increased to become globally competitive.

Conclusion:

These are some suggestions given by Dr. M. Anandakrishnan for reforming Engineering Education. If these are implemented India can definitely achieve new heights in Technical Education and compete with the whole world.

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ARCHAEOLOGY, ART AND CULTURAL HISTORY THE SECTIONAL PRESIDENT ADDRESS

Archaeological Excavations and the Reconstruction of Art, Culture and Society in Tamil Nadu - An Overview

Dr. S. Shenbagavalli

Esteemed General President, Respected General Secretary, beloved delegates and student friends, I am extremely grateful to the Executive Committee and the General Body of the Tamil Nadu History Congress for electing me as the President of the Archaeology, Art and Cultural History Section of the Thirty Second Annual Session-2025, organised under the auspicious of the Department of History and Tourism, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore. I deem it a great honour and rare privilege bestowed on me.

I also place on record my deep sense of gratitude to my Management for their gracious permission and unfailing support in enabling me to accept this responsibility. This recognition is not mine alone, but also a reflection of their encouragement and faith in me. With due awareness of my own constraints and of my limited familiarity with the various categories of sources available, yet encouraged by the trust placed in me, I have made a sincere attempt to present this Presidential Address entitled 'Archaeological Excavations and the Reconstruction of Art, Culture, and Society in Tamil Nadu - An Overview."

I. Introduction

Archaeology serves as the key to unlocking the silent yet powerful testimonies of ancient civilizations. By examining the material remains of the past, such as tools, pottery, inscriptions, monuments, and human settlements, historians and archaeologists reconstruct the lifestyles, belief systems, art forms, and societal structures of bygone eras. In India, where textual records intertwine with mythology and oral traditions, archaeology offers a tangible dimension to validate and enrich historical narratives. Tamil Nadu, located in the southern part of the Indian subcontinent, holds a significant place in this endeavor, with a cultural continuum stretching from prehistoric times to the modern age.

The land of the Tamils has always been a cradle of rich civilization marked by vibrant trade networks, enduring religious traditions, unique artistic expressions, and complex social organizations. While ancient Tamil literature such as the Sangam corpus, epics like Silappatikaram, and inscriptions offer vital insights, archaeological excavations provide physical proof that complements, corrects, or even challenges literary and oral records. Over the past century, both the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology (TNSDA) have undertaken numerous explorations and excavations that have greatly expanded our understanding of Tamil history.

The excavations at Adichanallur, Kodumanal, Korkai, Keeladi, Sivakalai and other sites have revealed not only the antiquity of Tamil civilization but also its unique contributions to world history particularly in terms of urban planning, maritime trade, early literacy, and artistic innovations. The discovery of ancient burial practices, urban settlements, Indo-Roman trade items, and even evidence of a possible script contemporary with or earlier than Brahmi underscores the depth and complexity of Tamil society from the Iron Age onwards.

II. Archaeology in Tamil Nadu - An Outline

Tamil Nadu, with its millennia-old civilization, has emerged as one of the most archaeologically rich regions in India. The practice of archaeology in the

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Tamil region has developed gradually from antiquarian curiosity during the colonial era to scientifically rigorous excavation and analysis in contemporary times. This section traces the evolution of archaeological activity in Tamil Nadu and the institutions responsible for its advancement.

Colonial Beginnings and Early Discoveries

The origins of formal archaeology in Tamil Nadu can be traced to the British colonial period when scholars like Robert Sewell, Alexander Rea, and J.R. Francis took an active interest in the region's antiquities. Their early works focused on temple inscriptions, architectural monuments, and ancient coins. In 1903-04, the British archaeologist Alexander Rea unearthed a treasure of over 9000 objects in the excavation of the megalithic urn burials at Adichanallur in the Thoothukudi district which was the first scientifically recorded archaeological efforts in South India. His work brought international attention to the Iron Age cultures of the Tamil region.

These early excavations, though lacking the advanced scientific tools of today, laid the groundwork for identifying Tamil Nadu as a significant zone of Iron Age and Early Historic cultures. Later studies during the 1930s and 1940s extended these efforts, with reports appearing in the Annual Reports of the Archaeological Survey of India.

Post-Independence Expansion and Institutional Support

After India's independence in 1947, archaeology in Tamil Nadu received a significant institutional boost. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), under the Ministry of Culture, took a leading role in large-scale surveys and excavations. Notable ASI projects included explorations at Arikamedu, which revealed evidence of Roman trade, and excavations at Kanchipuram, a historic religious and political center.

Recognizing the need for a state-specific approach, the Government of Tamil Nadu established the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology (TNSDA) in 1961. This department began systematic explorations across the state, working closely with universities, local communities, and national institutions. Since then, it has been instrumental in preserving monuments, conducting excavations, publishing site reports, and developing regional museums.

Methodological Advancements and Multidisciplinary Approaches

Over the decades, archaeological methods in Tamil Nadu evolved from basic stratigraphic digs to multidisciplinary, scientific explorations. Recent excavations have employed techniques such as:

- Carbon dating, Isotope analysis, ceramic petrography, and remote sensing
- DNA studies of skeletal remains
- Use of GIS and digital mapping tools for site documentation

These innovations have enabled researchers to arrive at more accurate cultural chronologies, dietary patterns, population movements, and even linguistic affiliations.

From Monument-Centric to Culture-Centric Archaeology

A notable trend in Tamil Nadu's archaeological landscape has been the shift from a monument-centric focus (primarily temples and forts) to a culture-centric approach. This has broadened the scope to include prehistoric settlements. industrial sites, water management systems, and social spaces of the common people - villages, burial grounds, artisan quarters, and trade hubs. Sites such as Kodumanal (industrial complex), Keeladi (urban habitation), and Ariyalur (dinosaur fossils and prehistoric environment) illustrate this expansion of focus.

Archaeology in Tamil Nadu has transitioned from antiquarian interests to a mature, interdisciplinary discipline that integrates scientific methods with historical analysis. With robust institutional support and increasing public engagement, Tamil Nadu continues to be at the forefront of archaeological research in India.

III. Major Excavations and their Historical Context

Archaeological excavations across Tamil Nadu have uncovered layers of cultural development, from

prehistoric settlements to flourishing urban centers. These discoveries have greatly enriched our understanding of the region's evolution in terms of art, technology, belief systems, and socio-economic structures. This section explores major excavation sites grouped chronologically and thematically. starting with prehistoric and protohistoric cultures.

A. Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sites

Adichanallur: A Cradle of Early Iron Age Culture

Located on the east bank of the river Tamaraparani in Thoothukudi district of Tamilnadu, Adichanallur has emerged as one of the most significant prehistoric burial sites in India. It was discovered in 1876 by Jagor of Bulin and was later explored by M.Louis Lapicque of Paris. The site first excavated by Alexander Rea in 1903-1904 yielded urn burials, iron weapons, bronze objects, copper ornaments, and even gold diadems. The skeletal remains found in urns, some accompanied by grave goods, reflect a sophisticated burial practice that indicates the existence of social stratification and ritualistic beliefs.

In a dramatic revival of interest, the site was re-excavated in the 2004, 2005 and again in by the ASI. Radiocarbon dating confirmed that the burials belonged to a period as early as 1000 BCE to 600 BCE. Among the most notable finds were bronze anthropomorphic figurines, which hint at ancestral worship and proto-artistic sensibilities. The presence of musical instruments, weapons, and agricultural tools reveals a complex society with specialization in various trades and possibly long-distance trade connections.

Kodumanal: An Industrial Hub of the Iron Age

Situated in the Erode district along the banks of the Noyyal River, Kodumanal was identified as the ancient city of Kavuntham, known from Sangam literature. Excavations conducted by the University of Madras, Tamil University, and the TNSDA over several decades have revealed that Kodumanal was a thriving industrial town between the 5th century BCE and 3rd century CE.

Findings at Kodumanal include:

- Bead-making units using semi-precious stones like carnelian, lapis lazuli, and quartz
- Iron-smelting furnaces, indicating advanced metallurgy
- Graffiti marks and punch-marked coins, hinting at early literacy and trade
- Pottery with Brahmi inscriptions, suggesting widespread communication systems

The site's proximity to trade routes connecting the Tamil hinterland with the west coast indicates its role as a nodal point in regional and international commerce. Artistic expression is evident in the design of pottery, jewelry, and personal adornments.

Porunthal: Traces of Early Tamil Literacy

The village of Porunthal lies on the left bank of River Porunthilur (Porunthalaru / Porunthalar), a tributary of the Amaravathi River, at the foothills of the Western Ghats in Dindigul District of Tamil Nadu. The site of Porunthal was one of the 175 Iron Age and Early Historic sites discovered in March 2006 by V. P Yathees. The excavations conducted in 2009-2010 under the leadership of Prof. K. Rajan of Pondicherry University brought to light crucial evidence about the Iron Age and Early Historic transition in Tamil Nadu. The discoveries at this site have significantly enriched our understanding of the social, cultural, and economic life of early Tamil society.

One of the most striking findings at Porunthal was a Megalithic burial urn containing paddy grains, scientifically dated to around 500 BCE. This discovery provides direct evidence of rice cultivation and its symbolic role in mortuary practices, highlighting the agricultural foundation of early Tamilakam. The ritual use of paddy within burials also illustrates beliefs about sustenance in the afterlife, linking food culture with spirituality. In addition, the site yielded iron implements, carnelian and quartz beads, spindle whorls, and pottery with graffiti marks. These findings point to a society skilled in metallurgy, textile activities, and craft production. The carnelian beads, in particular, suggest participation in long-distance trade networks,

possibly connected with the Indian Ocean exchange system.

The graffiti symbols on pottery have further drawn scholarly attention for their potential link to the evolution of the Tamil-Brahmi script, underlining Porunthal's role in the emergence of literacy in Tamilakam dated to circa 500 BCE, making it one of the earliest evidence of written Tamil. This finding challenges earlier assumptions that writing arrived in Tamil Nadu only around the 3rd century BCE. The script shows clear linguistic development and supports the argument that the Tamil people had an indigenous script system that may have evolved independently or parallel to Ashokan Brahmi.

Mayiladumparai: Earliest Evidence of Iron Use

The Mayiladumparai site in Krishnagiri district has added a crucial layer to the understanding of Tamil prehistory. The site was first excavated in the year 2003 by Prof.K.Rajan and based on his promising results, excavations was resumed in 2021 by the department of Archaeology. Excavations by the TNSDA in 2021 revealed that iron tools were used here as early as 2172 BCE, pushing the timeline of the Iron Age in Tamil Nadu further back than previously thought. This breakthrough discovery supported by radiocarbon dating refutes earlier theories that the Iron Age in Tamil Nadu began only around 1000 BCE. The implications of this are profound: it indicates that Tamil Nadu was part of the global transition to iron technology very early, independent of northern India, and may have contributed to regional technological innovations.

These early archaeological discoveries not only extend the known chronology of Tamil culture but also demonstrate the existence of complex social structures. early technological innovations, and aesthetic traditions. The finds from burial sites. industrial zones, and habitation mounds provide a lens through which we can view the rise of early Tamil society, its material culture, and its evolving worldview.

B. Sangam Age and Early Historic Sites

The Sangam Age (circa 3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE), renowned for its classical Tamil literature, urban sophistication, and maritime prowess, marks a pivotal era in the cultural and political history of Tamil Nadu. Archaeological excavations at key coastal and inland sites have significantly enhanced our understanding of this period, confirming and contextualizing the literary richness of the Sangam texts. These excavations reveal well-planned urban settlements, long-distance trade with Rome and Southeast Asia, and emerging religious and artistic expressions.

Korkai: The Ancient Port of the Pandya Kings

Korkai, an ancient historical village in Srivaikuntam taluk of Thoothukudi. lies three kilometers north of the river Thamirabarani and less than eight kilometers from the Bay of Bengal, while situated about 20 kilometers east of Adichanallur, another monumental site with one of the largest urn burials excavated. Renowned in antiquity for its pearl fishery, Korkai finds mention in Tamil Sangam literature and was noted as "Colchis" in the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea (mid-first century maritime traders' guide) and as "Kolkhoi" by Ptolemy in the second century. It is also referred to in classical works such as Silapathikaram, Kalithogai, Akananuru, and Aingurununu. The site was first excavated in 1870 by Dr. Caldwell, who reported finding pearl oysters and conch shells on the surface in Indian Antiquary.

Later, excavations by Prof. N.Nagaswamy revealed a brick structure with nine courses in six rows at a depth of two-and-a-half feet, beneath which were three large rings placed one over another. Potsherds bearing Tamil Brahmi letters (300 BCE-200 CE) were unearthed, and charcoal samples were dated to 785 BCE by the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai. Previous surveys have also exposed ruins of chank-cutting factories and pearl oyster-splitting units, highlighting Korkai's rich archaeological significance.

Alagankulam: Indo-Roman Trade and Cultural Exchange

Alagankulam situated on the left bank of the Vaigai River in Ramanathapuram district, Tamil Nadu, has yielded significant archaeological evidence through surveys and excavations conducted during the 1980s and 1990s. Finds such as shells, glass bangles, roof tiles,

and pottery pointed to the presence of an ancient civilization. Further excavations in 2014-15 and 2016-17, carried out both in the elevated parts of the main village and near the seashore, revealed traces of an ancient settlement along with artifacts reflecting daily life. Discoveries included a shell bangle industry, evidence of metallurgy, brick structures, terracotta ring wells, punch-marked silver coins, Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) of Gangetic origin, Mediterranean pottery, Greek and Roman coins, seals, and semi-precious stone beads. These findings suggest that Alagankulam functioned as an important port city, comparable to Kaveripoompattinam and Korkai on the east coast. Identified as the first Roman site in the Pandya country, it appears to have played a crucial role in sea trade and the commercial development of ancient Tamil society, indicating that it was once a bustling port.

Poompuhar (Kaveripoompattinam): The Submerged Capital of the Cholas

Poompuhar, also known as Kaveripoompattinam or Puhar, is an ancient Tamil port city located in the Mayiladuthurai district of Tamil Nadu, at the mouth of the river Kaveri where it meets the Bay of Bengal. This port played a vital role in the maritime history of India and is frequently mentioned in Sangam texts of the early Christian era as the capital of the Early Cholas. Archaeological findings, inscriptions, and literary sources confirm that Poompuhar was an international emporium where people from different countries gathered and lived in peace. Ships from Tamralipti in West Bengal and Palur in Orissa regularly visited this port, from which vessels sailed onward to Southeast Asia, Arabia, and Rome. Celebrated in Tamil epics such as Silappatikaram and Manimekalai, Poompuhar's remains offer striking affirmation of the literary imagination, portraying it as one of the most legendary cities of the Sangam age.

Excavations by the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology (TNSDA), the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) have uncovered submerged wharves, terracotta ring wells, brick platforms, and distinctive U and L shaped brick structures, believed to be warehouses or royal buildings. A wide range of ceramics, including Red Ware, Black and Red Ware, and imported foreign pottery, has also been found. Underwater explorations since the 1990s have revealed structural remains more than six meters below sea level, suggesting that large parts of the city were submerged, possibly due to sea-level rise or a catastrophic tsunami around the 3rd or 4th century CE. This discovery resonates with the account in Manimekalai, which describes Poompuhar's destruction by the sea as divine punishment. The urban layout of Poompuhar shows evidence of advanced civic planning, including a well-defined drainage system and standardized brick construction. Artifacts such as carved ivory, sculpted pottery, and terracotta figures point to a society with refined artistic sensibilities and religious diversity, with material evidence attesting to the presence of Shaivism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Altogether, Poompuhar emerges as both a bustling Chola capital and a hub of international trade, culture, and religious pluralism before its tragic submergence.

Together, the sites of Korkai, Alagankulam, and Poompuhar showcase the glory of the Sangam Age, a period characterized by literary brilliance, international commerce, artistic experimentation, and complex urban life. The convergence of archaeological evidence with literary sources allows historians to draw a more textured and authentic picture of early Tamil civilization.

C. Medieval and Later Sites

From the early medieval period (7th century CE) to the late pre-colonial era 18th century CE), Tamil Nadu witnessed the rise and fall of several dynasties most notably the Pallavas, Cholas, Pandyas, Vijayanagara rulers, Nayaks, and Marathas. This period saw not only territorial expansion but also monumental advancements in architecture, temple art, and urban planning. Archaeological investigations from this era focus on built heritage forts, temples, palaces, and civic infrastructures which illuminate the evolution of power structures, religious monuments, and cultural expressions.

Thanjavur: The Heart of Chola Imperial Art

The city of Thanjavur (Tanjore) stands as a testament to the grandeur of Chola architecture, especially during the reign of Rajaraja Chola 1 (985-1014 CE). The Brihadisvara Temple, built by him in 1010 CE and now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is the zenith of Tamil temple architecture. Though long known for its artistic brilliance, archaeological studies in and around Thanjavur have provided deeper insights into the planning, materials, and spatial hierarchy of Chola urban centers.Excavations by ASI and TNSDA around the temple precinct and palace complex have unearthed:

- Epigraphical inscriptions that reveal administrative orders, land grants, and cultural patronage
- Fine bronze icons of Nataraja, Devi, and other deities, reflecting metallurgical skill and devotional art

The alignment of architecture with cosmological principles, coupled with the use of standardized stone blocks, points to a centralized, professionalized architectural tradition under royal patronage. The walls and mandapas of the temple bear thousands of inscriptions that shed light on temple economy, festivals, caste structures, and women's roles in temple service.

Gangaikonda Cholapuram: The Imperial Successor City

Founded by Rajendra Chola 1, Gangaikonda Cholapuram served as the Chola capital in the 11th century CE. The temple complex here mirrors the Brihadisvara temple but with nuanced artistic features more refined sculptures, elaborate carvings, and a deeper focus on Shaiva iconography. Archaeological surveys and small-scale excavations have revealed:

- Coins, ceramic remains, and tools, indicating a well-populated, vibrant city
- Stone inscriptions detailing the Chola military campaigns in Bengal, Srivijaya, and beyond

The site reflects the political ambition of the Cholas to establish a pan-Indian and International presence, blending military triumph with architectural patronage.

The bronze sculptures discovered in the vicinity are some of the finest in Indian art history, marking a peak in Chola artistry.

Gingee Fort: A Fortress of Many Dynasties

Gingee Fort, often hailed as the "Troy of the East," is one of the most formidable military structures in Tamil Nadu, located about 160 kilometres from Chennai in the Villupuram district. First built in the 12th century (c. 1200 CE) by Ananda Kon, a chieftain of the Konar (Yadava) community, the fort stands dramatically on three hills-Rajagiri, Krishnagiri, and Chandragiri in a triangular formation. Over the centuries, it witnessed the rise and fall of successive empires and dynasties, passing through the hands of the Vijayanagar Nayaks, Marathas, Mughals, Carnatic Nawabs, the French, and the British. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site on July 11, 2025, the fort remains a lasting symbol of Tamil Nadu's glorious past. Excavations and architectural studies reveal granaries, armories, secret tunnels, watchtowers, fortified temples, mosques, and dargahs that highlight its strategic and religiously pluralistic character, along with pottery and coins from the Vijayanagara and Maratha periods. Ingeniously adapted to the rugged rocky terrain, the fort exemplifies advanced military engineering, while temple carvings especially in the Venugopalaswamy Temple showcase the refinement of Nayak-style sculpture and the continuity of Tamil iconographic traditions.

Vellore Fort and Nayak Architecture

The Vellore Fort, constructed in the 16th century by the Vijayanagara rulers and later used by the Nayaks and Marathas, showcases Indo-Islamic architectural fusion. The fort houses:

- A Jalakanteswarar Temple, a fine example of Vijayanagara sculpture
- A mosque and Catholic church, indicating its strategic and cosmopolitan nature
- Defensive structures such as bastions, moats, and galleries

Excavations within the fort have revealed weaponry, ceramic ware, and inscriptional evidence attesting to the fort's multi-dynastic use and socio-political importance. Its role during the British period as a site of rebellion and imprisonment adds layers of colonial history to its architectural legacy.

The medieval archaeological sites of Tamil Nadu reflect a dynamic period of temple-building, artistic innovation, statecraft, and militarization. The material remains bronze icons, temple inscriptions, urban ruins, and fortifications reveal how Tamil society expanded its artistic and ideological frontiers, leaving behind a monumental legacy.

D. Contemporary Discoveries and Scientific Interventions

In recent decades, archaeological research in Tamil Nadu has undergone a significant transformation due to the application of scientific methods, interdisciplinary collaboration, and increased institutional support. These developments have not only enhanced the precision of dating and cultural reconstruction but also revealed previously unknown dimensions of Tamil society particularly its urbanism, literacy, economic systems, and cultural continuity from ancient to medieval times. Sites such as Keeladi, Agaram, Konthagai, and Mayiladumparai have led this wave of discovery, altering the chronological and cultural paradigms of Tamil history.

Keeladi: A Sangam-Era Urban Civilization Unveiled

The site of Keeladi, is located in the Tirupuvanam Taluk of Sivaganga district, about 13 kilometeres southeast of Maduari has become a landmark in Indian archaeology. The discovery of a well-organized urban settlement attributed to the Sangam Age has earned a significant place on India's political and cultural map. Excavated in successive phases since 2014 by the TNSDA and later by the ASI, the excavation at Keeladi uncovered around 7,500 artefacts. The findings indicated the presence of a sophisticated, literate, and secular urban society and offered crucial evidence in bridging the historical gap between the Iron Age (12th-6th century BCE) and the Early Historic Period (6th-4th century BCE), Scholars have since referred to the site as part of the Vaigai Valley Civilisation. The Keeladi settlement could be a part of the second urbanisation that swept the Indian subcontinent between the 6th and 2nd centuries BCE. Keeladi has yielded startling evidence of urban planning, industrial activity, and script usage dating back to 6th century BCE, based on radiocarbon dating by Beta Analytic Lab, Florida, USA.

Key findings include:

- Rectangular brick structures, suggestive of habitation, water management, and industrial functions
- A vast array of pottery with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions, making it one of the earliest examples of script usage in South India
- Artefacts such as spindle whorls, dice, combs, terracotta figurines, and iron tools
- Carbonized grains (rice and millet), indicating dietary patterns and agricultural practices

Keeladi challenges the long-held notion that urbanization in South India was delayed compared to the north. Its findings suggest that the Tamil region had independent, indigenous urban cultures that thrived centuries before the Mauryan influence. Additionally, the literary sophistication attributed to Sangam poets is now supported by archaeological proof of a literate, artisan-based society.

Konthagai, Agaram, and Manalur: Burial and Habitation Synergy

The Konthagai site, located just 2 km from Keeladi, has been identified as its corresponding burial complex. Excavations have unearthed:

- Urn burials with human remains and grave goods like beads, weapons, and pottery
- Iron implements, bangles, and ornaments, hinting at a complex social structure
- DNA analysis and isotope studies, revealing demographic composition and dietary patterns

Meanwhile, Agaram and Manalur, close to Keeladi, have added depth to the Sangam landscape, revealing both elite structures and working-class quarters. Together, these sites confirm that the Keeladi

cultural complex was not an isolated town, but part of an interconnected urban sprawl The correlation between habitation and burial practices in this region provides a holistic picture of Sangam society from life to death, production to ritual, and domesticity to belief systems.

Mayiladumparai and Sivakalai: Redefining the Iron Age in Tamil Nadu

One of the most paradigm-shifting discoveries in recent years comes from the Mayiladumparai site in Krishnagiri district. Excavations in 2021 and 2022 revealed, Iron tools dating back to circa 2172 BCE, confirmed through accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) radiocarbon dating, Ash pits, black and red ware pottery, and evidence of early farming and Microlithic tools indicating a Neolithic transition phase.

Situated approximately seven kilometres north of the Thamirabarani River in Thoothukudi district, Sivagalai forms a crucial part of a broader archaeological landscape that also includes the microlithic site of Sayarpuram, the megalithic burial complex of Adichanallur, and the ancient Pandya port of Korkai. Excavations conducted in three phases between 2019 and 2022 uncovered more than 85 iron artefacts-comprising knives, arrowheads, chisels, axes, and swords-several of which were deposited within funerary urns. Radiocarbon dating of selected samples, undertaken through Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) at the Beta Analytic Laboratory, United States, yielded results of profound historical significance. The evidence demonstrates the utilisation of iron technology in Tamil Nadu as early as the 4th millennium BCE, thereby pushing back the chronology of iron use in South Asia by over a millennium from the conventionally accepted horizon of the 1st millennium BCE.

This discovery has pushed back the beginning of the Iron Age in Tamil Nadu by nearly a millennium, challenging the earlier scholarly consensus that iron technology arrived in the south from the north. It suggests that Tamil communities were not only early adopters of metallurgy but may have developed iron technology independently. These discoveries were not only remarkable for their quality but also for the insight they provided into early Tamil society

Chennanoor: From Microlithic Age to Early Historic Habitation

A sediment sample from the Stone Age site at Chennanur in Krishnagiri district emerged as the latest crown of Tamil civilisation has been dated to 8,450 BCE by Oxford University, providing the first scientific proof of continuous human habitation in Tamil Nadu for at least 10,000 years. Excavations by the state archaeology department uncovered Microlithic tools such as flakes, blades and cores in quartz. The site also yielded polished stone tools such as celts, hammer stones and sling balls belonging to the Neolithic period, marking the first ever scientific date for the later Microlithic period in the state. Experts Prof.K.Rajan and Prof.K.Selvakumar have confirmed the earlier stratigraphic evidence which offers a new insights into the cultural evolution of South India from hunter-gatherers to settled agrarian communities.

Marungur: Cultural Continuum from the Iron Age to the Early Historic Period

Nestled amid lush cashew groves in Panruti taluk of Cuddalore district, Marungur has recently emerged as an important archaeological site. Excavations carried out by the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology in 2024-25, under the direction of R. Sivanantham, Joint Director of TNSDA revealed a well-established settlement dating to the transitional phase between the later Iron Age and the Early Historic Period. The region was part of the ancient Naduvil Mandalam or Naduvil Nadu (Central Territtorial Division), flanked by the Thenpennai to the north and the Vada Vellar river to the south.

Using remote-sensing techniques such as UAV mapping and LiDAR, the team identified a habitation mound and burial site situated about 100 metres above sea level, and subsequent excavations yielded 95 antiquities, including a polished stone axe, beads of carnelian, agate, quartz, glass and terracotta, copper bangle fragments, an iron knife, terracotta objects, antimony rods, and a medieval copper coin of Raja Raja Chola I. Notably, the site is one of the few in Tamil

Nadu to reveal both habitation and associated burials. This site also holds significance as it is located close to the ancient port cities of Arikamedu in the Union Territory of Puducherry and Poompuhar in Mayiladuthurai district.

Vembakottai: A Window into Sangam Age Craft and Trade

Situated on the banks of the Vaippar River in Virudhunagar district, Vembakottai has swiftly become a flagship Sangam era archaeological site. The third phase of excavation, initiated in June 2024, by Dr. Pon Baskar, Director of the Vembakottai archaeological excavation unearthed an impressive array of artifacts: over 7,800 antiquities across earlier phases, comprising shell bangles, beads, rings, microlithic tools, and Nayak period copper coins and new discoveries such as a carnelian intaglio depicting a charging bull, one of only three known in South India

Notable finds also include a copper Anjana Kol,a traditional eyeliner pencil, demonstrating both daily life and metallurgical sophistication, as well as tin, iron, and a decorated terracotta medal, which together suggest bronze making knowledge and symbolic craftsmanship. Further, star-shaped terracotta ornaments were recovered from a depth of 1.90 m, noted for their rarity and paired occurrence. Dated broadly to 300 BCE-300 CE, the Sangam age, Vembakottai stands out not just as a habitation site, but as a craft and production hub, especially for glass beads and shell bangles. The material culture ranging from precious ornaments and gaming dice to standardized weights and tools paints a picture of intensive craft specialization, social identity, regulated trade, and possibly long-distance exchange, likely tied to Indo-Roman networks.

Scientific Techniques and Interdisciplinary Tools

Recent excavations in Tamil Nadu have employed a range of advanced scientific techniques that have added credibility and precision to archaeological interpretations:

- AMS Radiocarbon Dating: Used at Keeladi and Mayiladumparai to date samples with high accuracy.
- X-ray Fluorescence (XRF) and SEM-EDX Analysis: Applied on pottery and metal artefacts to understand composition and provenance.
- DNA and Isotope Analysis: Helps determine ancestry, health, and diet from skeletal remains.
- Drone Surveying and GIS Mapping: Used for spatial documentation and topographic analysis of large sites.
- Residue Analysis: Carried out on pottery and tools to identify food remains and other organic residues.

Such methodologies have not only enhanced the reliability of data but also facilitated cross-disciplinary collaboration between archaeologists, historians, geneticists, geologists, and chemists.

These contemporary excavations and scientific advances have transformed Tamil Nadu into a global centre for early urban archaeology. The Keeladi cultural complex in particular has spurred national debates on the antiquity of Tamil civilization, linguistic evolution, and the origins of urbanism in peninsular India. With continuing support from the state government, universities, and public engagement, Tamil Nadu's archaeological narrative is undergoing a renaissance one that fuses cutting-edge science with deep cultural memory.

IV. Art and Iconography through Excavations

Art and iconography are profound indicators of a society's belief systems, technological skills, and aesthetic sensibilities. In Tamil Nadu, archaeological excavations have unearthed an extraordinary range of sculptures, figurines, coins, bronzes, and religious motifs, which not only reflect the state's artistic heritage but also illuminate the evolution of faith, power, and identity. These artefacts ranging from megalithic anthropomorphic icons to Chola bronzes trace a continuous cultural journey from prehistory to the medieval period.

Terracotta Figurines and Early Artistic Expression

Excavations at Adichanallur, Kodumanal, Keeladi, and Agaram have revealed numerous terracotta figurines, often shaped as animals, birds, female deities, and human forms. The craftsmanship especially in the

shaping of expressive eyes, stylized postures, and symbolic gestures reveals not only an aesthetic dimension but also a deep symbolic and religious ethos in early Tamil society. These figurines serve as precursors to the sophisticated sculptures of the later historical periods.

Graffiti, Inscriptions, and Symbolic Communication

Numerous pottery sherds with graffiti symbols ranging from geometric symbols and motifs to early Tamil-Brahmi script have been recovered from sites such as Keeladi, Korkai, and Porunthal. Graffiti and inscribed pottery at Keeladi, some dated to 600 BCE, show that the population was not only literate but also engaged in a complex visual culture, using marks for communication, record-keeping, and possibly rituals. This period marks the transition from purely oral traditions to textual and visual inscriptions, reflecting the growth of urban and intellectual life.

Bronze Icons: Pinnacle of Chola Art

One of Tamil Nadu's most iconic contributions to Indian and global art history is the tradition of Chola bronzes. Bronze casting with intricate and expressive icons, Graceful postures and fluid movement (e.g., the Nataraja with balanced limbs and dynamic aura), Deep theological symbolism, where each gesture (mudra), posture, and attribute (like the drum or flame of Nataraja) conveys layered philosophical meanings, Sensuous modeling, especially in depictions of deities like Parvati, Vishnu, and Murugan were not only artistic objects but also used in ritual processions, symbolizing divine presence in the community.

Temple Sculptures and Iconographic Narratives

Archaeological studies at monumental temples such as those in Thanjavur, Darasuram, Kumbakonam, and Tiruvannamalai have documented extensive stone carvings that represent both divine and secular themes. Panels depict episodes from epics like the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Periyapuranam, while processional friezes illustrate royal patronage, military conquests, and temple rituals. The iconography reflects the diversity of religious traditions, with Shaiva, Vaishnava, Shakta, Jain, and even Buddhist motifs appearing in earlier temples. The Chola and Nayak periods in particular witnessed a refinement of iconographic conventions, and the mandapas and gopurams were adorned with a dense array of images that not only narrated religious stories but also encoded social values, political messages, and ethical teachings.

Coins, Seals, and Decorative Motifs

Coins recovered from Alagankulam, Karur, Madurai, and other sites display remarkable artistic and economic sophistication. Sangam Age coins often featured animal motifs such as tigers, elephants, and bulls, along with royal insignia and symbolic objects. Punch-marked coins with multipoint decorations reflect indigenous craftsmanship, while the discovery of Roman coins with Latin inscriptions testifies to the aesthetic and commercial exchanges between the Tamil region and the Mediterranean world. In addition, seals and signets unearthed from burial sites and trade centers bear the emblems of guilds, royal orders, and religious sects, often stamped with exquisite designs that highlight the cultural and commercial vibrancy of the period.

Through these material remnants figurines, icons, sculptures, inscriptions, coins, and decorative motifs, archaeology brings to life the artistic vision, spiritual imagination, and cultural identity of Tamil society across centuries. Each artefact acts as a voice from the past, testifying to a community that valued beauty, ritual, communication, and legacy.

V. Cultural and Social Insights Derived from Archaeological Excavations

The cultural and social history of Tamil Nadu is a mosaic shaped by diverse elements ethnic identities, economic networks, religious traditions, and evolving social structures. Archaeological excavations have played a critical role in decoding this intricate web by providing material evidence of everyday life, community organization, trade systems, ritual behavior, and inter-cultural interactions. From megalithic burials to urban settlements, the unearthed artefacts and architectural remains offer compelling insights into how ancient Tamils lived, worshipped, governed, and related to one another.

Burial Practices and Concepts of Life after Death

Excavations at Adichanallur, Perur, Sivakalai, Mayiladumparai, and other Iron Age sites reveal highly elaborate burial systems. Megalithic burials such as dolmens, cists, urn burials, and cairn circles indicate a strong belief in life after death and a complex ritual framework.

Key observations include:

- Grave goods such as iron weapons, pottery, beads, and tools were placed alongside the dead, suggesting a belief in providing for the deceased in the afterlife.
- Secondary burials, where bones were collected and ceremonially reburied, show sophisticated funeral customs.
- Some urn burials with multiple skeletons point to familial or clan-based identities.

These customs speak to notions of ancestor worship, ritual purity, and communal identity, themes later elaborated in Tamil spiritual and literary traditions.

Settlements and Urbanization

Sites like Keeladi, Kodumanal, Kanchipuram, and Uraiyur offer evidence of urban settlements with clear civic planning and functional zoning. Key features include:

- Street layouts, often laid out in a grid pattern
- Brick structures, indicating durable domestic and public architecture
- Drainage systems, attesting to hygiene and water management
- Industrial zones, including pottery kilns, bead-making centers, and smithies

These discoveries point to an urban consciousness and community planning. The Tamil people not only developed infrastructure but also organized labor and material production on a scale comparable to other classical civilizations.

Craft Production and Economic Specialization

Tamil Nadu's archaeological record indicates a highly skilled population engaged in multiple crafts:

- Bead-making at Kodumanal and Arikamedu with semi-precious stones such as carnelian, agate, lapis lazuli
- Textile production, suggested by spindle whorls, loom weights, and dyeing vats
- Metal working, evidenced by smelting sites, iron implements, and weapons
- Pottery industries, with black and red ware, rouletted ware, and fine red slipped pottery

The division of labor, craft specialization, and the distribution of goods point to a multi-tiered economy, where artisans, merchants, and producers coexisted with agriculturalists and the elite.

Religion, Ritual, and Sacred Spaces

Archaeological evidence demonstrates that Tamil society had a rich religious landscape, shaped by both local and pan-Indian influences. Temples, shrines, and religious symbols reveal the evolution of spiritual beliefs:

- Early Iron Age artefacts suggest animism and mother goddess worship.
- Sangam Age inscriptions and temple ruins show the rise of organized Shaivism and Vaishnavism.
- The discovery of Buddhist and Jain remains at sites like Poompuhar, Madurai, and Kanchipuram indicates a phase of pluralistic spiritualism.

Ritual structures such as yaga kundams, temple tanks, and mandapas reveal a formalized system of ritual performance, priesthood, and temple-based social services. Temple inscriptions and sculptures often depict festivals, donations, and community gatherings, underlining the central role of religion in public life.

Trade, Connectivity, and Cosmopolitanism

Excavations at Arikamedu, Korkai, Alagankulam, and Pattinam provide overwhelming evidence of external trade with the Roman world, Southeast Asia, and the middle east. Findings include:

- Roman amphorae, coins, and glassware
- Indo-Roman rouletted ware and Mediterranean wine jars

- Tamil pottery with graffiti in foreign scripts

The export of pepper, pearls, muslin, and ivory transformed Tamil coastal towns into cosmopolitan hubs. This economic affluence shaped local society through the rise of merchant guilds (Nigama), trade taxes, and temples as centers of wealth redistribution.

Literacy and Intellectual Life

The widespread discovery of pottery with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions and graffiti symbols across Keeladi, Mangulam, and other sites suggests that literacy was not restricted to elites. Artefacts show:

- Personal names, possibly indicating ownership or signatures
- Religious or trade-related terms
- Dates and titles suggestive of scribal traditions

This indicates a literate society with educational institutions, possibly informal, and an evolving intellectual tradition that would later produce literary masterpieces like the Thirukkural and Silappatikaram.

Archaeological excavations in Tamil Nadu thus offer a multidimensional view of society, its rituals, economy, trade, religion, governance, and learning. Material culture provides a crucial lens through which we reconstruct the day-to-day lives and philosophical outlooks of Tamil people across centuries.

VI. Regional and Intercultural Influences

Tamil Nadu's long and continuous history of human occupation, coupled with its strategic location along the eastern coastline of India, fostered rich and sustained interactions with both pan-Indian cultures and international civilizations. These interactions, evident in archaeological artefacts and site distributions, reflect a dynamic and open society shaped by cultural diffusion, trade, conquest, and religious dialogue. Excavations across Tamil Nadu provide clear evidence of these intercultural currents from northern India to the Mediterranean world. Archaeology illustrates this dialogue of traditions where Tamil culture was not isolated but in constant exchange with internal and external forces, both adapting and influencing them. Through these regional and intercultural connections, Tamil Nadu developed into a pluralistic society a confluence of indigenous roots and foreign influences. Archaeological remains serve as a testament to this cosmopolitanism, revealing a people who were both deeply rooted in their land and broadly engaged with the world.

VII. Conclusion

Archaeology has profoundly transformed the way we understand the historical and cultural evolution of Tamil Nadu, uncovering a continuous line of development from the Stone Age to the modern era. Sites such as Attirampakkam, Keeladi, and Poompuhar each contribute unique insights ranging from the earliest prehistoric tools to the sophistication of urban life and maritime trade. By integrating material evidence like pottery, inscriptions, burial practices, architecture, and trade artefacts with historical texts, archaeologists have provided a richer, multidimensional account of Tamil society. The Sangam Age, once understood primarily through its literature, is now supported by evidence of urban planning, literacy, craft specialisation, and wide-ranging trade networks. Burial traditions, from megalithic cairns to urn burials, reflect philosophical and spiritual depth, while Tamil artistic expression in terracotta, sculpture, and cave paintings illustrates the refinement and diversity of its people across millennia. Importantly, the Keeladi excavations have challenged earlier assumptions, pushing back the origins of Tamil script and proving the existence of a literate, self-sufficient urban culture in South India parallel to, or even preceding, some northern traditions. In reconstructing the past, archaeology has not only provided scientific grounding for cultural memory but also revived identity, enriched heritage, and reaffirmed the antiquity and global significance of Tamil civilisation.

Dear Research Scholars,

The title 'Archaeological Excavations and the Reconstruction of Art, Culture, and Society in Tamil Nadu - An Overview' is not just a theme of academic inquiry, it is a call to engage with the soul of Tamil Nadu's historical identity. As scholars, you carry the responsibility of not only discovering material remains

but also interpreting and narrating the lives, values, and creativity of the people who shaped this ancient land. The soil of Tamil Nadu hides not just artefacts, but stories of civilization, resilience, and brilliance. Each shard of pottery, each burial urn, and each inscribed stone is a silent witness to a vibrant past that deserves to be heard, studied, and preserved.

May your work contribute to a deeper understanding of Tamil history, and may it bridge the past and the present for generations to come.

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Archaeological Insights into the Pre Historic Cultures of Krishnagiri

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Introduction:

The Pre-historic Period was the earliest period of human beings. To study the history of Pre-history man, no evidence such as coins, literature, and inscriptions are available. In the absence of these source materials, we can trace the history of the Pre-historic period with the help of some common features found in it. The Archaeological excavations have proved that the people in Pre-historic period generally used different kinds of stone tools to safeguard their life. Based on the stone tools they used; the Pre historic period was classified as the Paleolithic period, Mesolithic period, Neolithic period, and Megalithic period.[1] In Krishnagiri district the Pre-historic artifacts are enormous. The pre-historic culture of Krishnagiri district ranges in age from the late Paleolithic to the Megalithic. The period before the formation of written language is known as the prehistoric period. The pre-historic period is studied with the help of the available archaeological evidence. The culture that prevailed in the Pre-historic period is known as Pre-historic Culture. Pre-historic culture of a particular region was revealed primarily with the help of archaeological sources.[2]

Pre-Historic Culture:

The Paleolithic and Microlithic sites in the Krishnagiri district are very few and the artifacts are also very low. More Neolithic sites were discovered and collected potteries and tools from these sites. On the otherside, the Megalithic sites are in large numbers and it is located every three to five kilometers distance. All these remains are the greatest evidence of the pre-historic period of Krishnagiri district. In Tamil Nadu, the pre-historic culture had unique features which remained certain values in the practice of present

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society that could be witnessed in the 21st century.[3]The existence of the late or the upper Palaeolithic tool industrial site in Erakettu near Kappalvadi in the present Krishnagiri district reveals that Palaeolithic people lived there atleast from 50,000 BCE. Hand-axes, cleavers, scarpers, ovens, etc., were found on the slope of the hillock of Erakeddu. The earlier findings of pre-neolithic tools, considered tobe the tools of Palaeolithic men by Robert Bruce Foote in Bargur hills, not too far away place to Erakettu, Palaeolithic tools dateable to 3500 BCE seems that a faction of Palaeolithic culture people continued their culture till that date. i.e., the Paleolithic people continued their ancient culture when their counterparts developedMesolithic culture and further pushed forward to the revolutionary Neolithic stage of culture.[4]

Paleolithic Tools:

The collection of Palaeolithic tools made on dolerite by Robert Bruce Foote at the sites near Kapalwadi and Bargur and the collection from the exploration by B.Narasimaiah from the same region were put in the pre-neolithic phase. The description made by him further reveals the nature of the stone tool industries. The twenty-two artifacts with heavily patinatedand deodorized from Kapalwadi and Bargur which are factory sites of the pecked and ground stone industry and the identical Thirumalai in the North Arcot district. Technologically, the patinated artifacts do not belong to any one of the well-defined lithic industries i.e., stone industries- either the Palaeolithic Age or the Neolithic. The techniques employed in the manufacture of these tools are limited, they are Clacton and cylindrical –hammer techniques.[5]The retouching technique is conspicuous by its absence. All the tools are made on suitable natural pieces of stone, except blade-flacks and two others which are made on flakes. The angle between the platform and the flake surface is nearly 1300 in the case of the two flake tools. Except for one, all the blade flakes do not have any prepared platform. However, in one example there seems to be a prepared platform of doubtful nature.Thus the artifacts encountered at Kappalwadi and the site near Bargur are not similar to any of the known industries, and hence it is difficult to date them. However, one is tempted to wonder whether this assemblage belongs to an early stage of the pecked and ground stone industry when the grinding of the tool was not yet adopted. Only further research can solve the problem.

Neolithic Culture:

The Neolithic artifacts include the Terracotta figurines, stone tools, and potteries were available. Artifacts from Dailamalai were studied along with Vattalmalai and Togarappalli by B.Narashimaih has revealed that there is no typological or technological difference between them. Study on the Mullukkadu was excluded by him because of less quantity. Vattalmalai yields hundreds of tools.[6]The raw material used to fashion the tool is essentially well-grained dolerite. Hornblendic gneiss, granite, and syenite are also rarely used in the manufacture of tools. The gneiss is used for manufacturing edge tools and granite and syenite for pounders and chopping tools. Typologically, this industry compares very well with the industry represented at other places such as Piklihal, Kodekkal, Sanganakallu, etc.

Potteries of Neolithic culture:

Narashimaiah's findings gave some characteristic details. His study revealed five major types of Neolithic potteries with their sub-divisions. They consist of Red, Tan, Grey, Brown, and Black wares. In the red and grey wares five sub-divisions viz., coarse burnished, dressed and burnished, slipped and burnished and rusticated varieties were noticed. In the tan ware, all the above except rusticated verity were available. The brown ware does not have either the dressed and burnished or the rusticated variety. Burnished and rusticated categories were absent in blackware.[7]The dominant wares of Modurare grey, burnished red, brown, tan, and coarse red. The unearthed pots were grouped into sixteen types with numerous variants amongst them. Wide-mouthed vases with various rim types and globular bodies; wide-mouthed vases with carinated neck, and straight shoulders; varieties of a deep bowl with different rims, sides i.e., convex, straight, etc., lid –cum-bowl, channel spouted, lug handle bowls and pots, etc. Channel spouts are short and luted to vessels; while these are present in

Dailamalai and Thogarappalli, they were absent in Mullikkadu.

Decorations:

Neolithic pottery of Dharmapuri was mainly plain however a small percentage of decorated variety is available. Incised decoration on pottery comprised chain, comb design, oblique lines, criss-cross, herringbones, ladders, notches, etc. Mat impression, perhaps of palm leaf mat was also found on the bottom of the pots. Appliqué works consisted of bands thatare pertinently absent in Mullikkadu. Paintings, usually, pre-firing in purple pigment over a light red as usual. But a single specimen of post-firing painted pot in ochre colour on the rim was also noticed. The brown ware of Modur was mostly plain, but occasionally with simple grooves and incised strokes. Other kinds of Modur were mostly plain.[8]

Neolithic Habitation Sites:

The findings of Neolithic tools elsewhere in the district, the habitation sites found were least in numbers. As many as 57 sites were noticed where Neolithic tools were found. Except for the four sites Modur in Palacodetaluk, Dailamalai, Pannimaduva, and Mullikkadu in Haurtaluk none other exposed any habitation site. Pikkanahalli in Palacodetaluk may also be included in the list however more exploration is needed to expose the significance of the site. The Iron Age or Megalithic culture artifacts include various kinds of Megalithic burial monuments, potteries including block and red ware, grave goods, Iron objects, agriculture products, and different kinds of artisan artifacts.[9]

Megalithic Monument:

Explored sites and archaeological evidence of about 85 % of sites were exposed to Cairn or Bolder circle type megalithic monuments. Overall findings disclose the Cairn Circle type Megalithic burials were found throughout the district irrespective of geographical character, plain or hilly region. Natural rough boulders of various sizes were used to construct these Cairn circle and their variants near the uniform size of a boulder were used in developing a stone circle; as a packing substance various sizes were used; the use of slab circle a variant was unfound in the district.Several sites, including several burials with Cairn or Bolder circle type, were found. Thirumalwadi is the only site exposed with Menhir-type monuments. Bodhumalai is exposed to barrel-type cairn heap monuments.[10] Dolmen type was reported in two places namely Nallampatti and Bodumalai. Four sites namely Pudur, Bodhumalai, Indur, and Laligam are exposed with Dolmonid cists type. Gobinathampatti, Ellappuliyampatti, Morappur, Thengaraikottai, Nalapirampatti, and Palacode are exposed to Urn burials. The number of cairn circles in a particular burial site varies from 10 to 1000. In some cases, 3 to 10 numbers in disturbed conditions were also reported. Moreover, the cairn circles were found entombing the other primary units. Stone circles are made of round boulders.[11] Sometimes slab circles were also reported, however not in Dharmapuri district. These circles are devoid of any cairn packing. Most urns unearthed in this region were from stone circles only. In cairn circles, generally, stone boulders were placed one after another without any gap to form a circle but in stone circles, they were generally placed by giving many gaps between two boulders to serve as a demarcation of the grave.[12]

Rock Paintings:

Rock paintings are painted in white pigment. Among them at the Eriyur site petro-glyphs along with paintings other two rock paintings are archeologically noteworthy. Petro-glyphs are rare in nature. The rock shelter is painted with mainly animal figures. The Muthurayangundu- Vazhaithoppu rock painting is filled with mostly symbols and geometric figures. Nallampatti Melagiri Hills rock painting mostly symbols, geometric figures, and a man figure. These symbols and signs are geometric and non-geometric patterns are reflect the people's faith and belief in nature and power.[13]

Mother Goddesses Worship:

Mother Goddess worship existed from Neolithic culture. Many terracotta female figurines have been unearthed from the excavations of Krishnagiri district. Some of the terracotta figurines are identified as the mother goddess of the respective periods. A rare

terracotta figurine was unearthed in Modur excavation in the Neolithic phase. It was unearthed from the trench at a depth of 1.05 Mts. It is a solid one and the female face is depicted with the beak of a bird. It looks like an anthropomorphic figure.[14]The breast is manually fixed. One of the breasts and hands are not preserved in the collected figurine. It is a bust of a female without a head, both arms and a right breast are broken was unearthed (2004-2005) by the State Department of Archaeology, Tamil Nadu. This broken piece of terracotta has the feature of a female. It is triangular. It is possible that it could be a mother goddess of the Neolithic period in Tamil Nadu.[15]

Another terracotta figurine is also witnessed in the same place which is comparatively well preserved and intact in condition. This standing terracotta female is made of clay with a coarse red coating. She is standing in tribanga posture. The right leg slightly bends and the left leg is shown straight. She has a feature of roundish face and long ears with ear ornaments. The headdress of the figure is noteworthy to mention. The elongated round turban-like headdress is shown on her head.[16]She has two hands and her right hand touches the right thigh of her and her left hand touches her mouth. She wears the bangles on her hands. The mother goddess is in a nude posture. It belongs to the Neolithic period. It is made clear from the available findings of pre-historical artifacts, that no trace of Palaeolithic, and Microlithic was found so far in the bifurcated modern Dharmapuri district. Contra to this fact, the next phase of pre-historic culture namely the Neolithic culture was abundant and evidenced by few Neolithic habitation mounts and sites.[17]

Conclusion:

As far as Krishnagiri district is concerned, the advent of iron made a tremendous impact on cultural transformation. This cultural phase is labeled as variously black and red ware culture, Iron Age culture, and Megalithic culture, which created certain confusion in understanding the real transformation from the Iron Age to the Early Historic period. The most important factor that hindered placing the Early Historic period in a proper chronological frame is that of the megalithic monuments. The long survival of these monuments for about a thousand years in the Krishnagiri district between 1000 BC and 100 BC prevented the scholars from placing this culture in a specific cultural context. It seems initially around 1000 BC Iron Age people were cattle raisers and probably with limited agriculture, a spillover of Neolithic. They migrated quite often in search of pasture land. The limited availability of the habitation-cum-burial sites can be understood in this background. Even the available settlements are small when compared with their burials.

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Unveiling Prehistoric Women's Lives in North Arcot's Rock art

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Patrilineal Society:

This can be identified as a society that primarily relies on hunting for food. Different groups were formed for specific tasks: one group hunted birds, another hunted animals, and another caught fish from water bodies. Men, utilizing their physical strength, would overpower weaker creatures, defeat them in combat, and use them as food. They would provide this food for their group or family. This process was repeated whenever hunger arose. However, if hunting in the sky, land, or water was unsuccessful due to seasonal changes or scarcity, the society would face starvation. As a result, women began to take initiative to address the food shortage.

Matrilineal Society:

Women, who were physically less strong compared to men, engaged in activities such as digging roots, gathering fruits, and collecting edible plants. This approach proved largely successful. The shift from food gathering to food production marked the beginning of civilization. Activities such as farming and cultivating crops were outcomes of this transition, leading to significant cultural and societal changes. This society is known as the matrilineal society, where women played a central role.

While men's reliance on physical strength for hunting was often insufficient to address hunger, women's efforts in gathering food ensured a more consistent food supply. In summary, a society that gathers food through hunting can be classified as patrilineal, while a society that collects or produces food through gathering fruits, roots, and grains is considered matrilineal.

Depictions of Female Figures in Prehistoric Rock Paintings of the North Arcot District

As previously discussed, it is evident that women held significant value in prehistoric societies, as reflected in their depictions in rock paintings. Let us further examine the portrayal of female figures in the rock paintings of the North Arcot District.

Keelvaalai:

On the route from Villupuram to Tiruvannamalai lies a small village named Keelvalai. Approximately one kilometer from this village is a hillock adorned with ancient paintings, locally known as the "Blood Cave." This hillock is situated within the scenic landscape of Oliyaparai, featuring five interconnected cave passages. Four of these passages contain vibrant rock paintings, with the most prominent found in the "Blood Cave," so named due to its numerous red-hued artworks and its historical association with ritual sacrifices performed by priests many years ago. The Keelvalai paintings exhibit characteristics comparable to those found in North Indian and international cave art.

The rock paintings in Keelvalai include the following motifs:

a. Animals
b. Humans with animal-like faces
c. Solar (sun) figures
d. Weapons or tools
e. Dance performances (featuring women)
f. Symbols

The Keelvalai rock paintings prominently feature a depiction of a horse. **(Fig.1)** One notable painting portrays a person riding a horse, accompanied by a human figure leading the animal. The figure leading the horse appears to have gathered hair or headgear, possibly indicating a female figure. The rider's chest is depicted as elongated, suggesting they may be bound or restrained. Another figure is also present in front of the woman leading the horse. These animal-themed paintings likely represent scenes from prehistoric life. In many prehistoric

rock art traditions, animal motifs are associated with hunting rituals or "magic rituals" intended to harness the power of animals. Regarding the striking painting described, Mr. P.L. Swamy suggests that it depicts a man riding a horse, led by a female figure, possibly a goddess, who is guiding him toward a sacrificial ritual dedicated to a mother goddess.

Mallapadi:

Mallapadi is one of the most significant rock art sites discovered in Tamil Nadu, first identified by the Department of Archaeology at the University of Madras. Professor Dr. K.V. Raman has extensively studied these paintings. The rock art at Mallapadi depicts human figures, animals, and possibly Asian motifs. Among the animal representations, horses are prominent and are classified as secondary paintings. The inclusion of human figures in these artworks categorizes them as secondary and tertiary paintings. Some scholars suggest that these paintings are prehistoric, while others attribute them to the Neolithic period. However, it is inaccurate to classify them as belonging to the early Neolithic period. **(Fig.2)** One notable painting depicts a man riding a horse, holding a spear in his hand. Another figure, also holding a spear, is identified as a woman based on her hairstyle and waist shape. Given these characteristics, the scene is reasonably interpreted as a hunting depiction. Similar artistic motifs are found in various rock art sites across North India.

Othikuppam:

This village is situated approximately one kilometer from the Barukur-Pasavanakoil highway. Within the village area, the hillock known as Kathisappanmalai hosts Megalithic monuments and rock dwellings. Among these, the rock dwelling at Sannyasi Galli features paintings executed in white paint on the rock surface. These paintings depict flat human figures organized into two distinct sets. A total of eight human figures are portrayed: four are arranged in a row, while the other four are depicted individually with varied expressions. The row of four figures likely represents a ritual dance, possibly a performance or a magical ritual dance within a ceremonial context. These figures are identified as female, characterized by historians as "line figures."

Mallachandram:

Mallachandram, located 19 km from Krishnagiri on the road to Birpalli, Tamil Nadu. The Neolithic site, known as Morel Rock, features paintings and drawings on approximately 100 stone blocks, ranging from 1 m to 2.5 m in height, making it the largest collection of stone block paintings in Tamil Nadu. The paintings on stone blocks are unique, resembling cave rock art, with some found in Neolithic tombs.Western Cover Stone: Depicts two human figures; another shows a man with an animal. Includes a long straight line with 16 diagonal lines, ending in a circular symbol, possibly indicating time or numbers.

A man with legs and arms drawn as three separate lines on a western cover stone. A man with a bow and arrow above his head, suggesting a hunting culture or a symbolic representation of place/time. Features human figures with a plant form between them; another set includes a bow and arrow above human heads. Depictions of a plant, a house, or a hut alongside a man and an animal, possibly representing a dwelling or ritual site. Three human figures, two with raised hands, alongside an animal and a house, suggesting a fertility ritual or worship event.

Four symbols, three with human figures; one shows a man sitting or lying on an animal, holding a plate in his left hand; some symbols are indecipherable. Western Stone Figures: Two standing men; another depicts a man sitting on an animal with a plate in his left hand. The paintings may represent magical or medicinal rituals, possibly linked to tribal traditions like "plathi" among hill communities. Some stones may serve as memorials for ritual practitioners. Many smaller Mesolithic drawings are faded, distorted, or unidentifiable. Dr. K. Rajan, who studied the archaeological elements of Mallachandram, did not specify the purpose of these drawings, leaving them open for further interpretation.

Mayiladumparai:

Mayiladumparai is a village located five kilometers from Chettipalayam on the road to

Mangalapatti in Krishnagiri taluk. This area is notable for its Stone Age symbols, with over 500 stone blocks identified. A natural hillock in the village forms a cave-like structure between rocky hills. The upper part of the cave is adorned with white-painted motifs depicting various themes, including human figures, animals, and symbols, some of which show humans sitting or standing

on animals or inside a house. Among the paintings, one distinct artwork portrays two individuals engaged in physical intercourse, believed to be the first such depiction discovered in Tamil Nadu. The artists who painted human body parts also illustrated this scene, which may have ritualistic significance. **(Fig.3)** The figures are depicted in a lying position with their feet touching. These human figures bear similarities to motifs found in the Bhimbetka cave paintings, making them significant among the rock art discovered in Tamil Nadu.

Pulikuttai:

In Pulikuttai, located in Krishnagiri district, rock paintings of human figures are present on the hills. **(Fig.4)** These paintings depict three individuals: one seated on an animal, while the other two stand holding each other's hands, likely representing a man and a woman, possibly a husband and wife.

Venkatapuram Kuntalakunta:

In Venkatapuram Kundalakunda, located in Krishnagiri district, rock paintings depicting human figures and symbols adorn the hills. These paintings are categorized into three types. The first, executed in red sandalwood pigment, portrays a dancing figure, likely a woman. The second type, rendered in white pigment, features a human figure. The third type consists of various symbols scattered across the surface. It appears that the female figure may have been part of a group effort to decorate and enhance the living space.

Erthangal:

There is a village called Erthangal in Gudiyatham Taluka in Vellore District in Tamil Nadu. This village is located at a distance of four km from Gudiyatham on West side. The exact place where the ancient rock paintings at a walking distance of 700 m from the bank of the Ganga Amman temple lake. There is a cave called Kurangu Theraigundu *(குரங்கு தேரரகுண்டு)* called by the local people, which is at the foot of the hill.

Discovered Rock Art

The area to explore consists of a bush track along the lake shore. There are total two rock shelter's here. The first shelter contains twenty paintings and some rock art. The second shelter's contains 100 depictions. Totally 120 depictions, symbols, ritual marks, war scenes, sign language mark, festival mark, ethnic mark, and some new depictions are also here. It is calculated and identified the Kurangu Theraigundu from the west direction. This place can be divided into three parts.

(Fig.5) A painting that has garnered attention depicts a tall man decapitating a small figure, raising questions about whether the figure is a child. If the figure is a male infant, it could suggest human sacrifice. If it is a female infant, it might indicate female infanticide. Given the elevated status of women in contemporary society, this raises doubts about whether such an act could have occurred.

Karkur:

Karkur is a small village in Pernamput Taluk at Vellore District. The name of the hill is locally known "Urkumi Hill" and especially as "Irular Gundu". Here thee is a rock shelter with rock art. The place where the researcher went for a field study was Karkur. The field study of the Irular Kundu (இருளர் குண்டு)was identified from the people of the area, and they helped by showing the exact location. Before that, there is a leopard movement there, so the people advised to be safe during the field visit. It was a bushy cave. This place may have been used by Paleolithic men to hang out, take a power nap, or mark an ethnic group's ceremony or place. It is known that Prehistoric man occupied and lived after the animals left the cave. It is possible to know that he may be worshiping an animal that he was afraid of drawing the work he did, marking the water levels, or the place where the ceremony took place. It looks almost perfect from an angle like this.

All the Depictions are white. Such Depictions are referred as Paleolithic paintings. These said to be around 2500 years old. There are **20** depictions on the roof of the rock and **8** depictions on the side rocks for a total of **28** depictions. Some Depictions it is mostly found decay. There is a scene with a man holding an arrow. A man's face is drawn as a triangle. It could be an animal that terrorized the area, or it could be a symbol of a domesticated animal, a cult female deity to be worshipped. It can also be a magical act of pretending. It is a scene that residents should beware of. That it looks like a line figure. There is a scene of a standing man holding something in his hand. That the figure is half human and half animal. The researcher's opinion that, it may be for magical practice or an image worshiped by humans. (Fig.6, 7)

Conclusion

The prehistoric rock art of North Arcot, spanning the modern districts of Vellore, Tiruvannamalai, Ranipet, Tirupathur, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Dharmapuri, and Krishnagiri, serves as a vibrant testament to the pivotal roles women played in ancient societies. Through a matrilineal lens, this study has illuminated the diverse depictions of female figures in the rock art of sites such as Keelvaalai, Mallapadi, Othikuppam, Mallachandiram, Mayiladumparai, Pulikuttai, Venkatapuram Kuntalakunta, Erthangal, and Karkur. These artworks, featuring women in ritual dances, leading horses, and engaging in symbolic activities, reflect their central contributions to social, spiritual, and economic spheres. The prominence of female figures in these visual narratives challenges conventional patriarchal interpretations of prehistoric societies, suggesting instead a matrilineal framework where women were key agents in food production, cultural rituals, and community organization.By employing feminist archaeology, this research underscores the matriarchal echoes embedded in North Arcot's rock art, revealing parallels with broader Dravidian cultural traditions and their enduring influence on Tamil heritage. The motifs of dancing women, potential goddess figures, and scenes of ritualistic significance point to women's roles as spiritual leaders and custodians of communal practices. Furthermore, the shift from hunting-based patrilineal systems to food-gathering and production-based matrilineal systems, as evidenced in the rock art, marks a transformative phase in the evolution of early South Indian societies. This study not only reinterprets the rock art of North Arcot but also contributes to a broader discourse on gender dynamics in prehistoric contexts. It invites further exploration into how these ancient visual narratives can inform contemporary understandings of Tamil identity and matrilineal legacies. By unveiling the lives of prehistoric women through their artistic representations, this research reaffirms their agency and legacy, offering a powerful counter-narrative to traditional assumptions about gender roles in antiquity. Future studies may build on these findings by integrating interdisciplinary approaches, such as advanced iconographic analysis and ethnographic comparisons, to deepen our understanding of women's contributions to the cultural and historical tapestry of South India.



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Sculpture of Poolanandisvarar Temple, Chinnamanur

P. Pitchaimani

Linga

Siva was and still is chiefly worshipped in the *linga* or phallic emblem, which is often a short cylindrical pillar with a rounded top, which is the relic of a cult that predates even Indian Civilization. In early Tamil literature, ritual posts that appear to have been phallic symbols were set up. Poolanandisvara temple, Kannisvaramudaiyar temple, Kalatisvara temple, Tirunilakantesvara temple and Maya pandesvara temple in Theni have *lingas* in *garbhagrihas.* Some *lingas* is naturally appeared called as *Suyambu*.

Siva is worshipped in the form of Phallus or *linga*. He is frequently portrayed with matted hair tied in a top knot, a jewel, a skull, a serpent, a crescent moon, and a thorn apple flower as ornaments. Another image shows the hair streaming and encircling the face like flames. On the forehead is an image of the third eye. The typical symbols used to represent Siva include an axe, an antelope, a trident, and a drum.[1]

In Chinnamanur the Siva *Sanctum* is facing to the east and is located to the west. It also has a square *Avadayar* (pedestal). The interior of sanctum is dedicated to Siva *linga.* Siva is generally worshipped in the form of *linga* fixed on a pedestal. In this temple *linga* is called as Poolanandisvarar.

Nataraja

The Nataraja image is the most potent and prestigious of all Hindu deities. The concept of the Siva's dance is very old; the representations of Siva's

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dance multiply only in the medieval era.[1] Various names for Lord Siva, the monarch of dancers, appear in early inscriptions as *Nataraja, Kuttadumdevan* and *Adavallan*. He is referred to by many other names, including *Dalvallan, Kuthaperuman, Ambalavanan, Sabapati, Natesa*, and *Niruthan.* The term Nataraja initially emerged in use in the 13th century AD and is still in use now. According to the *agamas*, Siva is depicted in seven different dancing posture. The first one is known as as *Anandathandava* or the joyful dance with his consort, is represented by the *Anandathandava Murti*.[1] The dance of Nataraja is believed to be symbolizing the actions of cosmic energy in the form of creating, preserving and destroying the visible universe.[1] At Thillai, it is thought that Siva performed *Anandatandava*. Nearly all of Tamil Nadu's Siva temples adopted this Nataraja form, and dedicated shrines were built for him there. The Siyamangalam cave temple in Tamil Nadu, built during the Pallava period, contains the first sculpture of Ananda Nataraja.[1]

The dance of Siva symbolises the five cosmic activities i.e. Panchakritayas srusti (*creation)*, sthithi (*maintenance*), samhara (*destruction*), throbhava (*embodiment*), and anugraha (*release*). It can be concluded from this that Nataraja is the supreme being in charge of the universe.[1] In his song Tirumandiram, the tenth book of the twelve divisions of the Saiva canonical collections, Tirumular had sung about Ananda Nataraja. The *ananda tandava* in *Devaram* also contains a lovely description of Appar, who lived in the 7th century CE. The image of *Atiravisi Atuvar*[1] is another form of Nataraja and is described by Ganachampantar in his *Tevaram.*

All the Saivite temples separate shrines for Nataraja. The sculptures of Nataraja and Sivakami are depicted at Chinnamanur, Melmangalam and Periyakulam on the northern side of the temple facing the south. In these sculptural representations, Nataraja is shown in dancing postions with his right leg placed on the *muyalaka* or *apasmara*. He has fire and kettledrum in the upper arms and his lower arms show *abhaya* and *gajahasta*. He wears *jatabhara*. Sivakami Amman is depicted on the left side of Nataraja with two arms holding flower in the right arm and her left arm is hanging down. At Periyakulam the image of *Vyagarapada* is placed on the right side of Nataraja facing the east.

Dakshinamurti

Twenty-five different sportive manifestations of Siva are mentioned in the *agamas*, most of which are frequently portrayed in south Indian temples. Dakshinamurti is one of the most significant sculptural piece. Generally, the image is depicted in niche in the south wall. Siva in the Dakshinamurti form is seen practicing yoga or reflecting on philosophical ideas.[1] The general stance of Dakshinamurti in the image depicts him with his left leg crossed so that it rests on the right tights and his right leg vertically bent at the knee and put on the body of the black demon *Apasmara*.[1] The left knee is bent and placed on the back of *Apasmara*, whose head is extended to the god's left in the form of a sitting position with the wiles spread and enlightenment. Siva appears as Dakshinamurti and is known as *Maha Yogi* (the Great Ascetic). He is seated in *yogasana*, or the traditional pose for *yogis*, beneath a banyan (*Alamaram*) tree that grows at the summit of a hill.[1] Dakshinamurti is referred to as *Aal Amar selvan* in the *Purananuru* Tamil Sangam classic, while *Aal Amar Selvan* is mentioned in the epic *Silappadikaram.* Since at least the 8th century CE, the subject was frequently depicted in iconography.[1] One of Siva's twenty-five athletic forms is Dakshinamurti. *Vega*, *Boga*, and *Yoga* are the three categories used to classify Siva's forms. The yoga component includes the Dakshinamuti form. *Gnana Dakshinamurti, Yoga Dakshinamurti, Vinadhara Dakshinamurti, Meda Dakshinamurti, Sakti Dakshinamurti, Vyakhyana Dakshinamurti*, and others are examples of distinct types of Dakshinamurti. Various sculptures from Tamil Nadu's Pallava period depict the Dakshinamurti theme. At Mahabalipuram, the southern side of the central panel of the Dharmaraja

Ratha has a figure called *Vinadhara Dakshinamurti* carved into it.[1] All of the Saiva temples in Theni have a Dakshinamurti image put on the South *devakoshta* of the *garbhagriha*. He was an expounder of the *Sastras.* In addition to being in *devakoshta*, Dakshinamurti's image can also be seen in the *gopuras*, *talas*, and *mandapas* temples in the region of Theni.

The Southern *devakoshta* of the all Siva temples such as Kalatisvara at Uthamapalayam, Balasubramanya at Periyakulam, Meenakshi Sundaresvara at Andipatti, Kasivisvanatha at Cumbum and Tirunilakantesvara at Upparpatti have the images of Dakshinamurti flanked by four sages two on either side. Almost in all the temples he is depicted sitting in *virasana*, placed his right leg on the *apasmara*, whereas he is shown in *utkatika* posture at the Poolanandisvara temple at Chinnamanur. He is flanked by four disciples or rishis on either side of him, which is absent in the temple at cumbum. The left lower hand holds a serpent while the left upper hand, carries *damaru* and *rosary*. The right lower hand shows the *chin mudra* (gnana mudra). His left lower hand holds *kamandalu* (*water pot*). He wears *jatabhara* and *patra kundala*.

Jvaradevamurti

Jvaradevamurti is portrayed in Saiva mythology as having destroyed the demon Bhasmasura. The *agamas* and *Isanagurudevapaddhati* describe the deity as having three legs, three heads, six hands, nine eyes, and an unhappy personality. The left legs is elevated in a way that suggests movement. The widely held belief is that Jvaradevamurti has the ability to treat fever.

An image of this form may be seen on the wall of the Siva temple's sanctum sanctorum, suggesting that the Chola monarchs paid attention to it.[1] The fever god Jvaradeva murti is personified. This deity's sculpture is seen in a very small number of temples. According to Saiva mythology, the following events caused lord Paramesvara to take on this form. Once, there was a fictitious combat between Siva and Vishnu. On the eve of the game, Siva supported and praised Vishnu as Krishna as he engaged in his final battle with Vanan, the son of Mahabali. Krishna shot an arrow at Siva during this pretend battle that caused him to become quite feverish. This unusual Siva figure with three heads, nine eyes, four limbs, and three legs is believed to be used to combat the fever.[1]

This rare sculpture is seen in the Periyakulam, Uthamapalayam and Chinnamanur temples. In the Balasubramanya Swami temple at Periyakulam the sculpture of Jvaradeva with his left leg being lifted is installed at the entrance of the shrine Rajendra Cholisvaramudaiya Nayanar. Jvaradevamurti is shown in art as having three legs, three hands, carrying fire, and adopting an *abhaya* pose with a sorrowful expression at the Poolanandisvara temple at Chinnamanur. In the Kalatisvara temple the stone image of Jvaradeva , with his right leg being lifted is found on the right side of the Kasi Visvanatha shrine. Jvaradeva continues to bless his devotees with his bountless saving grace and bliss.

Bhairava

Bhairava is the son of Siva. He is a very terrific and tremendous character.[1] Bhairava is usually represented as a nude youth and accompanied by a dog, is one of the terrible forms of Siva.[1] The image form of Bhairava is found at Dharmarajaratha of Mahabhalipuram and Kailasanatha temple of Kanchipuram. Under the Cholas, Bhairava images were developed in number.

Agamas recognize the sixty four different forms of Bhairava. Bhairava has eight main forms such as *Asitanga, Ruru, Canda, Krodha, Unmatta, Kapala*, *Bhisana* and *Samhara*, each of which is divided further into eight minor forms, making sixty four in all.[1] Those headed by *Asitanga* should be golden coloured with good physique and carry a trident, drum, noose and sword. Those presided over by *Ruru* are pure white, wear ornaments set with rubies, and carry a rosary, goad, manuscript and vina. *Canda's* group is blue and carries fire, spear, club and a bowl-shaped vessel.

Krodha's group are smoke coloured and carry a short and a long sword, shield and axe. *Unmatta's* are white and handsome and carry a kunda, shield, club and a short javelin. *Kapala's* and *Samhara's* groups are red, and the colour of lightning, respectively.[1] In all Saiva temples of Theni is shown the sculpture of Bhairava. Stone images of Bhairava are depicted in the north eastern corners of the temple. The Bhairava has four hands, each holding *damaru* and *pasa* in the backhands while a *sula* and a *kapala* are in the front hands. The hairs are adorned as *jvalakesa* by a betel leaf shaped nimbus of flames with a cranium and a twisting serpent at its centre. The heads have opened round eyes, wide nostrils, thick eyebrows and protruding teeth. They have dangling *makarakundala* and have *patrakundala* attached to the right ear lobes and the left shoulder, necklaces around the neck, *udarabandha* across the stomach. The two serpents with their twisted bodies, rest around his waist. The long ornamental skull and bone garland hang down up to the knees. He stands in front of their vehicle dog facing right with its tail curled up as usual. He is different from Bikshatanamurti in that he does not wear sandals *padaraksha*.[1] In all the Saiva temples having the Bhairava shrine in the north-eastern side of the temples. On the stylistic ground, all the images can be endorsed to the Later Pandya period.

Conclusion

The foregoing study unravels Saivite sculpture belonged Later Pandya period. These sculptures Aesthetically depicted and installed in the respective places of the temple according to the *agamas*. The form and meaning of the sculpture attract the devotees and this one of the significant Saivite temple site in Theni district.

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Archaeological Investigations in Kanniyakumari Under the State of Travancore

Vibin G

Archaeological Investigation in Southern Travancore (Kanniyakumari)

In 1861, the British Government established the Archaeological Survey of India, led by A. Cunningham. It was followed in the state of Travancore; as a result, in 1896 (1071 M.E.), the Travancore Archaeological Department was made under the supervision of His Highness the Maha Raja Moolam Thirunal (1885-1924)[3]. The department appointed Archaeological Field Assistants who conducted explorations throughout the Travancore princely state, leading to the discovery of numerous inscriptions and copper plates. Each year, these findings were published in the Travancore Administrative Reports. In 1908, Sri T. A. Gopinatha Row was appointed as the first Superintendent Archaeologist for Travancore (1908-18). Under his direction, valuable publications such as the "Travancore Archaeological Series" were published annually, detailing the department's contributions. In 1913-17, he published the two volumes of "The Elements of Hindu Iconography," a monumental work[4]. After his death, Mr. K. V. Subramonia Iyer took over and continued Gopinatha Row's work[5].

In 1929, the department prepared a report on the Vattakkotta Fort and Leepuram Port. Among the notable works of this period are "The Travancore State Manual," published by Nagam Aiya in three volumes in 1906, and T.K. Velupillai, who published four volumes in 1940. To safeguard ancient monuments and items of historical, archaeological, or artistic significance, the "Travancore Ancient Monuments Preservation Regulation" was enacted in 1936. This law empowered the government to declare certain monuments as protected and to acquire them as necessary for their maintenance and care. It also regulated the trade of antiquities, protecting sculptures, carvings, images, bas-reliefs, inscriptions, and similar objects, while supporting archaeological excavations. The regulation was based on the British Indian Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904[6].

Explorations Work

In 1896, the Travancore Archaeological Department initiated an archaeological field project, during which 127 inscriptions were collected by a field assistant. Fieldwork was conducted in the Taluks of Agastisvaram, Tovalai, Eraniel, and Kalkulam. From 1896 to 1898, a total of 216 inscriptions were gathered, of which 126 were deciphered[7].During the 1898-1899 period, 49 additional inscriptions were collected, along with copies of 7 copper plates, 1 Pattayom, and 52 edicts. Of these inscriptions, 15 were sourced from Cape Comorin, 7 from Krishnankovil, and 16 from various locations in Tovala and Agastisvaram. By the end of the year, 40 of the 47 inscriptions had been deciphered[8].From 1899 to 1900, a field assistant surveyed the Eraniel and Agastisvaram taluks, collecting 79 inscriptions, 2 copper plates, 37 edicts, and a chronicle of Cape Comorin. Out of these, 63 inscriptions were deciphered[9].

In 1900-1901, the survey of Thovalai was completed, covering 185 villages and producing facsimiles of 100 inscriptions, with 25 being deciphered by the field assistant[10]. During the 1901-1902 period, 61 villages were surveyed, resulting in the collection of 20 inscriptions. The surveys for the Taluks of Kalkulam and Vilavancode were completed, with 22 inscriptions and 7 copper plates deciphered[11].In 1905-1906, a field assistant deciphered an ancient Pallava inscription at Thiruvidaikkod and five others at the rock-cut cave temple in Thirunanthikara[12].From 1916 to 1917, the Superintendent of Archaeology visited 29 sites,

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including 3 in Padmanabhapuram, and copied 109 inscriptions that year[13]. In 1917 to 1918, the Superintendent of Archaeology visited 47 locations, of which 28 were in Padmanabhapuram, where 80 inscriptions were copied[14]. From 1918 to 1919, the Superintendent of Archaeology visited 12 locations, including 2 in Padmanabhapuram[15].

During the 1921 to 1922 period, the Superintendent of Archaeology visited 55 sites, of which 22 were in the Padmanabhapuram division, where 137 inscriptions were copied, along with the securing of 3 copper plates[16].In 1930-1931, two Tamil inscriptions from Kollam 604 M.E. (1426 C.E.) were copied from a rock located south of the Agastisvaram temple[17].In 1934-1935, ancient mural paintings were discovered on the topmost floor of the three-storied palace at Padmanabhapuram, which was the former capital of the state[18].In 1936-1937, the year saw the discovery of twelve new lithic records and several significant ancient artworks that had not previously come to light. Four of the inscriptions were found in Agastisvaram, a village near Cape Comorin, dating back to the 11th century C.E. The discoveries included six images of Hindu deities, recovered from Tiruvithamcode[19].In 1937, 17 inscriptions and unique ancient artworks were uncovered. Some of these lithic records date back to the Kulottunga Choladeva period from Cape Comorin. One inscription was found on a standing stone at Edalakudi, while another was inscribed on a stone-top at Padmanabhapuram. Among the artworks discovered was a seated Jaina image from the 9th century C.E., sourced from Chitharal in South Travancore[20].In 1938, 18 inscriptions were collected and deciphered; one of these records was inscribed on four-faced pillars located in a private compound near Thuckalai. These pillars are exquisite examples of mural art from Travancore, dating from the 15th to the 18th century C.E. They were found in the Adikesavaperumal temple at Thiruvattar[21].In 1939, 15 inscriptions were copied and deciphered; they are primarily found on the pillars of temples or stone mandapas, with 9 located in the Kalkulam taluk[22].In 1940, 19 previously unnoticed inscriptions were copied and deciphered, including 9 from Kalkulam[23].

Archaeological Excavations

In 1921, the significant discovery of the Indus Valley Civilization, along with the excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, drawn public attention. This discovery revolutionized ideas not only in the region itself but also throughout India. Consequently, in 1934, the first major excavation work in Kerala was conducted at Trikkakara, a village located about threekm from Edapalli, and the trial diggings were conducted at four different locations[24], during the period His Highness the Maha Raja Chithira Thirunal (1931-1949)

The following year, in 1935, the first archaeological excavation in the Kanniyakumari District took place at the Old Guhanathaswami Temple in Cape Comorin. During this excavation, 34 stone slabs, one parapet stone with inscriptions, a bas-relief featuring exquisite stone sculptures, and a stone image of Kalabhairava were discovered[25].In 1936, trial diggings at Vellimalai, near Eraniel, revealed the presence of 20 sepulchral urns, with two of them being unearthed. Inside one of these urns, two iron axes were found, indicating that they date back to the Iron Age[26].

In 1937, a trial excavation at Padmanabhapuram uncovered five large stone tubs, one stone cot, and thirteen grinding stones[27].In 1938, excavation work took place in the village of Karuppukottai, near Nagercoil. This excavation resulted in the retrieval of three stone images and an inscriptional stone. One side of the inscription features figures of a rod and ring, while the other side indicates that it is a boundary stone for a paddy field bestowed upon the Bhattarkals of Agastiswaram[28].

Conservation work and others

In 1935, renovation work began on the old palace at Padmanabhapuram, which is rich in historical and architectural significance. The palace was repaired, and efforts to preserve the murals commenced, showcasing some fine examples of mural painting.In 1936, plans were proposed to establish a museum of

antiquities at the ancient palace to house relics of archaeological, historical, and artistic significance.

By 1937, a museum of antiquities was organized at Padmanabhapuram Palace for the preservation and exhibition of various relics of antiquity that were being neglected throughout the state.In 1939, measures were implemented for the repair and maintenance of the ancient forts, including Vattakotta, Udayagiri, Padmanabhapuram, and other forts within the state.By 1943, the Museum of Antiquities at Padmanabhapuram was officially made permanent[29].

Conclusion

The Kanniyakumari district is a treasure trove of historical and archaeological significance, weaving a rich tapestry of the past that beckons historians and enthusiasts alike. During the rule under the State of Travancore, this captivating district witnessed an impressive more thanfour archaeological excavations, unveiling layers of its storied history and yielding fascinating discoveries. Despite the fervor of exploration during that time, the post-independence period has seen a shift, with research primarily propelled by dedicated individual scholars rather than large-scale government initiatives.

To date, the district has not experienced any major excavations or systematic explorations backed by governmental resources. However, the future holds potential for transformative research endeavours, poised to unlock the hidden narratives embedded within the countless archaeological relics that still lie beneath the surface.

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Kodumanal Excavations: A Window into Megalithic and Early Historic Tamil Nadu

S. Srinithi, MA

Introduction

The archaeologist Rajan has noted that the artefacts found in Kodumanal revealed that the period of the site was between 480 BCE to 1st century BCE. The excavations conducted by the Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department shed light on the two cultural periods such as Megalithic and Early Historic period.[1] Thereby, the desolate land has been transformed into an archaeological site with rich ancient culture. The unique feature of this site was the proximity between the habitation site and burial site, whereas in other sites the distance between the two was usually one or two kilometers. The findings of Ancient Roman coins at Kodumanal confirmed the vibrant trade contact with the Roman Empire.

Objectives

- To trace the historical background and significance of Kodumanal site during ancient times.
- To study the findings and artefacts recovered from Kodumanal.
- To analyze the industrial advancement of Kodumanal and its global trade contacts.
- To comprehend the unearthed potsherds with Tamil-Brahmi letters and Graffiti marks

Methodology

This study was based on both Primary and Secondary sources. The Primary sources consists of Archaeological Reports and Archival materials. The Secondary sources consists of Books, Journals, Newspapers, and Official websites.

Kodumanal & Its Location

The small village of Kodumanal lies on the northern bank of the Noyyal river, one among the tributaries of Kaveri river. It is located about 20 kilometres west of Chennimalai region in Perundurai taluk of Erode district, Tamil Nadu.



Source: https://doi.org/10.64672/IJIFR/25.09.13.01.003

The Kodumanal site is located on the old trade route which connected the Chera capital Vanji (Karur) on the east and the famous seaport Musiri on the west. This site was notable for its trade in precious stones such as carnelian, lapis lazuli, quartz, garnet and sapphire. The Sangam Literature Patirruppattu referred this village as *Kodumanam* and this village was highly glorified for its valued semi-precious stone ornaments.[1]

This habitation-cum-burial site was first identified by the Archaeologist V.N. Srinivasa Desikan in 1961, who was an officer of the Archaeological Survey of India. From the year 1985, several excavations were led by the Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department and the Department of Archaeology and Epigraphy, Tamil University.[1] The excavations provided comprehensive data on the nature of settlement, gemstone industry, type of burials, method of iron and steel production, the usage of graffiti marks and Tamil-Brahmi characters,

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weaving and shell industry, punch-marked coins and the extend of internal and external trade.

Key Findings

A Step Well was identified in the excavation, which was built of stone materials comprised of Granite, fine bricks and Limestone. One gold ring made out of copper wire concealed with gold foil was unearthed from a burial site. The beads made up of semi-precious stones and rock crystal, potsherds with Tamil-Brahmi letters and graffiti marks, iron smelting furnace terracotta, glass objects and storage pits were excavated from this site. Among these findings, Potsherds were more in number. The type of pottery recovered includes Red ware, Red slipped ware, Black and red ware and Russet coated ware. These potteries were mostly made of well-levigated clay with a highly polished and burnished surface.

Major Industries in Kodumanal



Remains of an iron smelting furnace at the Kodumanal site

Source: https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c62e36jm4jro

It was observed that magnetic iron ore was available around chennimalai hills. The artisans were expert in Copper and Iron smelting furnace, Gemstone industry and weaving industry. The occurrence of a large number of conches, cut-pieces of conches, sawed conches and shell bangles suggest that the shell industry also flourished at Kodumanal. These industries were found on the south side of the habitation mound. The occurrence of quite a number of intact terracotta spindle whorls pierced at the centre by means of an iron rod is clearly suggestive of cotton processing.[1] To strengthen this fact, a remarkably well preserved piece of woven cotton was recovered from the site.

Bead Making Industry



Source: Suresh K, *Kodumanal excavations (2019-2021)*, www.researchgate.net

Beads were a key element of adornment in early Tamilakam, fashioned from a wide variety of stones and shells. Sangam texts frequently describe ornaments, with Pathupattu noting the natural availability of sapphire in Kongu Nadu. Literary sources list gemstones such as *Palinku*(marble), *Manikkam*(ruby), *Pavalam*(coral), *Karumainiramani*(black bead), *Mani Patikkappetra Motiram*(bead embedded ring), and *Muthu*(pearl). During ancient times, the forehead was referred to as "*Mudhal*", and the people who wore ornaments on their forehead were called "*Nudhalani*". From common people to affluent people, including kings and queens habitually wearing ornaments on their forehead, arms, hands, wrists, and legs are identified in different terms in recent research as *toti, valai, katakam and Kaivanti*.

The famous hillocks of Perumalmalai and Sivanmalai with beryl and sapphire stones lies about 15 km south and southeast of Kodumanal.[1] A quartz-bearing site Vengamedu (venga means quartz and medu means mound) and Arasampalayam lies 5 km north and south of Kodumanal. The absence of raw materials, carnelian and lapis-lazuli in this region suggests that carnelian might have been imported from Maharashtra and Gujarat and Lapis Lazuli from Afghanistan.[1]

The beads in different manufacturing stages, finished and semi-finished, drilled and undrilled,

polished and unpolished were unearthed along with the raw material. The discarded chips, grooved stone slab and an interesting stone slab with few grooved beads intact clearly demonstrate that these were manufactured locally at Kodumanal. Hence Kodumanal was rightly called as "Hub for Bead manufacturing" and its exports reached far and wide across the globe.[1]

WOOTZ STEEL

The book named Periplus of the Erythraean Sea mentioned the "*Ferrum-Indicum*"(wootz steel) as a prestigious steel, imported from the East.[1] By the excavations at Kodumanal, revealed the fact that this site acted as one among the prime supplier of high quality wootz steel, (which was produced when iron and carbon rich materials are heated in clay crucibles for certain periods in order to allow the iron to absorb required carbon to become a liquid and finally the resultant product was cooled and exported). The Wootz steel from Kodumanal was well-known for its quality and sharpness, especially during the Chera, Chola and Pandya empires.[1] This steel played a pivotal role in making weapons like the Damascus sword and this technological innovation had a lasting impact on metallurgy, thus influencing sword production globally.

Metal Production



Source: Suresh K, *Kodumanal excavations (2019-2021)*, www.researchgate.net

The craft production in metals were of two major kinds, one in iron and the other in copper or bronze. Copper manufacturing was done on the northern part of the site and Iron working was concentrated in the southern part of the site.[1] This may be partly due to the prevailing winds and to situate production areas away from the settlement. Terracotta objects like Hopscotches, bone objects like bone points, horns, weighing measurements, glass objects, iron objects such as chisel, nail, knife, hook, ring etc, copper objects such as bead, bangle, antimony and pendents, coins like silver and copper coin were found in this site.

Burial Complex



Source: Suresh K, *Kodumanal excavations (2019-2021)*, www.researchgate.net

The burial complex unearthed at Kodumanal consists of more than two hundred burials scattered over an area of hundred acres on the eastern and northeast sides of the habitation.[1] Two kinds of megalithic cairn circles with either a single or double circle were noticed. All the cairn circles often had a cist completely embedded into the soil. There were totally three kinds of cists. The first one had a simple cist with passage on the east side. The second type had a transeptd cist consists of either double or triple chambers and all these chambers were interconnected by portholes. The third type had a main transepted cist flanked by two subsidiary cists. All these three cists met with a common passage at the front and cists were oriented in east-west direction. The trapeze shaped porthole was spotted in all three kinds of cists.

Grave Goods



Source: Suresh K, *Kodumanal excavations (2019-2021)*, www.researchgate.net

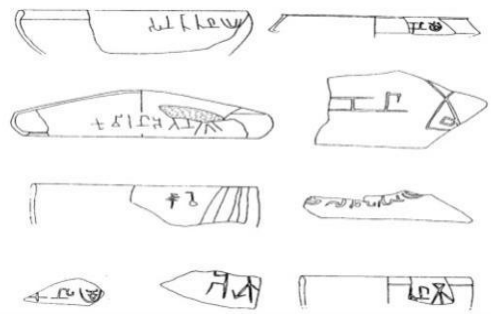
The Ancient Tamil people believed that the grave goods would equip the individual for afterlife. The Grave goods were placed either inside the cist and around the cist or in the gap between the cist and the inner most circle of the burial complex. Chronologically, the offerings were made inside the cist in the earlier Megalithic period, while in later period, offerings were placed outside the cist.[1] Almost all the grave goods such as pottery, beads, swords and iron objects were specially made for the funeral. Usually, all the burials had carnelian beads and a few beads of banded agate counting from a few to thousands. More than 2000 carnelian beads were recovered from a single burial. Bowls, swords, pots in black and red ware, potsherds with graffiti marks, rings, ring stands, black polished ware, copper toddy filter, legged jar, double edged axe, red slipped ware and red ware were found in both the chambers and passage of burial site.

Copper objects like tiger figurine inland with alternating triangular pieces of carnelian and sapphire, strainer, spoon, beads, bangles and so on were recovered from the burial complex. Iron objects were placed as an offerings in the cist, passage and outside the cist of burials. The majority of the iron objects in the burial complex were long and short swords, leaf-shaped arrow heads, bow, arrow heads of barbed and tanged variety and so on.[1]

Habitation-Cum-Burial Site

The pottery recovered from the habitation site were Russet coated ware, while the pottery found in burial site consisted of black and red ware, red ware and black slipped ware. Another captivating observation was that, Kodumanal was a centre of quartz bead production but no burial has yielded a quartz bead.[1] Beads of sapphire, beryl, agate, carnelian, amethyst, lapis-lazuli, jasper, garnet, soapstone and quartz were unearthed from the habitation whereas beads of carnelian particularly the etched variety and agate were restricted to burials.

Tamil-Brahmi Letter & Graffiti Marks



Source: Academia.eduhttps://share.google/t7yu8Uk6WY4wMeEox

Totally, there were more than 1500 Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds were recovered from the archaeological sites in Tamil Nadu, of which more than 1000 Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds were found in Kodumanal.[1] These potsherds were inscribed mainly of hundreds of personal names such as varuni, atan, kannan atan, visakan, campan sumanan, antuvan atan, tissan, periyan cattan, pannan, satantaiantavan, atintai, campan, silikan, uranan etc. The more common graffiti marks are sun, swastika, star, ladder, nandipada, fish, bow and arrow, wheel, cart, etc.[1] Few graffiti marks were found engraved at the end portion of the Damili inscription incised on the potsherd. Though the exact connotation of these symbols, individually or in compound form, cannot be easily guessed at but the close observation of these symbols, their places of occurrence, frequency and position clearly demonstrate that they were used to convey a certain message either pictographically or ideographically.

Conclusion

The objects and evidences recovered during the excavations from the archaeological site of Kodumanal revealed its rich ancient history. Beads of carnelian,

quartz, and agate not only enriched the economy but also symbolized identity and status in Tamil society. The large number of inscribed potsherds clearly suggested that Tamil Nadu was so high in literacy rate and the Tamil people were aware of the script in 6th century BCE itself.[1] The habitation and burial activities of this site provided a significant insight into the social and cultural life of the people lived there at the time.

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The Iconography of Kampaharesvara Temple at Thirubuvanam: Fusion of Myth, History and Culture - A Study

Dr. V. Purushothaman

Chola Architecture style

The major temple builders and forerunners of the religious awakening in the south were the Chola monarchs. Since the Chola power was revived under Vijayalaya in c. A.D. 850, countless temples have been constructed, but the majority are small in size. The Nagesvara temple in Kumbakonam, the Vijayalayacholisvaram in Narttamalai, the small Siva temples in Visalur, Tiruppur, and Kaliyapatti, the Sundaresvara temple in Tirukkattalai, the Agastyesvara temple in Panangudi, the Mahadeva temple in Tiruchchendurai, the Koranganatha temple in Srinivasanallur, the Muvarkovil at Kodumbalur, the Pasupati kovil at Pulla-mangai, the twin temples in Paluvur, and many more are unquestionably works of charming simplicity[2]. Numerous shrines of modest size that embodied the elegance and vibrancy of Chola art and architecture were also built during the Great Temples period. It is clear that epical compositions, represented by the Great Temples, are an uncommon occurrence. As already said, just four Chola monarchs out of a galaxy embarked on such a magnificent endeavour.

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Temple Architectureof Kampaharesvara,

To the east is the temple complex. There are two and two gopurams. The first enclosure has the Devi, Chandesvara, and Sarabhamurti temples as well as the centre shrine. All of the secondary shrines are located on the enclosure's north side. The vasanta (alankara) mandapa, nandi-mandapa, balipitham, and flag staff are located between the inner and outer (second) walls. An aniarala with flights of stairs on either side of the mahamandapa, a mukhamandapa, a portico fashioned like a chariot, a little narrower ardhamandapa, and a square garbhagrika (which is 3.81 meters in the interior and 18.29 meters in the outside) make up the central shrine[3]. Here is the shrine of Somaskanda. Although the garbhagrika's wails are thick, they are not sandhara-style like those of the Tanjavur temple. Over the sanctuary, the srivimam consists of a strong six-tala superstructure. The Srivimana's total height is 126 feet (38.40 meters), while its superstructure is 91 feet (27.70 meters).

Sculptural and Iconography

Considering the size of the structure, the Kampaharesvara's sculpture is neither particularly extensive nor is it the creation of any studio renowned for its sophisticated taste and innovative concepts. Now, everything is standardised, even architecture and sculpture. Even the dancing scenes don't captivate viewers; all of the themes of the bas-reliefs harp on well-known topics and incidents. Due in large part to the positional disadvantage, the majority of the scenes—especially the narrations—are limited to the narrow strip that represents the kantha of the upapitha, which means they lack any inherent attraction[4].

However, the relatively audacious execution of the deva-koshtha figures is evocative of the Chola heritage. Decadence had already taken hold, and iconometry was valued more highly than creative expression and form dynamism. Although the scenes chosen for the narration are renowned for their dramatic action and widespread appeal, they are not executed with realistic form or sophisticated emotion[5]. However, these sculptural elements might be (i) small panels and reliefs, or (ii) spherical pictures. The former category may be further separated into four categories: (a) scenes from the Ramayana; (b) scenes from mythology; (c) animal conflicts; and (d) Bharatanatyam dance sequences. Let's start with the Ramayana scenes, which are limited to the southern basement's central section.

Scenes from the Ramayana

Panchavati Scene:

From the Panchavati scene to Kusa and Lava reading the epic in front of a vast crowd during the Asvamedha sacrifice, the Ramayana is portrayed in a sequence of panels that depict significant moments from the epic. While some panels are difficult to recognise, the majority of them clearly illustrate the major themes. The Somaskanda shrine's base, which most likely underwent subsequent restorations, is where the scenes are mostly located[6].

Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana are shown in the Panchavati scene standing on a platform, most likely within a hut. This is followed by the four-panel Surpanakha episode. In these, Surpanakha seduces Rama by portraying her as a lovely woman. She is more regularly portrayed as beautiful in Kamban's rendition, which differs from this representation. At the beginning, Surpanakha is seen attempting to woo Rama, but she seems unimpressed. The following panel shows Surpanakha armed and engaged in combat with Lakshmana, who is seen twice. Later, Surpanakha is disfigured by Lakshmana, who, at Rama's command, chops off her nose and ears as she transforms back into her original rakshasi form. Notably, her breasts are unaltered, in contrast to Kamban's story. On Surpanakha's shoulder, Lakshmana appears practically infantile, which is an intriguing feature of the representation[7].

Sita's Abduction

Ten panels depict Sita's kidnapping by Ravana as a result of the disfigurement tragedy. In the first, Rama is urged to capture a golden deer by Sita. When Rama fires at the deer, it turns out to be Maricha. Meanwhile, Ravana and his attendants come on a chariot, which might be a reference to the celestial chariot, or pushpaka-vimana. Ravana, dressed as a sage, approaches Sita after Lakshmana leaves. The actual

kidnapping moment isn't portrayed, but Jatayu, the bird prince, tries to step in as Sita sits melancholy on a chariot between Ravana and the charioteer[8]. As the chariot passes, Jatayu sustains injuries in spite of his valour. While the charioteer dies in other versions, he lives in this one. Interestingly, in contrast to Valmiki's account, Ravana is not seen hugging Sita.

Lanka Scenes

After that, the narrative shifts to Lanka, represented by a building, where Trijata consoles Sita in the Asokavana. Tara expresses sorrow at her husband's murder at Rama's hands as the action moves to Rishyamukha, where Rama and Lakshmana are shown forming an alliance with Sugriva.

Hanuman's Role

The Role of Hanuman After destroying the city, Hanuman returns to Lanka and meets Sita, presenting her with Rama's signet ring. At first reluctant, Sita relaxes as Hanuman prepares to accompany her with the symbol, which stands for hope and faith.

Battle and Victory

The fight for Sita's rescue between Rama and Ravana follows, with Ravana battling Rama with ten heads and twenty hands. Mando-dari, Rama's wife, is seen in sadness after he kills Ravana. Rama and Vibhishana, who go on to become the rulers of Lanka, are shown in the scenario that follows. Some of the panels that follow are more difficult to understand. One of them shows Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana worshipping Shiva, which may indicate that they returned from Lanka after their triumph. This image serves more as a moral lesson than as a dramatic moment[9].

Later events, perhaps from the Uttara-kanda, depict Lakshmana and Sumantra abandoning Sita in Valmiki's hermitage, where she gives birth to Kusa and Lava. The last panels show the twins reading the Ramayana in front of Valmiki, with Rama listening intently as part of a larger group, perhaps including Sita[10].

Sarabha sculpture

The picture of Sarabha is the most significant of all the temple's depictions, both iconographically and historically. Sarabha is a legendary animal created as a counterpoint to the Vaishnava concept of Narasimha. The Sarabhesamurti of Siva is mentioned in several writings, including the Kamikagama, Sritatvanidhi, Uttarakaraṇayama, and others. Gopinatha Rao has gathered important information from many sources of literature and detailed the bronze image from the Kampaharesvara temple in Tribhuvanam. According to his description, the sculpture depicts Sarabha as having six legs, a lion's body and face, a tail, and four human arms. The parasu is in the right upper hand, the pasa is in the lower right, the mriga is in the upper left, and the agni is in the lower left. Sarabhamurti's front leg has pinioned Nrisimha, who is using his eight arms to struggle against his opponent. However, the writings do not describe Sarabha's iconography in the same way. This is a rare mythological representation unique to this temple[11].

Given that the deity's image has been observed at both Tribhuvanam and Darasuram, the Sarabha cult may have gained popularity in the latter Chola period. This idea first appeared at the same time as Saivism rose to prominence during the Chola dynasty. Perhaps the concept of Sarabhamurti reflects the Saivas' resolve to oppose Vaishnavism's growing power following the arrival of Ramanuja. Its legendary origins also make it clear.

Other styles lack the aggressive attitude of Saivism, which is seen in Sarabha's imagery. In actuality, this temple does not have any other Siva samharamurti. However, because the tale surrounding the Lingodbhavamurti of Siva indicates sectarian prejudice, the Lingodbhavamurti, which is enshrined in the western deva-koshthas, was produced to declare the glories of Saivism[12]. Like the well-known Gudimallam linga near Renigunta, Andhra Pradesh, it essentially combines the human and iconic forms. In most cases, the figure of Siva emerges from the centre of the column. Siva is depicted with four hands in the Tribhuvanam temple image; two of them hold parasu and black buck, while the other is in the abhaya-mudra, and the other rests on the hip (katyavalambita). In contrast to the Agamas' recommendations, it provides a nearly complete view of Siva. A garland of flowers is

displayed above the phallus, and in the upper left is the swan, Brahma's vehicle. At the bottom, the Varaha-form of Vishnu is shown digging a hole in the ground. The anthropomorphic figure of Siva is surrounded by an oval depression with flames that have been depicted in a highly stylised manner[13].

Dakshiṇamurti is the other form of Siva, which is unquestionably a saumya form and can be seen in all Saiva or Vaishnava temples. It depicts the deity as the master of a variety of skills, including dance, yoga practice, and playing various musical instruments. For this depiction, the southern deva-koshtha is always used, usually with four hands. The general type and the one in the Tribhuvanam temple are the same. While one of its legs rests on the thigh, the other hangs down and touches the Apsmarapurusha, which represents ignorance. Characteristics in three hands are fire, serpent, and book; the fourth is in the chin mudra.

Typically, a Chola temple's northern deva-koshtha is designated for a Brahma with four heads, three of which are visible. The artwork depicts a standing figure with four arms, with each head donning a jata-makuta. Akshamala in the rear right, kamandala in the back left, front right in the abhaya, and front left in the katyavalambita-hasta are all unusual hand and hand stance characteristics. Although it looks like it was originally from a lesser temple, this picture is the outstanding example of sculpture from the Kampaharesvara temple.

The portrayal of Durga in a northern deva-koshtha is the most significant of the temple's Devi representations. She holds a sword, sankha, chakra, and shield in her six hands while standing in abhanga atop Mahisha's head. Two of her hands are in katyavalambita, and one is in abhaya. Though the iconography is well supported by literary sources, images of Durga with six hands are fairly rare. There is seldom any clear theological doctrine or attitude shown in any of these deities[14].

Other Carvings

The spherical sculptures that embellish the four walls' deva-koshthas have already been described. Nonetheless, it is suggested that some of their artistic and iconographic qualities be included here for the purpose of completeness. It is difficult to find any iconographic oddities in the images found in the sanctum's deva-koshthas. A smaller figure from another temple has taken the position of the sitting Dakshiṇamurti on the south, Lingodhbava on the west, and Brahma on the north. Ganesa on the south and the six-armed Durga (pl. VIII) on the north, standing atop Mahisha's severed skull, may be seen in the ardha-mandapa's niches. On the eastern side of the actual shrine, two deva-koshthas are intended for soldiers brandishing swords and shields (pl. VI). They are graceful, yet their look lacks the energy that a fighter should possess. Ichchha-Sakti, Kriya-Sakti, and Jnana-Sakti are shown in the niches of the secondary Devi temple to the north. Despite their flawless dimensions, none of these sculptures exudes vitality or confidence. Furthermore, they lack the sophisticated expression that distinguishes a genuine piece of art[15].

It has twelve spokes representing the twelve months of the year and twelve figures of Surya (Dvadasaditya). Bracket figures surrounding the chariot-shaped mandapa are also acceptable. A lovely depiction of dohada or sala-bhanjika, currently housed in the cloister, was likely a bracket figure. The thin and supple figure grabs a limb from the flowering sala tree as her right foot brushes its trunk. Despite this, it must be noted that sculptural art is secondary to the temple's architectural grandeur[16]. The majority of the art items are outstanding works of skill, although their creative sense may not be particularly good.

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The Uvari Suyambulinga Swamy Temple in Tisaiyanvilai Taluk - A Historical Perspective

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A vessel descends and shatters upon being obstructed by a kadambakodi

This village, which is rich in natural resources, is divided into two parts, the lower village and the upper village, with only a single-track path connecting the two. Here, a woman from the pastoral clan would come along this route every day to do her business. She used to transport her milk and pure yogurt along this route every day. Similarly, although many women carry it, one woman in particular's pot gets knocked over and breaks. This causes all the milk and yogurt she carries to go to waste. Seeing this, she goes home and tells her husband.

In A Blaze of Fury, The Husband Arrives At The Scene

When the husband, who heard all about this incident, leaves the house in anger, he takes a shovel and a sickle with him, and angrily returns to the place, taking his wife with him. When the husband angrily asked where that place was, the wife replied, "This is where it is." The husband pushed the soil away with the shovel he had brought and began to cut the roots of the Kadambakodi instead of cutting it. He began to cut the kodi's roots, thinking that if he cut it down, it would grow back. Shortly after they started cutting, blood began to spurt out. Seeing this, the two of them ran into the village in fear and gathered all the villagers to the spot[2]

What They Did to Stop The Bleeding From The Kadambakkodi

All the people of the village came to that place, then an elder among them, Sami Arul, came and said, "Cut down the tree and rub it with it, and the bleeding will stop immediately." The people there said, "This is a beach place." The elder asked how to get sandalwood, "Go to this place." He said that there is a sandalwood tree there. They immediately went and cut the branch and applied it to the Kadambakodi. The blood stopped

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and immediately Lord Shiva appeared from under the Kadanbakodi in the form of a SuyambuLinga. The elder who gave the blessing at that time said that God himself dedicated him to that temple as a Dharmakartha, and he continues to do the work of this temple. That means that to this day, his family continues to carry out the work of this temple.

Ceremony And Worship Method Held in The Temple

Special monthly puja and Swami VidhiUla are held at the Uvari suyambulinga Swamy Temple on the last Friday of every Tamil month. On the Vaikasi Visakha festival held in the month of Vaikasi, lakhs of devotees come and stay, visit the Suyambhunatha temple, participate in the night procession of the Swami, and then leave for their homes. After first taking a dip in the holy Uvarik Sea, the devotees come to the nearby Theppakulam and take a dip. After taking a dip in the nearby well, they circumambulate the Kanni Vinayakar and offer their prayers.3

One should circumambulate the temple of the great Swami Uvari SuyambuLinga Linga and worship it, wear clean, dry clothes, and then enter the temple. One should approach the kodimaram in the outer courtyard and circumambulate the sanctum sanctorum of the temple three times. Thereafter, one should prostrate oneself in front of the kodi tree from the south to the north and bow down. Women are required to perform Ashtanga Namaskar and a special ritual of worship at this temple is to observe a 41-day fast and carry soil from the beach around the temple to worship the deity.

Temple Structure And Expansion Works in The Early Period

Following the manifestation of Lord Shiva in the form of a linga as a self contained linga, the people immediately decided to build a stone shed here and worship there, and so they built it. One day, a heavy storm accompanied by rain occurred. Many houses in Uvari village were damaged by the wind. Seeing this, the people came to see the temple as soon as the rain started to subside. But the temple did not suffer even a little damage due to rain or wind, and then they decided to build a temple. As a result, the temple was built with the help of sages to make efforts for the cause. The temple's sanctum was first built when Balavesamuthu Nadar was the Dharmakatha. Later, the temple's vimana was constructed when Karuthakannu Nadar was the Dharmakartha.[4]

The foundation stone for the expansion of the temple was laid by the Honorable Speaker Mr. M. Appavu M.L.A during the Thaipusam festival chariot procession held on Thursday, 25.1.2019 at 7:30 am. A special feature of this temple is a 108-foot-high, 9-tiered tower made of black stone, which is being constructed behind the Thanjavur Big Temple, and work on a beautiful sculptural Rajagopura is underway.

The Glory of Suyambulinga Swamy Spread

The Hindu Nadars in Kanyakumari district are the ones who spread the fame of the venerable suyambulinga Swamy, known as Nan Periyasamy. The priests would drive the sheep they raised and come to Kanyakumari district on foot to graze them during the summer. They would graze their sheep in grassy areas during the day and at night build cages about three feet high in a coconut grove and confine the sheep inside them. Coconut grove owners usually give money, rice, and coconuts in exchange for goat manure. The goat dung becomes a natural fertilizer for the coconut tree, which gives the tree a good yield.5

Then, if anyone in your village has an incurable disease, please donate a sum of money to the coconut grove owners. When they said that they would say that we are offering it to the suyambulinga Swami in our village, they immediately said that they would give the money. Their illness will go away. In this way, when they enter the village, they will know that we are also coming with you and will come with the coconut grove owners. Thus, the fame of Sami spread. People from many towns in Kumari district come to Uvari to do palmyra farm work. People who come for such work have had darshan of Suyambu Linga Swami and have received many benefits. Thus, Sami's fame began to spread everywhere.[6]

Contribution of Uvari Suyambulinga Swamy Temple In Tourism Development

Uvari suyambulinga Swamy Temple, located in the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, is a prominent pilgrimage center dedicated to Lord Shiva. The temple is renowned for its self-manifested (suyambu) Shiva Lingam and is visited by devotees seeking spiritual healing, particularly those suffering from illnesses. Over the years, the temple has played a vital role in promoting tourism and contributing to the socio economic development of the region. One of the key contributions of the temple is its ability to attract **religious tourists** from across Tamil Nadu and neighboring states. Devotees visit the temple not only for worship but also to bath in the sea, which is believed to have healing properties.[7]

This spiritual tourism has led to the growth of supporting services such as lodges, restaurants, shops selling puja items, and transport facilities, thereby boosting the **local economy**. The increased footfall has encouraged improvements in **infrastructure,** including better roads, sanitation, and communication facilities in and around Uvari village. Additionally, the temple is a site of cultural significance, hosting religious festivals like Maha Shivaratri and Pradosham, which draw large crowds and promote **cultural tourism.**Furthermore, the scenic coastal location of Uvari enhances its appeal. Many tourists are drawn to the natural beauty of the beach and its peaceful environment, combining pilgrimage with relaxation, thus fostering **eco-religious tourism**. In recent years, social media and online platforms have increased the temple's visibility, attracting more tourists and pilgrims. The temple's growing popularity has led to greater awareness and preservation efforts of both spiritual and natural heritage.[8]

Conclusion

The Thamirabarani River, full of sacred texts that add pride to Tamil culture, flows along the coast of Tirunelveli, a landscape that looks like a mat on the ground, on the edge of the sea. Surrounded by towering palm trees and the sound of their leaves, flowers bloom here and there in a beautiful natural setting. Uvari is a small village located on a beautiful beach with a canopy of palm trees nearby. Uvari Suyambunatha Temple is located in Kumari district, on the shores of a beautiful beach, a peaceful place to visit and enjoy. The chariot parade held here is a very special event. Thousands of people gather to witness it, have a glimpse of the chariot, and then leave. Also, it is surprising that even though the temple is located on the beach, the water from the well near the temple is suitable for drinking. Also, this temple has a very special Thiruvodu, a vessel structure, but it is very rare to find a Thiruvodu tree that can be used to make a plate. All these special features are found in the Uvari Suyambulinga Swamy temple complex

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Inscriptions of the Pallava on the Wilvanatheswarar Temple in Vellore District

M. Anandhan[1] and Dr. B. Rahamedsha[2]

Endowments of Villages

Gift of Villages, lands were common gifts of ruler and higher officials particularly by the Perundram officials. These lands donated to the temples were either exempted from tax or made tax free by these officials. Epigraphs show the administrative officials particularly Perundram officials were endowed for the development of the temple through their liberal gifts and administrative supports. For illustration a Tamil, Pallava Inscription1 found on the north wall of the mahamandapa in the Bilvanatheshwara temple at Thiruvallam of Pallava, VijayaNandivikramavarman is who none other than Nandivarman III Pallava in his seventeenth regnal year A.D. 863., states that request of MavaliVanarayan alias VikramaditaVanarayan, who may be identified with the Bana chief, BanaVidyadhara (c A.D. 850-95)., a gift of the village of VidelviduguVikramaditta chaturvedimangalam, 2 which was formed by clubbing together Amarunrimangalam, a devadana3 of the Paramesvara temple at Tikkalivallam the villages Aimbuni and Vilattur, was granted to the above temple, by the order of Kadupatti Tamil Apperarayan. Probably same as Videlvidugu Kadupatti AP-Praraiyanalso mentioned in the Bahur plates of Nripatungavarman4 . The sabha of the granted village was obliged to pay the 2,000 kadi of paddy and 20 kalanju5 of gold, which had been paid by the village of Amarungimangalam formerly to God Paramesvara of Tikkalivallam. The paddy and gold were to be used for sacred food offerings, feeding theSivabrahmanasbeating thedrumers, supplying flowers for the god, the flower suppliers and singing the Tiruppadiyam6 , the singers., The inscription also furnishes the earliest mention of Tiruppadiam, the singers, burning of perpetual lamps, the employers, anointing the idol, the employers, burning incense, the employers, making repairs, the employers, etc., in the temple. From this it is clear that the three villages and its revenue generation were given as salary to the temple employers namely the Sivabrahmanas, 7 the drummers, the flower suppliers, the singers, the employers connected with ritualistic daily worship of the deitymain of this temple. Further the temple has large number of ritualistic employers as well as administrative staff. All the three villages mentioned above and Tikkalivallam were situated in Miyagunadu, of Paduvurk kottam.8 Hence, temples proved to be the center of all sections of the society and employment platform. These activities namely landlord, employer and consumer of goods and services as bank, educational center, feeding center, museum, hospital and theatre through the endowments of perundram9 the higher administrative and executive officialsof the state. In short, as a nucleus, the endowments of the temple by Perundram made to gathered round by the public themselves all that was best in the arts of civilized existence, and regulated them with humanness borne of the spirit of Dharma.

The Pallavas

For illustration a Sanskrit, Tamil and Grantha inscription found on a large boulder in the bed of the Niva river, a tributary of Palaru one mile north-east of Tiruvallam of Pallava, Visaiya Nandivikiramaparuman is none other than Nandivarman II Pallavamalla, in his twelfth regnal year A.D. 793., records that when Mavalivanarayar perhaps same as Baṇa Jayanandivarman or Nandivarman (c A.D. 770-95) was ruling over Vadugavali. The record registers, a goldsmith called Aridiran, the son of Madan, a resident of Kilagam in Alinganapakkam in Urrukkattu kottam granted some gift of ***patti*** of land in Alinchirkalam, the

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son of Ilankilavar, to the temple Vadasikarakoyil at Vanapuram, which he renovated. Mavalivanarayar confirmed the grant after circumambulating the hamlet. The imprecation at the end states that those, who caused destruction to the endowment share would incur the sin of killing kadigaielayiravar and pay a fine of 1,000 ***kanam*** to the temple.

Another Tamil, damaged Pallava inscription found on a slab built into the floor of the Bilvanathesvara temple of Pallava Vijaya Nandivikramavarman who is none other than Nandivarman III Pallava in his seventeenth regnal year A.D. 863. registers a gift of four ***patti*** of land by one Vinaiyadityan, the son of Monaiyar, a resident of Ilaiyanur in Ilaiyanur nadu for daily puja provisions of rice and ghee for ***olukkavi*** for daily ***puja*** offerings to the Lord Tikkali Adigal. The offerings included rice, one ***alakku*** of ghee and the flower ***fondai.*** The gift land four ***patti*** of landwas left under the care of four persons of temple administrative staff. From this earliest inscription of this temple it is sumise that this temple might have been changed into stone sysamatic during the time of Nandivarman III Pallava.

Another Tamil, Pallava Inscription found on the north wall of the mahamandapa in the same temple of Pallava, Vijaya Nandivikramavarman is none other than Nandivarman III Pallava in his seventeenth regnal year A.D. 863., states that the record is a copy of an earlier one. The record refers that at the request of Mavali Vanarayan alias Vikramadita Vanarayan, who may be identified with the Bana chief Bana Vidyadhara (c A.D. 850-95).,

a gift of the village of Videlvidugu Vikramaditta ***chaturvedimangalam***, which was formed by clubbing together Amarunrimangalam, a***devadana*** of the Paramesvara temple at Tikkalivallam, the villages Aimbuṇi and Vilattur, was granted to the above temple, by the order of Kadupattit Tamil apperarayan. Probably same as Videlvidugu Kadupatti Tamilap Praraiyan mentioned in the Bahur plates of Nripatungavarman El, xviii, No. 2. The ***sabha*** of the granted village was obliged to pay the 2,000 ***kadi*** of paddy and 20 ***kalanju*** of gold, which had been paid by the village of Amarungimangalam formerly to God Paramesvara of Tikkalivallam. The paddy and gold were to be used for sacred food offerings, feeding the Sivabrahmanas beating the drums, the drumers, supplying flowers for the God (the flower suppliers), singing the ***Tiruppadiyam,*** the singers. The inscription also furnishes the earliest mention of Tiruppadiam the singers, burning of perpetual lamps the spiritual employers, anointing the idol spiritual the spiritual employers, burning incense the spiritual employers, making repairs the construction employers, etc., in the temple. From this it is clear that the three villages and its revenue generation were given as salary to the temple employers namely the Sivabrahmanas, the drummers, the flower suppliers, the singers, the employers connected with ritualistic daily worship of the deity. Further the temple has large number of ritualistic employers as well as administrative staff. All the three villages mentioned above and Tikkalivallam were situated in Miyagu nadu, of Paduvurk kottam.

For illustration a Tamil, Inscription of Bana, found in the same place. Mahavali Banaraja who is none other than Vikramaditya I Jayameru, in his fifth regnal year 810-A.D. records that the ***sabha*** of Vannipedu alias Ranavikkirama ***chaturvedimangalam*** in Karai nadu of Paduvurk kottam received twenty five ***kalanju*** of gold from Madavakramavittan of Vadacheri Ettukur, a hamlet on the east of Kaviripakkam alias Amaninarayana ***chaturvedimangalam*** in Paduvurk kottam and undertook to supply oil for a perpetual lamp in the temple of Perumanadigal Tikkalivallam in at Miyagu nadu in the same Paduvur kottam. The ***sabha*** agreed to pay five ***kalanju*** of gold for daily offerings as ***mancupadu*** to the ***dhunmasanam*** for default and to maintain the charity subsequently without default.

Another Tamil, Inscription of Bana, found on the west wall of the central shrine in the same temple. Vanavidyadhararajar alias Vanarayar who is none other than Vikramaditya I Jayameru, in his unknown regnal year c A.D. 850. records a gift of 40 ***kalanju*** of gold, for a camphor lamp and a perpetual lamp in the temple of Tikkalip Perumanadigal, by Kundavvai alias Vanamahadeviyar, the queen of Vana Vidyadhararajar and the daughter of Pratipati Araiyar (i.e.) Western Ganga Prithvipati who was the son of Sivamaharajap

Perumanadigal, alias Kongunivarma Dharmamaharaja, the lord of Kuvalalapura.Wrongly written as Nipupilapura. The ***sabha*** of Tikkalivallam received the amount and vowed to maintain the charity without fail. In case of failure, they agreed to pay a daily fine of five ***kalanju*** of gold in the ***dharmasana***. At the end it is said that as the land assigned for the charity was badly affected by weather, the ***sabha*** assigned only one oil lamp for burning. The Bana chief Vana Vidyadhara Vikramaditya I as a feudatory of Nandivarman III Pallava in A.D. 863 (NA-531) and became independent later. In A.D. 888 (NA- 532) he issued, an independent record in the same temple.

Another Tamil, Inscription of Bana found in the same place. Vana Vidyadhara alias Vanarayar who is none other than Vikramaditya 1 Jayameru in his unknown regnal year A.D. 850 registers a gift of 20 ***kalanju*** of gold, for a perpetual lamp in the temple of Perumanadigal at Tikkalivallam by the queen of Vana Vidyadhara alias Vanarayar, called Vana Mahadeviyar, who was the daughter of Pratipati Araiyar, son of Sivamaharajap Perumanadigal alias Kongunidharmamaharaja, the lord of Kuvalalapura, Kuvalalapura is written as Kunilapura in many places. The record also states that the ***sabha*** of the village, who undertook to maintain the charity. They also agreed to pay, on default, a fine of five ***kalanju*** of gold per day to the Panmahesvaras, the temple officials.

Another Tamil, Inscription of Bana, found on a stone built into the floor of the same temple. Vana Vidyadhara Vanarayar who is none other than Vikramaditya I Jayameru, in his unknown regnal year A.D. 850. records gift of 20 ***kalanju*** of gold, by the queen Maleviyar of the Bana King, for burning a perpetual lamp in the temple of Perumanadigal at Tikkalivallam. The ***sabha*** of the village, entrusted with the charity, assured to maintain it, failing which it agreed to pay a fine of five ***kalanju*** of gold daily.

Another Tamil, Inscription of Bana, found on the south wall of the central shrine in the Bilvanathesvara temple. Mahavali Vanarayar Vikramaditya I Jayameru, who is none other than in his unknown regnal year A.D. 850 records that a gift of 40 ***kalanju*** of gold by Choliyavaraiyan alias Mahabharanan of Iraiyancherip ponpadu kottam, a part of Kachchippedu for sacred food offerings and perpetual lamp in the daily ***pujas*** of the temple of God Perumanaddigal at Tiykkalivallam in Miyaru nadu. The ***sabha*** of Tikkalivallam received the gold and agreed to maintain the charity. It also provided instead of the gold 1,300 ***kuli*** of land for the food offerings and perpetual lamp and 400 ***kuli*** of land for the worshipping priest the Sivabrahmana.

Conclusion

The above study makes it clear that Bilvanatheswara temple, Tiruvallam, plays a significant role in the political and cultural life of the Tamils in general and the people of that town in particular. Tiruvall is one of the prominent town of Vellore District. This town is encircled with a vast stretch of paddy fields and other agricultural lands. This land of religious significance offered settlements to people of diverse communities and religious affiliation. However, this town is mostly free from communal unrest.

Tiruvallam due to its fertility and strategic location, became a vicissitudes of fortune among various dynasties in the end of the medieval period. As such, we come to know from records that this area came under the Pallavas and the Cholas. However, the Banas respective rulers envied one with the other and attempted to introduce various welfare measures including religious patronage. Consequently, all the rulers of different dynasties endowed profusely to maintain the divinity of the Bilvanatheswara temple, which in course left an everlasting legacy in the minds of the Saiva devotees of all ages to come. Tiruvallam had a distinction of its own from the 7th century AD. During the Pallava period, the town was reputed as a great religious centre and considered sacred to the Saiva devotees. The reason was that the great Nayanmar, Appar and Sambandar, visited this place and sang hymns in praise of the Lord of this temple. This study further reveals that this village is once situated in the nadu in a subdivision. During the reign of the Pallavas the Cholas and the Banas rulers. Tiruvallam was a ***devadana*** village. The ***sabha*** managed the administration of the village and the temple. The village

and the temple have carved a special niche for themselves in Saivism of South India. Lord Siva enshrined in this temple at Tiruvallam is Bilvanatheswara in suyambu ***linga*** form. In the inscription, the main deity of the temple is referred to as Mahaleswar and the goddess as Mathusunthara Nayagi Amman, Kuyilmozhi Ammai.

Sthalapurana has mentioned about the nomenclature of this village and the fame and name of this temple. Later, it was associated Saint Arunagiri. It is said that noted these Saints such as Saint Tirunavukkarasar Saint Thirungnana Sambandar and Saint Arunagiri worshipped the Lord of this temple.

The devotional literary work Tevaram, sources of this study contain references relating to this temple. The epigraphical evidences are the only sources of first-hand information giving the noteworthy features of this old centre of Saivism. The sixty one epigraphs engraved during the period of the pallavas the later Cholas and the Banas, rulers found in this temple throw adequate light on the history of this temple and help one to understand the contemporary political, religious and cultural conditions. It is to be recorded with regret that political interference in the affairs of the temple has affected its sanctity and the conduct of rituals. Though the H.R. & C.E. Board has been constituted to streamline the administration and utilize the income properly, these objectives have not been achieved as expected. Quite often, the powers that have interfered are backed by political considerations. Some of the employees have no faith in the Hindu Religion. Suitable action should be taken to realize the income from endowments. The funds of the temple are sometimes diverted for some other purposes. Religious administration should be with spiritual heads of unquestionable honesty and erudition with a record of selfless service. Such heads should be assisted by a band of devoted men imbued with a religious zeal and a spirit

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Mapping Divine Rule through Healing and Ritual Purity in Tiruvalithayam Temple in Puzhal Kottam through Sambandar HYMNS

Drishya S and Dr. K. A. Kavitha

The Sacred Geography and Legends of Tiruvalithayam:

Tiruvalithayam, located in Padi, was one of the shrines within Puzhal Kottam of the ancient Thondai Nadu, a landscape popular for its fertile fields, tanks, and vibrant settlements that cultivated a distinctive devotional tradition [1]. According to the Sthalapuranam, Bharadvaja Maharishi was once cursed to be as a bird named Valiyan and attained deliverance here by creating a sacred pond and offering worship to Shiva and from this event [2].

Legends further enhance the sanctity of the site. Tradition recalls that Hanuman visited the temple and worshiped there [3]. Another belief holds that Brihaspati, the divine preceptor, performed penance here, situating the temple within the background of Vedic cosmology [4].

These narratives interweave local memory with wider traditions, giving Tiruvalithayam its composite identity as both a Tamil and universal sacred space.

The natural features of the temple also contribute to its holiness. Two wells, Bharadvaja Tirtha and Hanuman Tirtha, are celebrated for their pure and curative waters. Devotees believe that drinking from them removes ailments and sins, as described in the Sambandar's hymns [5]. Ritual manuals further describe the use of this water for the daily rituals of the deity, thereby adding elements of the natural environment into religious practice [6]. In this way, landscape, legend, and rituals together shape the sacred identity of Tiruvalithayam.

Historical Background and Inscriptions:

The Tiruvalithayam temple provides a strong indication of its past from the fourteen Chola period inscriptions that are still engraved on the walls [7]. One of the most significant dates is from Rajaraja Chola I's 28th year it documents the granting of land for offerings and the construction of a temple for Kshetrapala Pillaiyar [8].

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Additional documents also provide information on the contributions made by private benefactors and local leaders. Kanchipuram's Vijayakanda Gopala Thevar provided lands, ceremonial items, and dancing ladies to sustain the devotion [9]. In addition, several inscriptions discuss presents for lamps that never go out, highlighting the significance of light as a representation of unwavering loyalty [10]. Sambandar's influence was felt in temple management as well as in his songs, as seen by the "Tirugnanasambandar Naazhi," a grain measure bearing the saint's name [11].

Later inscriptions suggest that the temple had consistent funding from trade guilds and local populations [12]. The Devakottai Pazhala S. Sabapathi Chettiar undertook extensive repairs in the temple and they staged a kumbhabhishekam during which Sambandar's songs were sung as part of the consecration [13]. When taken together, these inscriptions demonstrate how the temple was kept alive via the joint efforts of rulers, merchants, and common people throughout generations, combining spiritual devotion with temporal assistance.

Architectural Features and Iconography:

The early Chola architectural style is shown in the Tiruvalithayam temple. Its moolasthanam is constructed with the unusual Gajaprashta style [14]. Only a few early medieval shrines exhibit this architectural style, suggesting that it originated during the early Chola era.

Tiruvalithayanathar, also called Vallisvarar, is the main deity and is worshipped here as a self-manifested (swayambhu) lingam [15]. Thayammai (Jagadambal), his consort, is a symbol of Shakti's nurturing force. When viewed from a particular angle, the god and goddess appear together, signifying the unbreakable bond between the male and female facets of the divine [16].

One of the temple's unusual features is the placement of the Somaskanda shrine in the position normally assigned to Vinayaka [17]. This unusual configuration sets Padi apart from other Chola sanctuaries by highlighting its particular theological objectives and ritual procedures. Textual sources glorify and ritually sanctify the two sacred wells as living manifestations of divine favor [18].

The temple's architecture, despite its small size, effectively conveys a Tamil Saiva ethos, where sanctity is found in the depth of holy memory, the testimony of inscriptions, and most importantly, the presence of devotional lyrics.

The Devaram Hymns of Sambandar at Tiruvalithayam:

Context of the Hymns

Tiruvalithayam is unique in the Devaram since sambandar sang for the main deity who authored a single patikam of eleven verses [19]. His visit was after his pilgrimage to Tiruverkadu

[20]. The hymns are both poetic and theological, thus reinforcing the saint's relationship with divinitty. Arunagirinathar also sung song dedicated to lord Murugan [21].

Theological Framework and Divine Nature

The hymns feature diverse myths of Lord Shiva. He is both the cosmic and individual god, with attributes of the immanent as well as the supreme divine. He represents that in his three terrifying forms such as the eight-armed; the benevolent beggar seeking alms and then also as with serpents and skull-bowl followed by the blissful cosmic dancer surrounded by his supernatural entourage [22]. A major aspect of his motif is to be one with the relationship between him and his consort Parvathi popularly called Thiru Maathu and Grace in which case he is deemed as half woman, (Ardhanareeswarar), making it a total divine couple consisting of combined forms of male and female whose grace work for that humanity's get salvation [23].

Promise of Liberation

The philosophy of worship at Tiruvalithayam is Moksha which renders salvation from the life and death cycle. The hymns often assure that such devotion here

removes past karma, ends all sufferings and gains blissful Liberation in the end [24].

Nature Imagery and the Sacred Ecosystem

The landscape of Tiruvalithayam is not merely a backdrop but an integral part of its holiness. The hymns richly describe it as a land of plenty and paradise like abundance. This is highlighted through recurring images of flowering gardens and groves and jackfruit trees dripping with honey and running water. The wind carries the smell of honey, and the gardens are so fruitful as they are described. This environment is not ornamental; it symbolizes the overflowing bliss and grace of the divine in the entire area, making it a habitat for devotees and a natural paradise where the divine chooses to stand [25].

Ritual Practice and Devotional Acts

The hymns describe specific devotional acts as the means to attain divine grace from the deity. The most detailed ritual is the offering of flowers and they must be held in the palms, drenched in water and offered prayerfully while reciting Siva-mantras in union [26]. The use of large honey filled sweet smelling flowers is specified as particularly effective for liberation. Beyond physical offerings, devotion is expressed through melodic praise singing the hymns themselves is declared a powerful salvation attain act [27].

Rejecting false Paths

One hymn implies on Rejecting False Paths. It instructs devotees to reject the teachings of sects like the Buddhists and Jains, who are accused of having crude hearts and gathering to denigrate others. This draws a clear boundary around the Shaiva community, defining true devotees as those who praise the Lord of Tiruvalithaayam, irrespective of other differences. It affirms that Shiva's grace is exclusive to those who offer him sincere devotion, thereby strengthening in-group identity [28].

The Power of the Hymn Itself

The author, Saint Jnana Sambandar attributes the hymns creation to his constant meditation on Shivan's feet. The text itself is elevated to a sacred object, a garland of Tamil verse. It makes a profound claim that the act of treasuring and singing these specific hymns melodiously is itself a direct and guaranteed means to achieve spiritual rising, fixing the text's own status as a spiritual pathway equivalent to the temple itself [29].

Cultural and Liturgical Legacy:

The authority of Sambandar's hymns extended beyond his lifetime. Inscriptions from the temple reference the "Tirugnanasambandar Naazhi," a grain measure named after the saint, embedding his presence in administrative and economic structures [30]. Later texts repeatedly cite his verses when narrating the temple's holiness, ensuring their transmission across generations [31]. The hymns have been sung by the devotees during Brahmotsavam and Mahasivaratri [32]. In this way, the hymns became both scripture and song, shaping the temple's identity across centuries.

Sambandar's Legacy in the Living Tradition of Tiruvalithayam:

Sambandar's presence at Padi is not limited to historical memory but remains active in the temple's ongoing life. The hymns are sung by both the priest and the devotees during daily worship and even during the morning and evening pujas [33]. Temple records referring to the "Sambandar Naazhi" illustrate how his name became part of the very vocabulary of temple economy [34].

Texts and commentaries from later centuries consistently reference Sambandar's hymns when affirming the temple's sanctity. This also highlights how his poetic vision has shaped both ritual practice and cultural memory. Through these layers, Sambandar's association with Tiruvalithayam has transformed the temple into a living monument to his devotional voice.

Festivals and Ritual Continuity:

The ritual calendar of Tiruvalithayam continues to revolve around Sambandar's hymns. The annual Brahmotsavam in Chithirai month features processions of the deity accompanied by recitations of the eleven

verses, transforming the streets of Padi into an extension of the temple's sacred space. During Mahasivaratri, devotees chant his hymns through the night as devotion. Water from the sacred wells is drawn for ablutions, reinforcing the link between nature and sanctity [35].

The hymns are sung in morning and evening pujas, sustaining the continuity of Sambandar's poetic presence [36]. Through these practices, the hymns remain not only as texts but as living voices that shape the rhythms of devotion.

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30. Palur kannapa mudaliyar, op.cit., p. 228
31. P. K. Nambiar, op cit., p. 69.
32. Ibid., p. 70.
33. Samuga Samaya Sangam, op cit., p. 62,63.
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35. P. K. Nambiar, op.cit., p. 70.
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பழையாறை (கீழ்தளி) இராவண அனுக்கிரக மூர்த்தி – ஓர் ஆய்வு

ம. ஓவியா[1] and முனைவர்.மு.கலா[2]

ஆய்வுச் சுருக்கம்:

பண்பாட்டின் உறைவிடமாக விளங்குகின்ற இந்துக் கோயில்களின் பல்வேறு நிலைகளில் இடம்பெறும் இறைமூர்த்தங்கள் காலங்காலமாக இந்துப் பாரம்பரியத்தின் பண்பாட்டுத்துறைகளை வளம்படுத்துவதில் பெருந்துணை புரிந்து வருகின்றன. இந்துக் கலைகள் அறுபத்து நான்காக வகுக்கப்பட்டாலும் அவற்றுள் நுண்கலைகள் என்று அறியப்படும் கட்டடம், சிற்பம், ஓவியம், இசை, மற்றும் நடனம் ஆகியன முதன்மை பெற்றுத் திகழ்கின்றன எனலாம். இவ்வாறு அழகுக் கலைகளுள் ஒன்றாகச் ''சிற்பம்'' போற்றப்பட்டுச் சிற்பக்கலை, மக்களிடம் பெரும் வரவேற்பை பெற்று வருகின்றதை காண்கூடாக காண முடிகிறது. சிற்பங்களின் பெருமையை பிரதிபலிக்கும் வகையில் பழையாறை கீழ் தளியில் காணப்படும் கண் கவரும் சிற்பங்களில் ஒன்றாக விளங்கும் ''இராவண அனுக்கிரக மூர்த்தி'' சிற்பத்தை அடையாளப் படுத்துவதே இவ்வாய்வின் முக்கிய நோக்கமாகும்.

திறவுச் சொற்கள்:

சிற்பம், புராணம், சிவமூர்த்தங்கள்

முன்னுரை:

''ஆலயம் தொழுவது சாலவும் நன்று''1 ஆலயம் என்னும் உடலுக்கு உயிராக விளங்கி வருவது சிற்பமாகும். இச்சிற்பங்கள் கோயிலின் தொன்மையையும், தத்துவ நெறியையும் பிரதிபலிப்பவையாகவே அமைந்துள்ளன2. கோயில்களின் பண்பாட்டைப் பண் நெடுங் காலமாக வளர்ந்து வரும் தமிழ்நாட்டில், சமய தத்துவங்களை விளக்கும் வகையில் கடவுள்களின் புராணங்களும், தல புராணங்களும் பலவாகத் தோன்றியுள்ளன. இந்து சமய திருக்கோயில்களின் சிலை வழிபாட்டை அடிப்படையாக கொண்டு, பல்வகைச் சிற்பக் கலைக் கருவறையை அலங்கரித்து வருகின்றன.

''சில்'' என்னும் சொல்லின் அடியாகச் ''சிலை'' என்ற சொல் பிறந்துள்ளது. ''கல்'' எனும் சொல் உருவாகியுள்ளது. இதன் வளர்ச்சியே அழகுக் கலைகளுள் ஒன்றாகச் ''சிற்பம்'' போற்றப்பட்டுச் சிற்பக்கலை பெரும் வளர்ச்சியில் உன்னத நிலையை அறிய முடிகிறது. *3*

பழையாறை (கீழ் தளி) அமைவிடம்:

''சீரல் நீடிய செம்பியர் பொன்னின் னுட்டுக்

காரின் மேவிய கனி அளி மலர்ப்பொழில் சூழ்ந்து

தேரின் மேவிய செழுமணி வீதிகள் சிறந்து

பாரில் நீடிய பெருமைசேர் பதி பழையாறை ''

என்று சேக்கிழார் பாடிய பாடல் வரிகளின் மூலம் பழையாறை சிறப்பு பற்றி அறிந்துக் கொள்ளலாம்.4 கும்பகோணத்திற்கு ஐந்து கிலோ மீட்டர் தொலைவில் பழையாறை என்ற ஊர் அமைந்துள்ளது. பழையாறையைச் சுற்றி முழையூர், பட்டிச்சுரம், திருச்சத்திமுற்றம், சோழன் மாளிகை, அரிச்சந்திரபுரம், ஆரியப்படையூர், பம்பைப்படையூர், புதுப்படையூர், மணப்படையூர், திருமேற்றளி மற்றும் நந்திபுரவிண்ணகரம் போன்ற ஊர்கள் அமைந்துள்ளது. இவ்வூர் கி.பி 7- ம் நூற்றாண்டில் ''பழையாறை'' என்றும் , கி.பி 8 - ம் நூற்றாண்டில்''நந்திபுரம்'' என்றும், கி.பி 11 - ம் நூற்றாண்டில் ''முடிகொண்ட சோழபுரம்'' என்றும் மற்றும் கி. பி 12 - ம் நூற்றாண்டில் ''இராச இராசபுரம்'' என்றும் காலங்கள் தோறும் பெயர்

[1]முழுநேர முனைவர் பட்ட ஆய்வாளர் , முதுகலை வரலாறு மற்றும் ஆராய்ச்சித்துறை, அரசினர் மகளிர் கல்லூரி (த) கும்பகோணம், (பாரதிதாசன் பல்கலைக்கழக

[2]இணைப்பேராசிரியர் - ஆய்வு நெறியாளர், முதுகலை வரலாறு மற்றும் ஆராய்ச்சித்துறை, அரசினர் மகளிர் கல்லூரி (த) கும்பகோணம், (பாரதிதாசன் பல்கலைக்கழக இணைவு பெற்ற கல்லூரி)

மாற்றாம் பெற்றிருப்பதை அறியலாம். சோழ மன்னர்களின் தலைநகரமாக விளங்கிய இவ்வூர் தற்போது ''சோழன் மாளிகை'' என்ற பெயரில் அழைக்கப்பட்டு வருவதை காணலாம்.5, 6

கோயிலின் அமைப்பு :

இத்தலத்தின் சுவாமி சோமநாதர் , அம்மன் சோமகலாம்பிகை ஆகியோர் மக்களுக்கு காட்சி அளித்து வருகின்றனர். இக்கோயில் முதலாம் குலோத்துங்கன் கால கோயிலாகும். இக்கோயில் கிழக்கு நோக்கி அமைந்துள்ளது.. மூன்று பிராகாரங்களை கொண்டு, இராஜ கோபுரத்தின் பீடத்துடன் கோபுரம் சிதைந்த நிலையில் காணப்படுகிறது. இராசகோபுரத்தினை அடுத்து இரண்டு நிலையினை கொண்ட சிறிய கோபுரம் உள்ளது. சுவாமிக்கும், அம்மனுக்கும் தனித்தனி சன்னதிகள் காணப்படுகின்றன. முதல் பிராகாரத்தில் திருமாடப்பத்தி அமைந்துள்ளது (தற்பொழுது சிதைந்து காணப்படுகிறது). மூர்த்திகளில் தக்ஷிணாமூர்த்தி, அர்த்த நாரீசுவரர், பிரம்ம தேவர் ஆகியோர் எழுந்தருளியுள்ளனர். அடுத்தாக மகாமண்டபம், முன்மண்டபங்களில் துர்க்கையின் திருவுருவம் அமைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. அதுமட்டுமின்றி இதே முன்மண்டபத்தில் தான் ''இராவண அனுக்கிரக மூர்த்தியின் சிற்பமும்'' காணப்படுகிறது. முதல் பிராகாரத்தில் வடகிழக்கு மூலையிலிருந்த சபாநாதர் மண்டபம் மிகவும் சிதைந்த நிலையில் உள்ளதால் நடராசர் சிற்பம் மகா மண்டபத்திலேயே வைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.7

சிவ மூர்த்தங்கள்:

சிவனது திருவிளையாடல்கள் அறுபத்து நாக்காகும். அத்திருவிளையாடல்களில் சிவன் அறுபத்து நான்கு சிவா வடிவமெடுத்தார் என அறிய முடிகிறது. இத்திருவடிவங்கள் பற்றிய பெரிய புராணத்திலும் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளதை காண முடிகிறது. லிங்க வடிவத்தை பற்றி மெய்ஞானிகள் கூறுகையில் இதனை சுயம்பு லிங்கம் என்று கூறுகின்றனர்8. திருமந்திரத்திலும் 64 சிவ மூரத்தங்களைப் பற்றிய குறிப்புகள் கிடைக்கின்றன9.

சிவ வடிவங்கள்:

1. இலிங்க வடிவம்
2. இலிங்கோத்பவர் வடிவம்
3. முகலிங்க வடிவம்
4. சுதாசிவ வடிவம்
5. மகாசதாசிவ வடிவம்
6. உமா மகேசுவரர் வடிவம்
7. சுகாசனர் வடிவம்
8. உமேச மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
9. சோமஸ்கந்த வடிவம்
10. சந்திரசேகர வடிவம்
11. இடபாரூட வடிவம்
12. ரிஷபாந்திக மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
13. புஜங்கலளித மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
14. புஜங்கத்திராச மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
15. சந்தியாதாண்டவ மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
16. சதா நிருத்த மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
17. சண்டதாண்டவ மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
18. கங்காதரர் வடிவம்
19. கங்கா விசர்சன மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
20. திரிபுராந்தகர் வடிவம்
21. கல்யாண சுந்தரர் வடிவம்
22. அர்த்த நாரீசுவரர் வடிவம்
23. கஜயுக்த மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
24. ஜ்வராபக்ன மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
25. சூர்த்துரல ஹர மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
26. பாசுபத மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
27. கங்காளர் வடிவம்
28. மாதொருபாகர் வடிவம்
29. பிட்சாடனர் வடிவம்
30. சரபேசுவர் வடிவம்
31. சண்டேசானுக்கிரக மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
32. தட்சிணாமூர்த்தி வடிவம்
33. யோகதட்சிணாமூர்த்தி வடிவம்

34. வீணாதரதட்சிணாமூர்த்தி வடிவம்
35. காலாந்தர் வடிவம்
36. காமதகனர் வடிவம்
37. இலகுளேசுவர மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
38. பைரவர் வடிவம்
39. ஆபதோத்தாரண மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
40. வடுக மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
41. சேத்திரபாலக மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
42. வீரபத்திர வடிவம்
43. ஆகோராசுதிர மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
44. தீட்சயக்ஞவரத மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
45. கிராத மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
46. குரு வடிவம்
47. அசுவாரூட மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
48. கஜாந்திக மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
49. ஜலத்திரவத மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
50. ஏகபாததிரி மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
51. திரிபாததிரி மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
52. ஏகபாத வடிவம்
53. கௌரிவரப்பிரத மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
54. சத்ரதானசுவரூப மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
55. கௌரிலீலா சமன்வித மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
56. நீலகண்டர் வடிவம்
57. கருடாந்திக மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
58. பிரமசிரச்சேத மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
59. கூர்மசங்காரர் வடிவம்
60. மச்ச சங்காரகர் வடிவம்
61. வராக சங்காரகர் வடிவம்
62. பிரார்த்தனா மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
63. இரத்தபிஹப்பஜரதான மூர்த்தி வடிவம்
64. சிஷ்யபாவ மூர்த்தி வடிவம்

இச்சிவவடிவங்கள் அறுபத்து நான்கும் போக வடிவங்கள், யோக வடிவங்கள், மற்றும் கோப வடிவங்கள் என மூன்றாக பிரித்துக் காட்டப்பட்டுள்ளது எனலாம்.

போக வடிவம்:

உமாமகேஸ்வரர் , சந்திரசேகரர், ரிஷபாரூடர், மாதொருபாகர்.

யோக வடிவம்:

தட்சிணாமூர்த்தி, ஞானதட்சிணாமூர்த்தி, யோகதட்சிணாமூர்த்தி, வீணாதட்சிணாமூர்த்தி, சுகாசனர்.

கோப வடிவம்:

கங்காளர், வீரபத்திரர், திரிபுராந்தக மூர்த்தி, கஜயுக்த மூர்த்தி, காலந்தக மூர்த்தி.

அறுபத்து நான்கு சிவ மூரத்தங்கள் தவிர வேறு பல வடிவங்களைச் சிவ பெருமான் எடுத்தாக ஆகமங்களும், நூல்களும் குறிப்பிடுகின்றன. பெரியபுராணம், சிவமகாபுராணம், பாகவதம் புராணம் மற்றும் சைவ சமயக் கலைக்களஞ்சியம் போன்ற நூல்களிலும் இவ்வடிவங்கள் பற்றி கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது.

1. யானை உரிபோர்த்த அண்ணல் (கஜாவி வடிவம்)
2. விநாயகருக்கு அருளிய வடிவம் (கஜமுக அனுக்கிரக மூர்த்தி)
3. இராவணனுக்கு அருளிய வடிவம் (இராவண அனுக்கிரக மூர்த்தி)10

இராவணஅனுக்கிரகமூர்த்தியின்புராணவரலாறு:

''இமையவர் அஞ்சியோட எதிர்வார் அவர் தம்மையின்றி

அமைதரு வல்லரக்கன் அடர்த்தும் மலை அன்று எடுப்ப

குமையது செய்து பாடக் கொற்றவாளோடு நாள் கொடுத்திட்டு

உமையொடு இருந்த பிரான்''

சம்பந்தர் (11)

சிவபெருமானின் 64 - சிவ மூரத்தங்கள் தவிர பல வடிவங்கள் ஒன்றாக விளங்கிய இந்த ''இராவண அனுக்கிரக மூரத்தியின் சிறப்பு பெற்ற ''சிற்பமானது'' பழையாறை கீழ்தளியில் அமையப்பெற்றுள்ளதை கண்கூடாக காண

முடிகிறது. அவ்வாறு அமையப் பெற்ற இச்சிவ வடிவ மூர்த்தியானவரின் புராண வரலாற்றைப் பற்றி கூறும் போது. சிவபெருமானும், உமாதேவியரும் கைலாய மலையில் வீற்றிருந்த போது இலங்கையை ஆண்ட மன்னன் இராவணன் அவ்வழியாகச் சென்றான். கைலாயமலை மிகவும் உயரமாக இருந்தமையால் இராவணனால் மேற்கொண்டு பயணிக்க முடியவில்லை அதனால் தன்னுடைய ''புஸ்பக'' விமானத்திலிருந்து இறங்கிக் கைலாயமலையைத் தூக்கினான். கைலாய மலையானது நடுநடுங்கியது. இதனால் பயந்த உமாதேவியர் சிவபெருமானைக் கட்டித்தழுவ, சிவபெருமான் தனது கால் பெருவிரல் நுனியால் கைலாய மலையை ஊன்றி அழுத்த இராவணன் பெருந்துன்பப்பட்டுத் தனது கை நரம்பை விணையாக்கி சிவபெருமானை வேண்டி பண் நிறைந்த பாடல்களைப் பாடினான். அதனால் மனம் மகிழ்ந்த சிவபெருமான் இராவணனுக்கு தேர், நெடியநாள் வாழ்க்கை மற்றும் சக்தி மிகுந்த வாள் ஆகியவற்றைக் கொடுத்து அருள் வழங்கினார். இப்புராண வரலாற்றைப் பற்றி தேவாரங்களில் மற்றும் பெரியபுராணத்திலும் மற்றும் கலித்தொகையிலும் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளதை அறிய முடிகிறது12.

இலக்கியங்களில் இராவண அனுக்கிரக மூர்த்தி:

''தோரார்தரு தீகழ்வாளேயிற் றரக்கண்சிவன் மலையை

ஓராதெடுத் தார்த்தான்முடி யொருப ஃதவை நெரித்துக்

கூரார்தரு கொலைவாளொடு குணநாமமுங் கொடுத்த

ஏரார்தரு மிறைவர்க்கிடமிடும்பாவன மிதுவே''

என்ற சம்பந்தரின் பாடல் வரிகளின் மூலம் இராவணனின் பக்திக்கு மயங்கிய சிவபெருமான் தேர், நீண்ட ஆயுள், வாள் போன்றவற்றை அருளாக வாங்கியதை அரிய முடிகிறது13.

''இமையவில் வாங்கிய ஈர்ஞ்சடை அந்தணன்

உமை அமர்ந்து உயர்மலை இருந்தனனாக ,

ஐயிரு தலையின் அரக்கர் கோமான்,

தொடிப்பொலி தடக்கையின் கீழ்புகுந்து அம்மலை

எடுக்கல் செல்லாது உழல்பவன் போல'' (குறிஞ்சிக் கலி - 2 : 1 - 5)14, 15

இப்பாடல் வரிகள் கலித்தொகையில் இடம்பெற்றுள்ள வரிகளாகும். இப்பாடலில் சிவபெருமானும், உமாதேவியரும் கைலாய மலையில் அமர்ந்த கோலத்தைப் பற்றி கூறுகிறது.

மூவர் தேவாரத்தில் ''இராவணனை ஈடழிய எழில்கொள் விரலால் பெரியவரை ஊன்றியருள் செய்த சிவன்''16 என்று சம்பந்தரும், நாவுக்கரசர் ''இலங்கையர் கோமானைத் திருவிரலால் உதகரணம் செய்துகந்த சிவமூர்த்தி''17 என்று சிவ பெருமான் தன் கால் பெருவிரலை ஊன்றிய நிகழ்வைப் பற்றி கூரியுள்ளார்கள். அதுமட்டுமின்றி இச்சிவடிவின் அழகினைப் புகழ்ந்து திருஞானசம்பந்தர் கூறுகையில் ''அரக்கனை அடர்த்தருள் புரிந்த அழகன்'', ''அரக்கனை வரையால் ஆற்றல் அன்றழித்த அழகனார்''18 என்றும் காட்சிப் படுத்தியுள்ளார்.

இராவண அனுக்கிரக மூரத்தியின் சிற்ப அமைப்பு முறை:

ஜடாமுடியும் அதில் அழகிய பிறையுடன் சிவபெருமானும், உமாதேவியாருடன் அமர்ந்த கோலத்தில் காட்சியாளிகிறார். சிவபெருமானின் பூணுலாகத் திகழும் நாகமும், மார்பில் திகழும் ஆபரணங்களும், உமாதேவியார் சிவபெருமானின் பூணுலை பிடித்த வண்ணம் தெளிவாக வடிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது இச்சிற்பம். கைலாய மலையை தூக்க முடியாமல் இராவணனுடைய விழிகள் பிதுங்குவதைச் சிற்பமாக வடிக்கும் முறை இருந்ததை பற்றி பழையாறை கோயிலில் உள்ள இராவண அனுக்கிரக மூர்த்தி சிற்பமே மிகச் சிறந்த எடுத்துகாட்டாகும். இறைவனின் இருப்பிடமாகிய கைலாய மலையில் புலியும், மானும் ஒரே இடத்தில் அமைந்தவாறு இச்சிற்பத்தில் காணப்படுகிறது.19, 20

முடிவுரை:

பொதுவாக 64 சிவடிவங்களை பற்றிய குறிப்புகள் புராணங்களில் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது.இவைத் தவிர எண்ணற்ற சிவடிவங்கள் பற்றியும் குறிப்புகள் கிடைக்கின்றன. புராணக் கதைகளை சிற்பமாக வடிக்கும் முறையை கையாள்வதில் பழந்தமிழர்களின் கைவண்ணம் தனிச் சிறப்பாகும். இவ்வாய்வில் இராவண அனுக்கிரக மூர்த்தியின் புராண கதை பற்றியும் மற்றும் இலக்கியங்களில் இச்சிற்பத்தின் பாடல் வரிகளின் மூலம் படிமக்கலை பற்றியும் அறிந்துக் கொள்ளலாம். மேலும் இத்தகைய சிறப்புகள் கொண்ட இச்சிவவடிவம் சிவன் கோயில்களில் வழிபாட்டிற்குரிய வடிவமாக அதிகளவில் காணப்படுவதில்லை எனலாம். ஆனாலும் ஒருசில கோயில்களில் இச்சிவ வடிவினை காணமுடிகிறது. அவை திருவிடைமருதூர் மகாலிங்க சுவாமி கோயில் உட்பிரகாரத்தில் வடமேற்கு திசையில் காட்சியளிக்கிறார். தஞ்சை பெரிய கோயிலில் கருவறை மேற்புற உட்சுவரில் இராவணன் கைலாய மலையை எடுக்கும் காட்சி ஓவியமாகத் தீட்டப்பட்டுள்ளதை காணமுடிகிறது. பல கோயில்களில் விழாக்காலங்களில் இறைவன் எழுந்தருளுவதற்காண வாகனமாக ''கைலாய வாகனம்'' இராவணன் கைலாய மலையை எடுப்பது போன்று அமைக்கப் பெற்றுள்ளது.

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The Chola Imperium: An Integrated Analysis of Political, Maritime, and Cultural Hegemony in Medieval Asia

[1]K.Anitha

Administrative Brilliance and the Mechanics of Power

The foundation upon which the Chola edifice was built was a remarkably sophisticated and efficient administrative system. This system masterfully negotiated the classic tension of empire: the need for strong, centralized control alongside the practical necessity of effective local governance. The success of the Cholas lay in their ability to institutionalize this balance.

Centralized Authority and Imperial Hierarchy At the apex of the political structure stood the emperor (Chakravartin), whose authority was absolute and often expressed in increasingly imperial and divine terms under rulers like Rajaraja I and Rajendra I. The empire was divided into a hierarchy of administrative units that ensured effective control from the center. The largest unit was the *Mandalam* (province), often under the viceregal authority of a royal prince. Below this was the *Valanadu* (division), and the foundational unit was the *Nadu*, the district representing a collection of villages. This hierarchical structure facilitated efficient revenue collection, resource mobilization, and the dissemination of imperial orders, forming the backbone of centralized control.

The Innovation of Local Self-Government, the *Sabhas.* The most striking and often-cited innovation of Chola polity was the extent of local autonomy. The famous Uttaramerur inscriptions from the reign of Parantaka I (10th century CE) provide a detailed constitution for the election and functioning of the village assembly, the sabha. These assemblies were composed of elected members who met in committees (*variyams)* to oversee specific functions such as irrigation management, land distribution, tax collection, temple maintenance, and justice for minor disputes. The electoral rules were remarkably detailed, specifying property qualifications, age limits, and procedures designed to ensure rotation and prevent corruption. This system of local self-government was not an exercise in democracy for its own sake but a brilliant administrative tool. It devolved the burdensome tasks of day-to-day governance and revenue collection to the local level, ensuring efficiency and reducing the need for a vast, top-heavy imperial bureaucracy. It fostered a sense of participation and investment in the stability of the empire, thereby strengthening the central state from the ground up.

Revenue and Resource Management

The lifeblood of the state was land revenue(*irai*), assessed through extensive and periodic land surveys. The accuracy of this system, managed effectively by the local assemblies, provided the predictable and substantial income needed to fund the imperial court, the standing army, the navy, and grand public works. The administration also collected tolls and customs duties from trade, a revenue stream that would grow exponentially as maritime power expanded.

The Chola political engine was a masterpiece of design. It combined the unifying force and ambition of a powerful central monarchy with the hyper-efficient, ground-level management of local assemblies. This structure generated immense internal stability and a reliable revenue stream, creating the capital—both financial and administrative—required to pursue ambitions beyond the Indian mainland. It was this powerful and well-oiled political machine that made the projection of maritime power not just a possibility, but a reality.

The Chola Navy and Maritime Hegemony

The wealth generated by the political and agricultural economy provided the means for the Cholas

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to build and project power beyond their shores. They recognized that ultimate supremacy lay in controlling the lucrative trade routes of the Indian Ocean, and to this end, they developed a formidable navy that served as the central instrument of their economic and imperial policy.

The Navy as an Instrument of State Policy: The Chola navy was not merely an auxiliary force;it was a professional, standing military armada comprising numerous specialized vessels, including large combat ships (*thirisadai)* and troop transports. Its primary purpose was threefold: to protect the vast coastline of the Chola state, to safeguard the merchant fleets of Indian traders (a key constituency), and to execute offensive campaigns against maritime rivals. This represented a strategic understanding of geopolitics where control of the sea (thalassocracy) was directly linked to prosperity and power on land.

Economic Motives and the Srivijayan Rivalry: By the 11th century, the trade route between China, Southeast Asia, India, and the Arab world was the most lucrative on the planet. The key chokepoint controlling this route was the Strait of Malacca, dominated by the Srivijaya

Empire based in Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. Srivijaya acted as an intermediary, taxing goods flowing through the strait. The Cholas, seeking to maximize their own profits and protect their merchants from exorbitant tariffs, increasingly saw Srivijaya not as a partner but as a barrier to their economic ambitions.

The Expeditions of Rajendra Chola I: The culmination of this policy was the audacious naval campaign launched by Emperor Rajendra Chola I around 1025 CE.Inscriptions, including the famous Tiruvalangadu plates, detail this expedition, which targeted a string of Srivijayan port cities across the Strait of Malacca.[^8] The Chola fleet reportedly sacked Kadaram (modern Kedah), Pannai, and other centers, crippling Srivijayan power in the region.

It is crucial to note that this was not a classic territorial conquest aimed at annexing Southeast Asian land. Instead, it was a strategic, punitive raid designed to achieve clear economic objectives: to dismantle the Srivijayan monopoly, chastise a rival power, and establish direct and favorable trading terms for Chola and Tamil merchants. It was the projection of hard power in the service of economic interest. The success of this campaign reshaped the geopolitical map of the Indian Ocean, establishing Chola hegemony over the trade routes and

ushering in a period of unprecedented commercial wealth flowing into the Chola heartland. This wealth would become the fuel for the empire's most enduring legacy: its cultural transformation.

Legitimation Through Art, Architecture, and Ideology

The immense wealth flowing into the Chola treasury from land revenue and, crucially, from maritime trade, was not merely hoarded. It was strategically invested in a vast program of cultural production that served as the final, crucial pillar of Chola hegemony. This output was not incidental; it was a deliberate arsenal of tools designed to legitimize, integrate, and glorify the imperial project. Architecture of Power: The Royal Temple The most visible and powerful symbol of this cultural project was the construction of monumental stone temples. The Brihadeeswara Temple in Thanjavur, commissioned by Rajaraja I in 1010 CE, is the paradigmatic example.It was far more than a place of worship; it was a multi-functional institution central to Chola power.

Economic Function: The temple was a major landowner, employer, and economic hub. It managed vast resources, acted as a bank, and stimulated local economies. Administrative Function: Its walls served as the public record office, with inscriptions detailing imperial orders, land grants, and endowments, anchoring the state's bureaucratic functions in a sacred space. Ideological Function: Most importantly, it was a statement of divine kingship. The colossal scale of its vimana (tower), designed to mimic Mount Meru, the axis of the universe, and the strategic placement of the emperor’s portrait in a sacred position, explicitly linked the king’s rule to the cosmic order of the gods. It was physical propaganda, demonstrating the king’s power,

piety, and divine mandate to both his subjects and rival kings.

Metaphysics in Bronze:The Nataraja as Cultural Icon The Chola period represents the zenith of bronze

casting in India. The iconic form of Shiva as Nataraja, the Lord of Dance, was perfected during this era. The Nataraja bronze is a masterpiece of theology and art, encapsulating within a single form the Hindu concepts of creation, preservation, destruction, illusion, and liberation. The patronage of these exquisite idols by the royal family and elite was not merely an act of devotion. It was a way of associating themselves with the highest philosophical ideals, displaying their taste and wealth, and reinforcing the religious and cultural values that underpinned the social order. The widespread distribution of these bronzes, both within India and through trade networks, also acted as a vehicle for disseminating Chola cultural influence.

Inscriptions: The Written Word of Authority The thousands of stone inscriptions adorning

temple walls are invaluable historical sources. They go beyond mere records of donations; they are the detailed ledgers of the empire, providing data on taxes, land disputes, administrative organization, and social structure. They were the permanent, public testament to the king's generosity, the stability of his rule, and the reach of his administration, ensuring his legacy would be literally set in stone. In essence, the cultural project was the necessary superstructure to the economic base. The wealth from trade and taxes was recycled into cultural forms that justified the very system that produced that wealth, creating a powerful cycle of legitimation that cemented Chola authority for generations.

The Integrated System of Hegemony The true genius of the Chola Imperium is revealed not when examining its political, maritime, or cultural achievements in isolation, but when understanding how they functioned as interdependent components of a single, integrated system. This synergy created a resilient feedback loop that propelled and sustained the empire for centuries.

The process can be visualized as a virtuous cycle:

The Political Foundation: The efficient administrative system, combining central authority and local sabhas, created internal stability, integrated the agrarian economy, and generated a reliable stream of land revenue. Funding Projection: This capital, supplemented by initial trade, funded the building and maintenance of a formidable standing navy, an instrument of state power. Securing Wealth: The navy projected power to protect Chola merchants, crush

rivals like Srivijaya, and secure dominance over the Indian Ocean trade routes. This generated a massive influx of wealth from tariffs and increased trade profits. Investment in Legitimation: This new commercial wealth was strategically invested in a vast cultural project: the construction of monumental temples and the patronage of exquisite art. Reinforcing Power: These cultural projects served to: Legitimize the state and the emperor through divine association; Integrate society by providing a shared religious and cultural focus; Stimulate the economy by functioning as central economic hubs; Project soft power, broadcasting Chola glory across Asia.Completing the Loop: This enhanced legitimacy and economic stimulation further strengthened the internal political stability and revenue-generating capacity of the state, allowing the cycle to begin anew with even greater intensity.

This model explains why the Chola Empire was more resilient and influential than its contemporaries. A challenge to one pillar of its power was mitigated by the strength of the others. An agricultural drought could be offset by trade wealth. A military setback could be overcome by the deep internal stability provided by the sabhas and the legitimizing power of its cultural institutions. The Cholas did not just conquer; they engineered a sophisticated and self-sustaining ecosystem of power.

Conclusion

The Chola Imperium stands as a testament to one of the most sophisticated political and cultural enterprises of the medieval world. This analysis has argued that its enduring legacy was not the product of isolated excellence in governance, naval warfare, or art,

but rather the result of a deliberate and masterful integration of these elements into a coherent and self-reinforcing system. The Chola state demonstrated a profound understanding of the mechanics of power: that effective governance generates capital, that capital can fund the projection of hard power, that hard power can secure wealth, and that wealth must be invested in the soft power of cultural legitimation to ensure long-term stability. The feedback loop between the hyper-local administration of the sabhas, the global reach of the navy, and the symbolic power of the Brihadeeswara Temple and Nataraja bronzes created a resilient hegemony that dominated South India and the Indian Ocean for over four centuries. The Cholas offer a compelling case study in pre-modern statecraft, one that highlights the importance of synergies between different spheres of power.

Future research could fruitfully compare this integrated model with other contemporary empires, such as the Khmer in Angkor or the Song in China, to develop a broader comparative understanding of medieval state formation. Furthermore, a deeper archaeological investigation of Chola-era port sites could provide even richer data on the scale and nature of their maritime economy. Ultimately, the Chola legacy endures not only in the stone of their temples and the beauty of their bronzes but also in the powerful example they set of how to build a lasting and influential civilization.

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Kutirai Padai: Horse Regiments and Statecraft under Ancient Tamil Kings

V. Vignesh

Kutirai Padai – The Cavalry

In the landscape of early historic and medieval South India, the Tamil kingdoms of the Cholas, Pandyas, and Cheras emerged as politically and economically complex states that relied heavily on martial prowess to sustain governance structures. Among the military components, thekudiraicevagar[1]-horse regimentswere pivotal, serving functions ranging from tactical warfare to civil policing and revenue administration.[1]

The Tamil term "Kutirai Padai" translates to "horse army" or cavalry force, reflecting the martial and logistical importance of mounted troops. Given the geographic challenges of Tamilakam and the expensive

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nature of horse maintenance and importation, these regiments symbolised royal power and administrative sophistication.[11]

Military Role and Organisation of Kutirai Padai

Historical Development and Structure

Historical texts, including Sangam literature and Tamil epigraphs, establish the early presence and growing importance of Kutirai Padai in Tamil armies. The Chola military, from the 9th century CE onwards, featured regiments named "Kudhiraipadai," emphasising their prominence alongside infantry, elephant corps, and naval forces[1].

The Chola military organisation was sophisticated, with territorial regiments called "Senai," subdivided into units like "Thalam," each commanded by a "Thalapathi" (equivalent to a colonel) who managed cavalry, infantry, and elephant formations. A Thalam typically comprised thousands of servicemen with cavalry units ranging between 500 and 1000 horses, emphasising significant investment in mounted troops.[1]

Regiments had semi-autonomous identities, often endowing temples and managing local shrines, indicating their embeddedness in socio-religious life. The presence of military academies for training and a dedicated medical corps further reflects the professionalisation of the Tamil armies.

Tactical and Strategic Importance

According to the Sangam text of Purananuru, the song "You in your golden chariot drawn by fast horses with waving plumes are splendid like the red sun that rises up high into the sky from the huge ocean. Because of you being who you are, the people in the countries of your enemies wail without end, like hungry, motherless infants!"Horses provided a crucial battlefield advantage due to their speed, mobility, and shock value. Cavalry units were vital in reconnaissance, flanking manoeuvres, and rapid troop deployments across Tamilakkam's diverse terrains[1].

Beyond warfare, cavalry facilitated the enforcement of the king's will over widespread areas, acting as a rapid response force to quell rebellions, banditry, and civil disturbances. Their operational flexibility supported the king's centralised control over fragmented territories[1].

Expensive imported Arabian horses bolstered the regiments' effectiveness, underscoring the importance of maintaining high-quality cavalry units for strategic dominance[1].

Kutirai Padai and Law Enforcement

Policing Functions

The Tamil kingdoms did not possess a police force; instead, military regiments often doubled as policing entities. Kutirai Padai patrolled trade routes, ensured highway security, and protected agrarian villages from raids[1].

Inscriptions suggest horse regiments were charged with safeguarding temples and marketplaces—vital hubs of public order where adherence to royal laws and tax payment was enforced[1]. The military presence deterred local insurgencies and maintained peace, facilitating economic transactions and social stability.[1]

The king's authority was backed by these mounted units, making them essential for law enforcement across the rural and urban landscape. Literary sources mention "Padikkaval," a concept akin to royal guards or military-police responsible for immediate law enforcement[1].

Economic Role: Kutirai Padai and Revenue Collection

Revenue Administration in Tamil Kingdoms

The revenue administration was closely tied to their military institutions, particularly the *Kutirai Padai*, which played a dual role in ensuring both security and economic stability. Sangam literature, particularly the Purananuru and Pattinappaalai, reveals that the presence of mounted troops was not merely for battlefield valour, but also for safeguarding agrarian settlements, trade routes, and revenue collection centres. The *Purananuru*song ***"On the streets of your enemy countries dug up by yourfast chariots, you yoked dull colored donkeys with white mouths, and ploughed their protected vast spaces. You rode your chariot across their land, and the curved hooves of your***

horses galloping with their white plumes furrowed their famed, fertile fields where flocks of birds sing". highlights how kings ensured the protection of fertile lands and peasant communities through well-trained cavalry, thereby guaranteeing uninterrupted tax inflow from agriculture. Similarly, the *Pattinappaalai* portrays the bustling port city of Kaveripattinam, where revenues from inland trade and maritime commerce were secured by the swift mobility of horse regiments, preventing raids and safeguarding royal wealth. Thus, the *Kutirai Padai* was a vital instrument of statecraft, ensuring the smooth functioning of fiscal administration by linking military power with the economic foundations of the Tamil polity.

Land revenue formed the pillar of Tamil state finances, complemented by customs, tolls, and tributes. Administrative division into "nadus" and "oor" facilitated localised tax assessment and collection managed by officials under royal supervision[11].Taxation records from temple inscriptions reveal a spectrum of levies: land tax (veli), tolls (kadamai), and trade tariffs ensured the state's fiscal strength[1]. Efficient revenue extraction required not only bureaucratic mechanisms but also robust military protection.

Protection and Enforcement by Horse Regiments

Kutirai Padai safeguarded revenue collection points, including roads where tolls were levied and trade hubs were situated. Their superior mobility enabled patrolling of extensive trade routes, critical for the unimpeded flow of goods and stable revenue[1].

According to the Sangam text of Pattinapalai's song on Tax collectors, "Tax collectors sleep on the pure, flower-fragrant sandy banks of the wide Kāviri and protect their fine king's goods on the big streets near the seashore filled with thālai trees with fragrant, white clusters of flowers. They work every day without idling or taking breaks, like the horses tied to the chariot of thescorching sun with rays, and collect taxes",Mounted soldiers also acted as royal messengers and enforcers, swiftly carrying tax orders and collecting dues to prevent evasion or rebellion. Their role was crucial in a pre-modern economy where trust in remote officials was supplemented by visible military coercion[1].The interdependence of cavalry and economic administration illustrates the pragmatic integration of military capability within governance systems—securing revenue streams while maintaining public order.

Comparative Insights: South Indian and Indian Subcontinental Traditions

South Indian Military Traditions

The Tamil kingdom's emphasis on cavalry parallels other South Indian dynasties such as the Pallavas and Hoysalas, which also had prized horses for warfare and policing[1]. South Indian military traditions were deeply intertwined with notions of kingship, valour, and statecraft, with the Kutirai Padai occupying a crucial role in both warfare and governance. As stated in the Sangam song of Purananuru, ***"O leader of archers who carry sharp arrows and wear pretty strands of vēngai flowers that are strung on narai fibre! O lord who owns swift horses and is very generous!"*** The Sangam corpus provides vivid descriptions of the prominence of cavalry in the political and military life of ancient Tamil polities. In *Purananuru*, horses are celebrated as indispensable assets of the king's army, symbolising swiftness, strength, and royal prestige.

Likewise, *Akananuru* highlights the image of war horses adorned with bells and ornaments, charging into battle alongside elephants and infantry, embodying the martial ethos of the Tamil land. These references underscore that horse regiments were not merely instruments of war but were integral to the projection of authority, maintenance of law and order, and the consolidation of agrarian revenue systems. Thus, the Kutirai Padai was both a military necessity and a political tool, reflecting broader South Indian traditions where martial organisation reinforced the legitimacy and stability of kingship. The strategic reliance on imported Arabian horses demonstrates Tamil engagement with international trade networks, which helped sustain military excellence[1].

Comparing the Indian Subcontinent

Northern Indian polities also integrated cavalry within their military and administrative apparatuses. The Mauryan Empire, for instance, maintained large

cavalry regiments utilised in both warfare and internal security.However, Tamil kingdoms uniquely balanced their cavalry's roles between local policing, temple protection, and revenue protection, whereas northern armies exhibited more distinct separations between military and civil functions.This integrated approach reflects South Indian adaptations to regional socio-political realities, emphasising multifunctional troops that are vital for territorial cohesion.

Analysis and Discussion

The available evidence positions Kutirai Padai as a critical nexus between martial prowess and governance. Their mobility and firepower ensured the rapid enforcement of law and state revenue policies.The dual function of Kutirai Padai—in battlefield combat and civil administration—enhanced the king's ability to project power across territories, maintain social order, and secure fiscal resources essential for state sustainability.

The symbiosis between cavalry and economic administration underscores the efficiency of Tamil kingship, where military regiments undertook multifarious roles rooted in local socio-political contexts.Moreover, their patronage of temples and economic activities denotes a militarised socio-religious elite, reinforcing the militarisation of public life and administration.

Conclusion

Ancient Tamil kings strategically deployed Kutirai Padai not only as a military asset but as an institution deeply entwined with law enforcement and revenue collection. Their cavalry regiments secured trade routes, maintained law and order, and ensured effective fiscal mobilisation.This dual military-administrative function of horse regiments contributed substantially to the political stability and economic vitality of Tamil kingdoms like the Cholas, Pandyas, and Cheras.

By examining Indian and South Indian parallels, it becomes evident that the Tamil model provided a distinctive, integrated approach to governance, blending martial, economic, and social functions to reinforce centralised authority.Kutirai Padai thus represents a key military-administrative innovation of the ancient Tamil polity with enduring legacies in South Asian statecraft.

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Rediscovering Korkai: Archaeological Revelations from an Ancient Port City

Dr. S. Subramaniyan[1] and Dr. M. Lavanya[2]

Literary References to Korkai

Tamil Sangam literature, dated roughly between 300 BCE and 300 CE, offers the earliest references to Korkai. The *Akananuru* depicts Korkai as a bustling port where pearl divers, merchants, and kings coexisted.[1] In *Purananuru*, Korkai is described as the seat of Pandya rule and a symbol of maritime prosperity.[2] The *Madurai Kanchi* alludes to the pearls of Korkai as items of luxury that sustained royal courts and diplomacy.[3] *Kalithogai* emphasizes the bustling cosmopolitanism of Tamil ports, with references to Yavanas (foreign traders) arriving at the coast.[4] Beyond poetry, the *Silappathikaram* indirectly situates Pandya wealth in pearls, suggesting that the prosperity of Madurai was founded on resources derived from Korkai.[5] Taken together, these texts indicate that Korkai was not merely an economic hub but also a cultural symbol for Tamil identity. The recurrent imagery of pearls, ships, and Yavanas reveals how deeply maritime trade was embedded in Tamil imagination.

Classical References: Greek and Roman Accounts

Korkai was not only remembered in Tamil literature but also recorded in Greco-Roman texts, confirming its global connections. Claudius Ptolemy’s *Geographia* (2nd century CE) identifies “Korkhai” as a Pandya port, suggesting that knowledge of South Indian trade had reached Alexandria.[6] Pliny the Elder, in *NaturalisHistoria*, devotes a section to Indian pearls, particularly those of the Gulf of Mannar, noting their high demand in Rome.[7] Strabo, writing in the 1st century BCE, refers to Pandya trade, emphasizing pearls as a prized commodity.[8] The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, a navigational manual written by a Greek merchant, documents Tamil ports exporting pearls, spices, and textiles.[9] These references highlight that Roman luxury markets depended heavily on South Indian resources, and Korkai was central to this flow. Beyond pearls, amphorae fragments suggest the inflow

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of Mediterranean goods such as wine and olive oil. The textual and material convergence underscores Korkai's position in the first global economy of the ancient world.

Epigraphic and Inscriptional Evidence

Epigraphic discoveries provide another layer of evidence about Korkai's importance. Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions from Alagankulam and Adichanallur suggest the presence of literate mercantile classes, possibly involved in trade guilds.[10] The Velvikudi Grant, an 8th-century Pandya copper plate, recalls earlier times when pearl fisheries contributed significantly to royal revenue. [11] Though retrospective, it reflects the enduring association of Pandyas with pearls. Further inscriptions from the Pandya period describe donations to temples financed by maritime revenues, illustrating the intersection of economy and religion. [12] Archaeological inscriptions mentioning guilds (*nagaram* and *manigramam*) also suggest institutional frameworks that supported trade at Korkai. [13] These sources reveal that Korkai was not only a fishing center but also part of an organized mercantile system connected with polity and religion.

Archaeological Excavations at Korkai

The excavations carried out by the ASI and the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology since the 1950s have confirmed many literary claims. Finds include rouletted ware of Mediterranean origin, Roman amphorae, beads of semi-precious stones, glass bangles, and large heaps of oyster shells.[14] The amphorae indicate trade with Rome, while rouletted ware suggests Southeast Asian connections.[15] The discovery of iron implements and slag indicates the presence of metallurgical activities.[16] Bead-making debris suggests local craft industries, possibly tied to export.[17] Structural remains such as brick foundations point to permanent settlement.[18] Shell remains confirm that pearl harvesting and processing occurred on site.[19] Together, these discoveries demonstrate that Korkai was not an isolated fishing village but an organized urban port town integrated into global maritime circuits.

Pearl Fisheries and Economy

The pearl fisheries of the Gulf of Mannar, adjacent to Korkai, were among the most famous in the ancient world. Sangam poetry frequently celebrates pearls as symbols of Pandya power.[20] Greek and Roman sources describe Indian pearls as among the most expensive commodities in Mediterranean markets.[21] Archaeological finds of oyster shells at Korkai confirm large-scale pearl harvesting.[22] The Parava community, historically associated with pearl diving, likely played a role in sustaining this industry, forging alliances with both local rulers and foreign traders.[23] Revenue from pearls enabled the Pandyas to maintain political dominance, patronize poets, and invest in religious institutions.[24] The pearl trade also created social hierarchies, as divers, traders, and rulers were differently positioned within the economic system. Beyond wealth, pearls symbolized purity and prestige, making them not just an economic commodity but also a cultural icon of Tamilakam.

Korkai and Maritime Networks

Korkai's significance cannot be understood in isolation; it must be seen as part of the wider Indian Ocean system. The amphorae and rouletted ware suggest links not only with Rome but also with Southeast Asia, possibly through Sri Lanka and the Straits of Malacca.[25]Sangam references to Yavanas arriving by ship illustrate the cosmopolitan nature of Tamil ports.[26] Later Arab travelers such as Ibn Battuta noted pearl fisheries in the region, demonstrating continuity of trade.[27]Korkai's integration into maritime networks meant that it was exposed to cultural exchanges as welllinguistic borrowings, artistic influences, and religious practices were carried by merchants along with goods. This cosmopolitanism made Tamilakam one of the most vibrant regions of the ancient Indian Ocean world, with Korkai as one of its earliest nodes.

Decline of Korkai

Despite its early prominence, Korkai gradually declined due to environmental and political changes. The silting of the Tamiraparani estuary made navigation difficult, while shifting trade routes redirected commerce toward Kayal and later Tuticorin.[28] The political centrality of the Pandyas also shifted toward Madurai, relegating Korkai to a secondary position.[29] However, the symbolic memory of Korkai as the original Pandya capital endured in Tamil tradition and inscriptions. Archaeological remains today provide material testimony to its lost grandeur. The decline of Korkai illustrates how maritime centers are historically contingent, shaped by geography, environment, and political shifts.

Conclusion

Korkai represents a convergence of literature, archaeology, and history. Sangam texts, Greco-Roman records, inscriptions, and excavated artifacts consistently affirm its significance as a center of pearl fisheries, maritime trade, and Pandya power. The findings at Korkai demonstrate the complex urban life of early Tamilakam, characterized by craft specialization, long-distance trade, and cultural exchange. The site illustrates how south india was deeply integrated into the Indian Ocean world, contributing pearls, beads, and textiles while receiving Mediterranean and Southeast Asian imports. Korkai's story also reminds us of the fragility of maritime centers, which rise and decline with environmental and political shifts. As excavations continue, Korkai promises to yield even richer insights into the ancient past of Tamilakam and its role in world history.

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The Practice of Sati Stone worship in Pandiya Country with References to Thirumal and Aruppukottai Sati Stones

Dr. Chellappandian

Introduction

Worship had been started during the nomadic life of mankind itself. The ancient men worshipped natural forces thunder, fire due to fear. It is considered as the origin of natural worship. Then ancient human being started to worship snake and other creatures to safeguard their lives. The beginning of settled life induced them to believe on soul, spirits. Importantly the megalithic men strongly believed that after death their soul stayed in stone. So they started to worship stone to satisfy soul. Through which they thought their clan and cattle would get protected.

Hero stone

As mentioned above the Tamils worshipped Hero stones with a view to gain prosperity of their clan or ethnic group. This is considered as the origin of ancestral worship, the megalithic burial situated in Korankombu village in Dindigul District is an example to this practice. There was a custom among the sangam people too erect a commemorative stone to a soldier who lossed his wife in war or in the attempt of protecting cattle from enemies. It is important to mention that only blood relatives of the deceased erected hero stones. They also inscribed the hero's name on the stone. The sangam literary work Malaipadukadam mentions this tradition as

"Mattravar Sella Nallisai Peyarodu Natta Kal"1

According to R.Poonkundran a notable researcher on herostone, "A commemorative stone may erected to the person who died for the public cause, for which the king or local leader gave endowment to his family called Uthirappadi".2

Another prominent sangam literary work Purananuru mentions as

"Animayirp Peeli Chooti Peyar Porithu Ini Nattanere Kallum"3

The above verse clearly indicates that herostones are sign of valour. A hero cut his head and offers it to **kottravai4** (a mother goddess), he later worshipped as god in Tamil country.

Sati

Sati is a Sanskrit word, which means wife. However, the wife committed suicide on the funeral pyre of husband is also called Sati. This practice was vogue among ardent hindus, particularly among the Rajputs.5 Being associated with religious faith sati was considered as holy practice. Importantly only higher class women were permitted to do sati. In Tamil country too Sati was existed and practiced by higher class society. This ancient practice had been continued till 1829 when it was prohibited by then governor general William Bentinck by the act Rules 17.

Sati in Tamil Literature

The first reference of Sati in Tamil country is witnessed in Tolkappiyam a Tamil grammar work.

"Nallol Kanavanodu Naniyalal Puhi e"6

The above line mentions after the death of husband, the wife of good character fall on the pyre of husband. Another notable sangam work Purananuru (v. 246) gives reference about sati committed by pandiya king's wife perunkoppendu. A part from this, Kurunthogai and Manimegalai also give references about Sati.

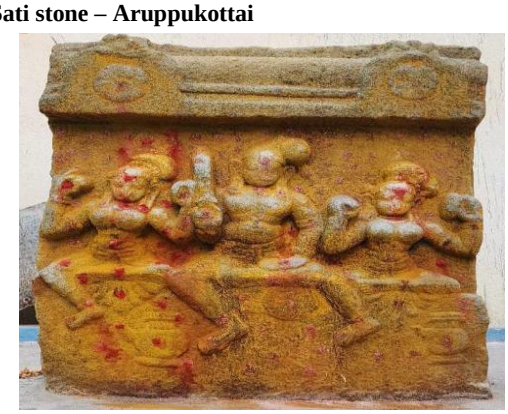
Sati stone – Thirumal Village



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The sati stone worship was existed in Tondaimandalam, Cholamandalam and in Pandiya country also, but each region has its own significant features. Though Pandiya's sati stone were not magnificence in structure as pallava's sculptures, it reflects the customs and cultural practices of people. However, different sati stones have been unearthned in Pandiya country. The Sati stone seen at Thirumal village in Madurai district provides new hypotheses on the practice of Sati. Unlike the female figures found in other sati sculptures, the woman's leg in this stone is tied. This sati stone is carved as relief measuring 21/2 feet height and width.7 A man and woman were also in this sculpture. The man's head is titled to the left, with long hair, ornaments in the ears and a necklace around his neck, with a sword in his right hand. The leg of the female figure is tied, when looking this sculpture she may have refused to commit sati, but her relatives or community leaders may tied her leg and throw her on the funeral pyre of the husband. Srithar an independent researcher said that the woman figure seen holding a bottle would be a liquor bottle. It indicates, the woman was forcibly made of to drink liquor and then she was thrown into fire.8 The female sati stone sculpture seen with tied leg and bound a liquor bottle in hand has not been discovered in Tamilnadu before. Therefore, it is believed that the custom of woman committing sati voluntarily was also forced by the society to do this practice. The sati stone discovered at Thirumal village with tied leg and a bottle in hand are both tentatively considered to be the evidence that woman were forced to commit sati.

Sati stone – Aruppukottai



In this sculpture, the hero is depicted sitting in the middle with two wives on either side of him. The hero has weapon in his right hand. His left hand is placed on his left thigh. The two women seen in sati stone have small balls in their hands. There is figure like kettle is seen on the bottom of sati stone, which is a special feature of Nayak symbol.9 It is believed that during the time of Nayaks, who believed in spirituality, the souls of women who committed suicide as sati. It is believed that their soul went to heaven. The people believed that the kettle was puff in place to fulfill the thirst of the soul while it was going to heaven.10 This sati stone is considered as the most significant of the sati sculpture found so far.

Conclusion

Although there are many sculptures depicting sati, this sculpture in Thirumal village is unique and provide new hypothesis that the woman may have been forced to commit sati. Thottiya Nayak community people are worshipping this sati stone as **Veerasooramadevi**. The sati stone worshipped in Aruppukottai as **Malaiyamman** proves

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10. Ibid., that the people of Pandiya country during the Nayak period had strong belief on paradise and hell. In short the hero stone and sati stone continue to be the symbols of the worship of the common people in Tamil country even today. The beliefs on folk deities among Tamilans enrich the cultural heritage of Tamil country.

Veedur Adhinathar Temple

N.Jayapradha[1] and Dr.T.Kamalakkannan[2]

Location

Veedur is situated 5 kilometers away from Veedur park via Veedur damat Villupuram to Chennai National Highways at Tindivanam Taluk in Villupuram district. This place is situated 23 kilometers in the south eastern direction of Tindivanam and 25 kilometers northeastern side away from Villupuram. Bus facility is there to reach this place from Villupuram and Tindivanam. A Jain temple is there since the ancient times in this village where more than thirty Jain families live.[1] This temple has Adhinathar who is the first Tirtankara of Jainism as a main deity.

History of the Temple

It becomes clear from the sculptures that belong to the Chola period that this temple was built during the Chola period. The word 'Kannaradeva' is mentioned in the prakara of the temple. So it becomes clear that this temple had a special place in the 10th century C.E.[2] Another inscription mentions the word 'Perumpalli Azhwar'. So it becomes clear that there is a Jain monastery in this temple. So there is no prohibition to say that this inscription belongs to the period of Rajaraja Chola I. As per the book of Colonel Mackenzie, it becomes clear that this temple has been the first class devatanam. Lands are there in some places for this temple.[3] They got into trouble during the period of Vijayanagar rule and East India Company rule. But still, this temple has a special place till date without any damage.

Architecture of the Temple

The architecture of this temple has a special architectural artistic feature. The sanctum sanctorum is in square shape. Adhinathar appears as the main deity in this sanctum sanctorum. Artha Mandapa is seen next to it. This is rectangular in shape. Maha Mandapa is located next to it. Six pillars in cylindrical shape are here. They are in the shape of Rudrakanda. A huge pillar which is in square shape is situated in this temple. The pediments of this pillar are situated in a way in which they remind the Chola period without having a floral corner. Muga Mandapa is situated before this place. 12 pillars are built here. These are the arbitrary pillars which are square and octagonal in shape. The pediments which are built above these are called floral pediments. The paintings of Nayakar period are painted in the canopy of the Muga Mandapa. The outer hall is connected to this hall. A compound wall is built around them. An outer compound wall is built around this place. An altar is situated in front of the exterior hall and a pillar of honor called Manastambha is situated next to it. The altar is called 'Vazhipalikal' by Jains. The altar is built in an octagonal shape.[4]

The Manastambha is built next to the altar. This is a huge pillar built of a single stone. This Manastambha has eighteen bands. The Manastambha in Veedur belongs to the 18th century.

The blunt tower in this temple contains parts such as Athistanam, Patham and Prastara.

The series of hall is built under the prakara and in the northern part of prakara. Thirteen pillars are built in this place. A decorative hall is situated in the southeastern corner of the prakara. The idols of Yakshan and Yakshi are decorated and placed in this place during the festival times. Sixteen pillars are there in this hall. These pillars belong to the arbitrary type. The floral corner of this pillar is seen very lengthy. The rafter, blessed tree, projections and an arch are placed on this pillar. A vajana is there above these things.[5]

A sub temple is built for Sirayamsanatharwho was 11thTirtangarain the northern prakara of this temple.

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This temple has been built in the recent days. This temple has parts like Adishtanam, Padam, Prastaram, Vimana, Greevam, Sigara and Kalasa.

The Vimana of this temple has been built in two ways from upwards to downwards and vice versa. This temple is researched from downward position. They contain segments like Adishtanam, Patham, Prastara, Vimana, Greevam, Sivaram and Sthubi or Kalasa. The Athishtana of this temple is found in two ways such as PratibandhaAdishtana and PathabandaAdishtana. The pratiis the upper layer in PratibandhaAdishtana. This has parts like Jagati, Tripatai Kumudham, UrtuvaKambam and Vajana Prati. Vajanais the upper layer in PathapandaAdishtana. Padmavajana is situated as the upper layer. PathapandaAdishtana has the parts such as Kandhara, Adhopadmam, Urtuvakambam, Vajana or Pattigai, Urtuvakambam and Padma vajana.[6]

The middle part above the Adishtana and below Pratistara is called Padam. There are three Devakottamon the three sides of Padam around the sanctum sanctorum. Kumbapancharas are found between the two pillars on both sides of the Devakottam. It is made in a way in which a flowering vine is seen coming outwards of the kumba in Kumbapanchara. The things like Kumudham, Padmam and a bouquet in the form of bell are placed in Kumbapanchara. The things like Vedi, Kal, Kumba, Adhopadmam, Kumudham, Palagai, Kandam, Adhopadmam, Palagai, Veerakandam and Padra Pothikai along with a floral corner are situated in the pillar in the pasted form around the sanctum sanctorum.

Prastara is a portion situated below the Vimana and above the Padam. The lower part of the Prastara is Uthiram which is a beam. The Boothavari and Valai are placed on Uthiram. The Kabotha, Uthirapattikai and Prathi are situated above them. A sheath has been built on Kabotham.[7]

The part which is above the Prastara on the sanctum sanctorum is called Vimana. This contains portions such as Kala, Greevam, Sigaram and Kalasa. Salai, auricle and Agarai in every floor of the Vimana. The Jain images are created on the Salai, Agarai and Karnakoodu.

The part that is above the Kala or Vimana and below the Sigaram is known as Greevam. A greevam which is a head is created here as in the other Jain temples.

The place above the Greevam is known as Sigaram which means peak. Four sheaths are placed on the four sides of it. The Kalasa is situated above the lotus flower. This contains parts such as Padmam, Kumbam and Nala Kumudham. The Kalasam belongs to the recent time.[8]

Jain Sculptures found in the Temple

The main deity of this temple is Adhinathar who is the first Tirtankara. His yaksha is Komuka yaksha and Chakreshwari Yakshi. He is seen in a sitting posture by keeping the meditating mudra. There is a decorative halo behind his head and a tri umbrella above it. The copper idols of many Tirtankaras belonging to later period are there in the sanctum sanctorum. The sculptures of Mahavir and Parsuvanathar which have a contemporary image are in the storeys of the exterior walls of the sanctum sanctorum.

Sirayamsanathar is the eleventh Tirtankara. His symbol is deer or rhinocero. His Yaksha is Eshwar and Yakshi is Gauri. The idol of Sirayamsanathar made of stone is kept in this temple. This belongs to the recent period.

The image of Dharmadevi in this temple belongs to the 10^{th} century C.E. The images of Dharmadevi in Veedur belongs to the 10^{th} century C.E. They are in a standing posture. Commonly there would be no relevance between all the images of Dharmadevi. The two images of Dharmadevi in Veedur are not related to each other. They look like a smiling face like a lotus flower. These two images are created in a way in which they are wearing silk clothes on their hip. They are in a standing posture on the lion. These are surrounded by two males and a female image.

Bakthara slogans and the metal statues of Navagraha Tirtankaras are there along with the idols of Rishabadeva and Manathungachariyar at the Bakthara mandapa in the northeastern side of the temple.

The stucco images that are in the upper part of the Vimana of this temple are established in the recent times. The idols of Mahavir and Chaturvimsati which have the small sculptures of twenty four Tirtankaras are kept in the entrance hall. These might have been created in the 17th or 18th century C.E.[9]

Paintings found in the Temple

Thirty paintings have been done in the entrance hall of this temple. The explanation of each painting is given in all the paintings. They are written in Grantha script. Each painting is drawn on the limestone mixture. They are painted in a way which explains the history of Adhinathar. These are painted in the southeastern corner of the Vidana of Muga Mandapa. These are considered to be belonging to the 17th century.[10] The first painting is drawn as if the servants are standing. The second painting denotes that Devas including Chaudarmandis go to Ayodhya on hearing the news of the birth of Adhinathar. The third painting explains that Adhinathar sits on an elephant named Airavata and goes to take a holy bath. The fourth painting shows Adhinathar sitting in a meditating posture at Padmapeet in Panduga Silai Mandapa. Devas are seen holding an earthen pot filled with water and standing near Adhinathar. The dance stage which shows happiness is shown in the fifth painting. The Pooja done by Adhinathar is shown in the sixth painting. The marriage scene of Adhinathar takes place in the eighth painting. The ninth painting shows Adhinathar playing swing with his two wives namely Sowndarya and Yasaswati. The dream of Yasaswati is shown in the tenth painting. In the eleventh painting, Yasaswati asks Adhinatharabout the effect of her dream. The scene of Adhinathar showing blessings in Samavasarana is shown in the twelfth painting.[12]

The scene of Adhinathar giving sermon to his two daughters Sundari and Brahmi is depicted in the thirteenth painting. The Pooja done to Adhinathar is shown in the fourteenth painting. The vamsas like Nagavamsa and Guruvamsa are drawn as the paintings in the fifteenth painting. In this, the leader of Guruvamsa is doing the Pooja. The scene of Adhinathar dancing with Absaras is shown in the sixteenth painting. The seventeenth painting depicts the Devas from eight directions come in the form of Neelanjan who is a chief dancing woman and welcomes Adhinathar. The eighteenth painting denotes Adhinathar in a Vimana. The scene of Vidhyadars taking Adhinathar to heaven is depicted in the nineteenth painting.[12]

The scene of Devas carrying Adhinathar on their shoulders and going to Degashvata is shown in the twentieth painting. The twenty first painting shows the scene of Adhinathar going to get the initiation. The twenty second painting shows that the Devendras and the kings and Abaranatis who were the dead ancestors are there in the ocean of milk. The twenty third painting shows Kasmayokasekar and Rishabar doing penance in a standing posture. The twenty fourth painting denotes Baratachakravarthy seeking blessing and returning from there. The twenty fifth painting shows Marisagumars who were the grandchildren of Adhinathar and the Children of Baratachakravarthy and Anandamathy doing penance. The scene of Dharanendra taking Nami and Vinami in a Vimana is shown as the twenty seventh painting. The twenty eighth painting is in a destroyed state. The Kanadharas like Adhinathar in Samavasaranaare shown in the twenty ninth painting. The thirtieth painting shows Barata going towards his country in order to rule his place.[13]

Conclusion

More than thirty Jain families live in Veedur. A Jain temple that belongs to Chola period which has Adhinathar who is the first Tirthankara as its main deity is situated in this place. The architecture is very special in this temple. Thirty paintings have been drawn in the Muga mandapa of this temple. The explanations about the paintings are written on each painting. Pooja is done twice everyday and special Poojas are done on special occasions. The festivals are celebrated every year. This temple has been greatly administered by the Indian Archaeological Research department. Lot of inscriptions should have been in this temple during the ancient times. They have been destroyed completely as the renovation works are done many times in this temple. So it is not an exaggeration to say that this temple is one of the most important Jain temples in Tamil Nadu.

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The History of Alagramam Sri Yamadhandeeswarar Temple

S. Arul[1] and Dr. V. Vijayarangam[2]

Introduction

"Do not dwell in the place where there is no temple" is an old saying. As per the saying, a situation arose to an extent of telling that there is no place without temples today. These temples become the treasury of the arts. People worshipped nature in the beginning. Only later, the present Gods and worshipping methods of them have developed. The kings who ruled Tamil Nadu erected many temples here and there for their victory and for the citizens and changed Tamil Nadu as the place where temples are seen commonly. The significant one among them is Sri Yamadhandeeswarar temple situated in Alagramam.

Location

Alagramam is located near Kooteripattu at Tindivanam Taluk in Villupuram district. This place is situated 5.6 kilometers in the southwestern side from Kooteripattu in Tindivanam to Villupuram Road, 34 kilometers away from Villupuram, 16 kilometers away from Tindivanam, 10 kilometers away from Mailam, 144 kilometers away from the state capital Chennai. Many temples like Sri Yamadhandeeswarar temple, Veetriruntha Perumal temple, Draupatiamman temple, Selliyamman temple and Sri Adinathar temple are located in this place.

Alagramam – Etymology

Alagramam was called Alakoorai during the Pallava period and Arkamur during the Chola period. It was initially called 'Arkamur' as it is located in the northern shore of Thondi river and slowly changed as 'Alagramam'.

Puranic History

Markandeya who had only 16 years as his lifetime, started doing Pooja for Lord Shiva knowing his final duration of life. When Lord Yama came to take his life, he hugged the Shiva Linga tightly by completely

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surrendering himself to Lord Shiva. When Yama threw his noose on Markandeya, it fell on Lord Shiva too. The noose fell on Lord Shiva who is the supreme God who does not have beginning and end. He got very angry and kicked Yama using his legs. He has given the boon of eternity to Markandeya.

The sin of throwing the noose on Lord Shiva tortured Yama prevented him from doing his duty. So Yama went to many pilgrim centers and finally reached a place called Alagramam. He started doing penance towards Lord Shiva here. Lord Shiva became very happy on seeing the penance of Yama and appeared before him and said that 'his sins will get purified if he takes bath six times in the River Ganga'. Then he created Ganga river in the pond of this place on order for Yama to take bath. The place where Lord Shiva created the river Ganga for Yama is called 'Alagramam' and the deity of this temple is called Yamadhandeeswarar.

History of the Temple

This temple belongs to the Pallava period. The maintenance work of this temple which was in a demolished state without proper maintanence started in the year 2000. After this work was over, the great consecration ceremony was held by pouring the holy water on the deity and the Kalasa of the Vimana done by the Thirukkayilaya Paramparai Mailam Bommapura Adheenam 20th Pattam Gurumaha Sannidhanam Thiruperunthuru. Sivagnana Palaya Swamigal, Thirukkayilaya Paramparai Meykanda Santhanam Peroor Adheenam 25th Gurumaha Sannidhanam Thiruperunthuru. Shantanga Maruthasala Adigalar, and Goumara Marabu Thandapani Swamigal Vazhivazhi Siravai Adheenam 4th Gurumaha Sannidhanam Thiruperunthuru. Ramananda Kumaragurupara Adigalar. The maintenance of this temple is done by P. Kumaralingam who is the secretary of Manivasagar Arutpani Mandram, Perur in Coimbatore. This temple has been compleleyy renovated and built newly. Only the sculptures of the main deity, Tripurasundari, Lord Vinayaga, Lord Muruga, Lord Vishnu and Laguleesa found in this temple are the old ones. Other sculptures are made newly.

Structure, Architecture and Sculpture of the Temple

This temple is situated facing east in 50 cents of land in the center of the village. Sanctum sanctorum, ante chamber, Artha mandapa, Muga mandapa, Vimana and tower are found in this temple. The royal tower which has three tiers is found above the entrance of this temple which is along with the compound wall. The holy sculptures made of stucco are seen in the royal tower. The trident stone, altar and Nandi hall are found after entering right inside the temple. Nandi which is seen in the Nandi hall is called Adhigara Nandi. The sculptures of Lord Vinayaga and Lord Muruga are found on the pillars of Nandi hall.

The sculpture of Veerpatra is stuated facing west in the right side next to the entrance and the sculptures of Lord Vinayaga and the male and female snake are found facing east under the Bael tree which is the holy tree of this temple. The small level sculpture of Saneeshwara is found facing south without any shrine in the northeastern corner of this temple. The shrine of Kala Bairava and Natraja facing south are situated right next to each other after it.

The kitchen of this temple is situated in the southeastern corner next to the entrance of the temple. The separate shrines for the four Shaiva saints namely Thirugnanasambandhar, Thirunavukkarasar (Appar), Sundarar and Manikavasagar are located in the southern prakara next to it. The sculptures of 63 Nayanmars and 9 Thogaiyadyars are seen facing north in the circumambulatory path hall.

The sculptures of Dvara Balagas made of stucco are found on both sides of the entrance of Artha Mandapa in Muga mandapa. The stone sculpture of Lord Vinayaga is seen beside the Dvarabalaga on the right side and the stone sculpture of Lord Muruga is seen beside the Dvarabalaga on the left side. The sculptures of Lord Vinayaga, Lord Shiva, Parvati and Lord Muruga made of stucco are found above the Muga mandapa.

A Nandi in a small level is found facing the main deity in Artha Mandapa. The sculptures of Lord Vinayaga in the south and goddess Durga in the north are found in the devakoshtas of Arthamandapa. The

sculptures of Dakshanamoorthy in the south, Lingothbavar in the west and Lord Brahma in the north are found in the devakoshtas of the sanctum sanctorum.

The main deity who is in the sanctum sanctorum is found as the four barred Linga on the square shaped Aavudayar. As per the saying of the historians, the main deity of this temple belongs to the Pallava period. Lord Shiva who is known as Yamadhandeeswarar appears as a self manifested deity. A Nagara Vimana which has three floors is found above the sanctum sanctorum. Various idols made of stucco are found in the Vimana.

The shrine of Tripurasundari is situated facing south in the north of Muga mandapa. This shrine is found along with the sanctum sanctorum and Artha mandapa. The goddess Tripurasundari who is seen as 6 feet hight sculpture is in a standing posture showing Abhaya and Varada Hasta. Upper hands carry a blue colored lotus flower. Nagara Vimana is found above the sanctum sanctorum of the goddess. Various sculptures made of stucco is found in the Vimana.

There are sub shrines for Lord Vinayaga, Lord Muruga, Lord Vishnu, Chandikeshwara and Kala Bairava in this temple. When the people of this village started renovating this temple in the year 2000 as the temple was seen in a destroyed state without proper maintenance, the sculptures of Lord Vinayaga, Lord Muruga, Vishnu and Lakuleesar were found. The researchers confirm that these sculptures belong to the Pallava period. When they researched further, only the inscriptions found in the sculptures could be read. The inscription in the sculpture of Lord Muruga was in a destroyed state.

Information from the Inscriptions

The stone letters of three lines are inscribed in the altar where the elder Vinayagar who is newly found is in a sitting posture at the temple in Alagramam. The form of the letters in this temple belongs to the period before the stone letters of Poolankurichi and the period before the stone letters found in the cave temple of Karpaga Vinayaga. It belongs to the period between 4th and 6th centuries A.D. The stone letters found in the 'hen memorial stone' found by the researchers at Arasalapuram in Villupuram district, the Nisitika stone letters found in Thirunathar Kundru near Gingee, the Nisitika stone letter inscribed on the Parayanpattu rock near Avalurpet and the stone letters inscribed near Keeralvaraivukal in Perumukkal belong to the 5th century A.D. A sentence '*Pramirai Pannura - Seviga - Magan - Kizhar - Kon - Koduvithu*' is inscribed in this sculpture. It is said that this sentence denotes the sculptor who sculpted this inscription. The Tamil rounded letters belonging to the 5th century A.D. of the eldest Vinayaga of Alagramam is a new arrival. The sculpture of the eldest Vinayaga which contains the Tamil rounded letters is the foremost Vinayaga sculpture found all over Tamil Nadu.

Then an inscription of Chola period and seven inscriptions of the Vijayanagar period are found in this temple. These inscriptions are found damaged heavily and seen without any continuation. These inscriptions denote that grants had been given for Poojas and Naivedyas.

Conclusion

Sri Yamadhandeeswarar temple in Alagramam which belongs to the Pallava period is renovated newly as it was found in a completely damaged state without proper maintenance. One of the very ancient sculptures of Lord Vinayaga in Tamil Nadu is seen here. It is special that Kanchi Maha Periyavar Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswati Swamigal has come and worshipped here. It is believed that all the doshas of the devotees who worship Yamadhandeeswarar get relieved. So this place is called the pilgrim center which solves and dissolves all the sins of the devotees. The devotees realize the God of this temple through their spiritual experience and through their worship. The God also accepts the love and grace of the devotees with His blessings.

End Notes

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Nagaraja Temple: A declaration of Religious Syncretism or a Sectarian Transition

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Nagaraja Temple

The term "Nagercoil" is an Eponym as it was only dedicated to the Naga Raja Temple of Kottar. Later the term was profoundly used to indicate the area around the temple and then it is the most important name in the topography of Kanniyakumari district as it is its headquarters. Before 1800 B.C, the places under the name 'Nagercoil' were called 'Kottar' or 'Kottaru' (in Tamil). After 1800s, the majority of the area under Kottar was named Nagercoil and now, Kottar was a small statutory town in Nagercoil. (1)

Kottar was a most famous town and a trade centre in ancient Tamilagam even Ptolomy and Pliny the Elder have mentioned Kottar in their works associated with Indo-Roman Trade as "Kottiara metropolis" and "Kottara" respectively. (2)Even Thirungyana Sambanthar marks this town as 'Kottar' in his Thiruppathigams. (3)

When Kulothunga Chola tried to capture the south, Kalingathupparani mentioned this area Kottaru as given below,

முள்ளாறும் கல்லாறும் தென்னார்ஓட
முன்னொருநாள் வாள்பயன் முனிந்த போரில்
வெள்ளாறும் கோட்டாறும் புகையால் மூட
வெந்தவனம் இந்தவனம் ஒக்கில் ஒக்கும்
(Jeyangkondar, Kalingathupparani:95)

While a person with less Tamil literary knowledge might easily misinterpret this poem, it metaphorically describes the war damages done by the enemies by setting fire at Kottar. These lines states that the Pandiyan army ran in the paths filled with thrones and stones and they crossed the river, reached Kottar and then Kottar was filled with smoke that rose form war. (4)

Folk lores based on this temple for Naga Raja (King of Snakes or Serpent King) were all almost a century old. At that period, this temple was surrounded by agricultural lands, Coconut trees, Peepal/Pipal trees, and Nerium Oleander plants (Arali / aka Naga Arali). This nature filled area act as the home for a numerous King Cobras around the temple, currently there is no forest and they were replaced with buildings around the temple; thus, no cobras either. (5)

The Folk Lore went on like a young maiden cut grass for her cattle, she accidentally chopped offone of the heads of a five-headed serpent/cobra, she realised the blood in her sickle soon after and found out that she mutilated a sacred creature, in panic she called out her

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villagers. The villagers want to amend the mistake and console that mystical creature of five heads, hence they construct a small temple dedicated to that Five-headed Serpent. (6)

Likewise, there are a lot of stories of several kings/rulers constructed this temple also in circulation. One of the prominent lores was A King of Kalakad wanted to reconstruct his kingdom, during the process of restoration of a remote forest, a stone was got broken and blood gushed out from it.While the workers amazed with the sight, there a seen a reflection of Cobra in the blood. At the same night, A Man-Cobra envisioned in the King's dream and warned him that his workers destroyed himself and if the King has to recover from his leprosy, he might commission a temple for Cobra King and worship him. As per that, the King of Kalakad constructed a Naga Temple in Kottar. (7)

There is another version of KalakadKing's folk lore associated with this temple. The Kottar area was once belonged to the Venad regime and the forest surrounding the temple was a dwelling place of King Cobra also called as SharphaKaavuin local tough. A girl from Kannimedu area, while passing that particular place had met with a cobra by chance and begun to worship it by offering milk to it. While seeing this, the villagers also had joined the Cobra-worship along with that girl, and in time growing they built a temple in that premises and consider the sand from those snake-hill/ ant-hill and herbs growing near by the temple as Prasad. They even in the zenith of belief apply the Prasad in forehead, body, and even consume it, by believing it might cure all their illnesses. This story spread wide and eventually placed into the vision of the King of Kalakad – King Poothala Veera Sreeveera Udhya Marthanda Varma, who ruled Venad from 1516 B.C.E to 1535 B.C.E. (8) After got-up the news, the King visited the temple followed the sacred practices for forty-one days, consumed the sacred herbs offered to the deity, and eventually recovered from his leprosy. It is said that, the herb used in the temple was Kodai Ilai aka Oda Valli, when a residue of Cobra such as its sacales, skin or feces get in contact with this herb, both of them compoundly act as a medicine to a lot of skin infections, and ultimately it has cured the Leprosy of the King. Thus, the King commissioned to reconstruct a massive temple dedicated to Cobra God. (9)

There is a surreal Jain myth surrounding this Temple's origin. The Uthara Purana of Jainism states that there is a pair of Cobras were killed by a Asur named Mahibala. However, they heard themanthrachanting of 23rd Jain Thirthankara Parshvanath and reborn as the King and Queen of Lower World/ Adho Loka (Hell). One day, the powerful waves/ vibrations created by the Dyana of Parshvanath spread in the sky and trembled the path of Samvarathe Kantharava. Thus, Samvara used his force to create a cloudburst to halt the Dyana of Parshvanath. To save the Parshvanath from this extreme rainfall, the King of the Lower World Dannentra, the Snake-King, flattered his hood and stand behind him to protect the Thirthankara from rain. When the water level gotincreased, the Queen of Snakes, Padmavathi, spouse of Dannentra**,** making a Lotus appeared in his foot which helps him float in water, hence, save the Parshvanath without disturbing his Dyana/ Meditation. Though it is considering a myth, there are two statues in the Nagaraja Temple's entrance which is dedicated to those snake king and queen. Even, Moolavar / main deity of temple is the Nagaramman, who is none other than the Snake Queen Padmavathy herself. The sanctum next to Nagaramman/ Nagar sanctum is for Nagaraja (Snake King), and this deity is obviously Dannentra only. (10) Currently, there is a sanctum dedicated to Lord Shiva in between these two sanctums (11), and the Vaishnavites converted the Dannentra's sanctum into the sanctum of Anandha Krishna.

There is also a popular folk lore prevailed among Malayalees which is the amalgamation of the above stated incidents. A Namboothiri devotee of Lord Shiva received a Nagamanickam from Vasuki, the king of serpents, as a divine gift. The Namboothiri then began worshipping Nagaraja and Nagayakshi. (12) Later, while traveling through Kottar (present-day Nagercoil), he encountered a woman crying by a rock from which blood was flowing. Upon investigation, he recognized the rock as a five-headed Nagaraja idol. He conducted the necessary rituals and built a small shrine at the site.

(13) This simple shrine was later expanded into the present-day temple, with additional sanctums for Lord Maha Vishnu and Shiva.

Kottar – A Jain Fort

Nagaraja Temple is situated in Kottar, and before the Bakthi Movement washed out Buddhism and Jainism in Tamil Country, there are innumerous Buddhist and Jain monks lived in Kottar with high heritage. It can be known by Sambanthar's Devaram but not in a positive way, because, as a Saivite, Sambanthar criticized Jains and Buddhist as far as he can in his verses. (18)Sambanthar censured these monks by saying they were lacking morality and the Lord Shiva never bestowed his grace up on such people, and he definitely used such impolite words to mention them.

உடையிலாது உழல் கின்ற குண்டரும்
ஊணருந்த வத்து ஆயசாக்கியர்
கொடையிலாமனத்தார்குறைஆரும்கோட்டாற்றில்
(Sambanthar, Thevaram-2, Thirukkottaaru:10) (19)

கருக்கொடுத்ததுவராடையர்காட்சி இல்லாததோர்
தடுக்கிடுக்கிச்சமணேதிரிவார்க்குத்தன்னருள்
கொடுக்கில்லாக் குழகன் அமரும்திருக்
கொட்டாற்றுள்
இடுக்கணின்றித் தொழுவார் அமரர்க்கு
இறையாவரே
(Sambanthar, Theveram-2, Kottaaru:10) (*20*)

In the first verse, Sambanthar mentions the Naked monks who belongs to the Digambara category and in the second verse, he marked the monks wear discolored robes, which indicates the Svetambara category of Jain monks. Overall, these verses from Thevaram portrays the presence of Jain monks in Kottar town during the 7th century C.E, and ThirungyanaSambanthar heavily criticized those monks lived by getting alms as a part of his broader effort to promote Saivism. (21)

Pancha-Parameshtiis the five steps of evolution of a Jain monk, from Monk to Thirthankara, a spiritual person should try his best to achieve all the five steps through his perfect belief; knowledge; and conduct. The steps are,

- Sadhu : A Sadhu is a monk or a nun who renounced their worldly life and practices the five great vows/ Mahavrathas such as non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-attainment. They always indulge in constant spiritual practices.
- Upadhyaya : They are usually a teacher or a preceptor who has thorough knowledge in Jain scriptures. They are responsible for teaching the monks, nuns, and the laymen.
- Acharya :Acharya is the head of the Jain ascetic order. They are considered as the spiritual leaders of Jainism. They are also considered as the living embodiment of the Jain principles.
- Siddha : Siddha is a soul that achieved liberation from the cycle of birth and death, but not attained Kevala Jnana. Having shed all Karmic bonds, they reside at the highest point of the universe called the Siddhashila.
- Arihant : Arihant is a soul that attained perfect knowledge/ Kevala Jnana, and have reached the path of liberation but have not yet given up their physical body. In Jainism, all the Thirthankaras are Arihants but not all the Arihants are Thirthankras, the Thirthankaras are supreme beings in Jainism and they are fold-makers, there are only twenty-four of them were presented till now, and in this current Jain cosmic wheel of time, no Thirthankara will be born or made, only Arihant is the supreme position a Jain monk can attain.(22) (23)

The first three level monks listed in Pancha-Parameshti were lived in Kottar Nagaraja Temple and they were distinguished in Architecture and Medicine. All the inscriptions related to Jains of Kottar speaks about the Teacher who make the student to do this / that specimen.(24)

Even these monks were not isolated and maintained their connections with the other monks resided in Kazhugu Malai, Thiruchaaranathu Malai, and Thirukkurandi. (25)These teachers are also called 'Padaarar' in KazhuMalai inscriptions.(26)(27)

The inscriptions that found on a stone near the Ayyanar Temple in Kazhugumalai, Kovilpatti Taluk, ThirunelveliDitrict holds the names of the Jain monk-students of Kottar are listed below,

- *திருக்கொட்டாற்று பாதமலத்தான் சன்மம்புட்ப்பணந்தி செய்வித்த திருமெனி (28)*
- *திருக்கோட்டாற்று உத்தணந்திக் குரவடிகள் மாணாக்கர்சாந்தி செனப் பெரியார் செய்வித்ததிரு மெனி (29)*
- *ஸ்ரீ திரு கொட்டாற்றுபாத முலத்தான் அரங்கன்மாறன செய்வித்ததிருமெனி (30)*
- *ஸ்ரீ திருகொட்டாற்று விமளசந்திரக் குரவடிகள் மாணாக்கர்சாந்தி செனஅடிகள் செய்விச்சபடிமம் (31)*
- *ஸ்ரீ புட்ப்பணந்திபடாரர் மாணாக்கர் பெறாணந்திபடாரர் செய்விச்சதிருமெனி(32)*

The above inscriptions mentions the names of the Jain Monk-Teachers such asUtthananthiKuravadigal, Vimazha Chandra Kuravadigal, PutpananthiPadaarar, also it mentions the Jain Monk-Students SaanthisenaPeriyaar, SaanthisenaAdigal, Peraananthi Padaarar. Those Monks and their students went to Kazhugu Malai which is situated in Tirunelveli and carved some stone architectural work to assist the Jain monks residing there, in return the locals of Kazhugumalai carved their names and work in a stone near the present Ayyanar temple of Kazhugumalai, Kovilpatti.

In the same place, we can witness the presence of female Jain Monk-students from Thiruchaaranthumalai contribute the same level of excellence stone art work in Kazhugumalai, also retrieved from the same inscription. They are

- *ஸ்ரீ மிழலூர்க்குரத்தியார் மாணாக்கியார் திருச்சாரணத்த படைகள் செய்வித்ததிருமெனி(33)*
- *ஸ்ரீ கொட்டுர் நாட்டு சிறு..... ல்தலிசடையன் கொற்றியைசார்த்தி திருச்சாரணத்துக் குரத்திகள் செய்வித்தபடிமம். (34)*
- *ஸ்ரீ கொட்டுர்நாட்டு பெரும்பற்றூர்கூத் தங்காமனை சாத்தி திருச்சாரணத்துக் குரத்திகள் செய்தபடிமம் (35)*

These inscriptions clearly represent the presence of Male as well as Female Jain monks in Kottar area. There are even Female Jain Monk-Teacher such as MizhaloorKurattiyarwas presented during that era.

Studying all these inscriptions dated 8th century C.E indicates, the Kumari region was once filled with highly educated and prestigious Jain Sadhus and Sadhvis who excelled in art, architecture, education, and medicine.(36)

Nagaraja Temple – A Jain Shrine

The Moolavar of Nagaraja Temple is none other than Nagaramman also known as Padmavathy – the Snake Queen of Jain tradition.(37)Moolavar, theNagar statue is five-headed serphantwith one head being chopped off state. Dr. Siva. Vivekanandan states that it is a very tiny statue of about only one and half inch length, (38)the temple head priest P. K. Narayanan Namboothiri firmly denies it and says that “the statue of moolavar of Nagaraja Temple – the Nagaraja is almost ‘Ten inches’ in heigh, the previous writer might be misinterpreted the size of it, as the pottiwho doing regular poojas to that particular idol, I can vow that it is almost ten inches, not more not less”. (39)The full scale statue of Nagaraja placed in the Ananda Krishna sanctum of this temple is originally, Dannentra, the Snake King, who is Yakshan (protector) of 23rd Thirthankara Parshvanath. And this statue was not carved but made, made with a special mixture called ‘Kadu Sarkkarai’,it’s a mixture of Glue, Resin, Kulkulu, Brown Sugar, Red Dye, Red Sand, Ghee, and Oil. This mixture mixed with glue and resin became highly durable;however it should not get wet, Hence, the Three foot statue of Nagaraja is not being given any abhishekam.(40) This Nagaraja statue was stays naked with a five-headed serpent above his head, posing Abhaya mutra, with the companion yakshis of Ambhika and Padmavathy in the right and left respectively. Currently, deities Ambhika and Padmavathy were considered as the Bhama and Rukmani, the partners of the deity Ananda Krishna. (41)

There are the statues of Jain Tirthankaras were presented in the pillars of Artha Mandabhas of this temple. Detailed statues of Neminatha, Parshvanatha, Mahavira, Ambhika, and Padmavathy were carved in the Artha Mandabha. There are two statues of

Parshvanatha in this temple. On the ceiling of Nagaramman sanctum, there is a statues of Dannenthra with his partners Ambhika and Padmvathay.(42)There are also the statues of animals, birds, not so ferocious calm Yazhis, dancers and musicians were carved in the pillars of Nagaraja Temple. (43)

Until 16th century C.E, the Temple was a popular Jain shrine, after that due to political changes, the Hindu worshipping practices were adapted in that temple. Most of the inscription of this temple belong to the 16th century C.E. Around C.E. 1521, the Venad ruler Boothala Veera Sree Veera Uthaya Maarthaanda Varma renovated the old temple and donated a lot of lands in the name of 'Palli Santham'.(44)However, the Hindu worship was began to amalgamated into the Jain shrine during the same period of Udhaya Maarthanda Varma. More Over, Palli Satham is none other than the land donations given to Jain or Buddhist study centers and educational institutions. (45)

Ten out of twelve inscriptions in Nagaraja temple are related to Jainism. In these inscriptions, the contributors gave donations to the temple for its religious practices such as doing poojas, offering prasadhas, and conducting festivals. (46)

In conclusion, The Nagaraja Temple is a fascinating testament to the shifting religious landscape of southern India. What is now a celebrated Hindu temple dedicated to the serpent god has deep roots in Jainism. Its history, from being a Jain shrine housing deities like Dannentra and Padmavathy, to its eventual transformation under Hindu influence, illustrates the dynamic nature of religious traditions. The survival of Jain-related inscriptions and architectural elements within the temple serves as a powerful reminder of a time when Kottar was a vibrant center of Jain art, learning, and asceticism. The temple's story, therefore, is not just one of worship, but also a chronicle of cultural and religious transition.

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Sri Margasagaya Ishvarar as Gleand From the Chola's Inscriptions at Virinchipuram

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Location of Virinchipuram

Virinchipuram is one of the saiva sacred places in South India that lies in North latitude 12° 55.5' and East Longitude 79° 1', on the right bank of the river Palar at about 14 km west of Vellore, the head quarter of the present Vellore District. This place is well connected by road and rail. The national high ways coming from Chennai to Bangaluru runs through it just 1 km away in the Southern direction. The Sourthern railway runs on the norther side of the place. The Virinchipuram village is located in the centre of Vellore taluk and ancient Tondaimandalam[1]. The Tondaimandalam covers the area between the Bay of Bengal in the east, the coral mountain in the range of Eastern Ghats in the west, Venkata Mountain in the north and the river Pinagi in the south. Physio geographically the Virinchipuram

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region is situated in between 12° 39' - 12° 57' N and 78° 39' 79° 13'E, west of Madras at a distance of about 135 km. It is bounded on the north by Gudiyattam, on the east by Arcot, on the south by Polur and Arni and on the west by Vaniyambadi towns with an area of about 1000 square miles.

Critical Study Of The Legend

Generally the legends are fanciful tales which created out of imagination, intended to appeal to the faith on God and glorify the place. They do not posses any history in the accepted terms. The events which are described in the Sthalapuranas are all exaggerated stories and not of reason. They built upon the belief in the supernatural divine beings. However, a careful study of the 'Sthalapuranas and other relevant fables of the temple help to understand that when and how the legends arose, what light they throw on the existing practices in the temple and howfar the legends of this temple has been influenced by the traditions of other places are noteworthy.

Historical Background of the Temple

The Margasagaya Iswara temple of Virinchipuram has a rich tradition connected with the patronage of great rulers like Pallavas, Cholas[2], Later Pandyas[3], Sambuvarayas and Vijayanagar[4] rulers in different periods of South Indian history. To understand and to get a proper perspective of the temple and its history, it is necessary to study the broad outline of the historical background of the temple and the Virinchipuram region[5].

Generally, the history of a particular region throws light on various aspects of different rulers and their dynasties, the administrative divisions, the provincial and local quarters and socio, economic, political and religious impacts over this area from time to time. Accordingly, an attempt is made to bring out a glimpse of the historical background of the temple and the region from pre-historic to Vijayanagar times under several periods viz., Pre-historic period, Early historic period upto Pre - Pallava, Pallava, Cholas, Later Pandyas, Sambuvarayas and Vijayanagar.[6]

The history of this region and the temple has been sketched with the aid of numerous stone inscriptions mostly available from the temple and its nearby places. In addition, the literary and copper plate records also supplement the present work. The Archaeological and excavation reports are the main source materials for writing the pre- history of the region[7].

The Period of Chòlas (846 A.D - 1279 A.D.)

Before the actual decline and deterioration of the Pallava Empire, Vijayalaya Chola-I (850 A.D-871 A.D.)[8] and Aditya-1 (871 A.D.-907A.D.)[9] were the subordinates to Nandivarma-III, Nripatunga varman and Aparajita. It was Aditya, who betrayed Aparajita and established the Chola authority over the area of Chola mandalam and Tondaimandalam. At the initial stage of about 897 A.D. Aparajita was murdered and a part of Tondaimandalam was annexed to the kingdom of Aditya as revealed by his record at Kanchipuram[10]. His subsequent conquest of Tondaimandalam upto Nellore was also indicated by his Thillaistanam record and infact he died near Kalahasti of Tondaimandalam. Therefore, as early as Aditya, Virinchipuram region must have passed into the hands of the Chola ruler.

During the time of Parantaka-l (907 A.D.-957 A.D.) the Virinchipuram region was found as the part and parcel of the Chola Empire. There are two records from the ruined Siva temple at Solapuram near Virinchipuram dated 907 A.D. and 938 A.D. and another inscriptiondated 910 A.D. from Virinchipuram itself issued by Parantaka-l confirming his suzerainty over this region. The latter record issued in his 3rd regnal year is found in the courtyard of the first Prakara of the temple. The inscription is damaged and refers to a cattle raid. It also records the death of a warrior whose figure holding in his hands, a bow and an arrow is cut in relief beside the inscription.[11]

In the last days of Parantaka, Rastrakuta king Krishna III invaded Tondaimandalam and occupied it after the battle of Takkolam in 949 A.D. Neverthless Parantaka himself tried to recover Tondaimandalam, the ambition was materialized during the period of his successor **Uttama Chola** (973 A.D.-985 A.D.). Numerous inscriptions of Uttama Chola are found in

other parts of undivided North Arcot and Chengalpet District but none is found in this region.[12]

On the death of Uttama Chola in 985 A.D. Rajaraja-l (985 A.D.-1014 A.D.), the second son of Sundara Chola, became the ruler. He was a great ruler and whose 30 year long rule constitutes the formative period of Chola imperialism. His reign was extended almost to whole of South India and abroad. Rajaraja's political and administrative authority over the Virinchipuram region is indicated by his two records. One recordis found on the north and west bases of Selliyamman temple from Pallikonda, a village near Virinchipuram. Another stone record is found on the north base of the ruined Siva temple at Solapuram. It is issued in his 27th regnal year. The inscription is damaged and only maigirthi is available. However no epigraph of this great ruler is found in this temple.[13]

Rajaraja was succeeded by his son **Rajendra-l** (1012 A.D. - 1044 A.D.). He was also a great ruler. His sway spread even beyond the territories of his father. His political control over this region is witnessed by two records, one epigraph from Pallikonda and another record from Solapuram. The Pallikonda inscription is located on the pavement stone on the floor of the Ranganatha swamy temple. Another epigraph from Solapuram is found on a stone lying in the ruined Siva temple. Both of these records are fragments. It is also to be noted that there is no inscription of Rajendra is left behind in this temple like his father[14].

However Rajendra's son **Rajendra-ll's** (1052A.D - 1063 A.D.) Inscription is found on a stone set up in the first Prakara of the temple. It is issued in his 5th regnal year dated 1057 A.D. The inscription describes the battle between Rajendra-ll and Ahavamalla (1042A.D.-1068 A.D.), the Western Chalukya ruler. The battle took place at Kuppam on the bank of river Palar in which the Chola defeated the army of Ahavamalla and captured all the elephants, horses and treasures of his enemy. The latter part of the inscription records a gift of land to the presiding deity of the temple.[15]

During the period of **Kulottunga- I** (1070 A.D.-1120 A.D.) the region experienced his rule and it is confirmed through his records ranging from 24th regnal year to 33rd regnal year from Solapuram and Vellore.[16]

Following Kulottunga-1, we come across three records of **Kulottunga-Ill** (1178 A.D. 1217 A.D.) from this temple which show the authority of his reign over the region. The earliest record of Kulottunga-III is found on the eastern wall of Arthamandapa. It was issued in his 31st regnal year dated 1209 A.D. It records a gift of land by Virasani **Ammaiappan Alagiyasola Sombuvarayan** (c.1205 A.D. - 1244 A.D.), a subordinate for burning the perpetual lamp in the temple[17]

Another inscription of this king is also found in the temple. It was issued in the 33rd regnal year dated 1211 A.D. It is damaged in the middle, seems to record a gift of land by the Nattavar (village assembly) of Seruvalai village (Seduvalai) for a perpetual lamp in the temple.[18]

The third record of this Chola ruler is depicted on the south wall of the Arthamandapa issued in the same regnal year dated 1211 A.D. It refers to a gift of 32 Kasu by Seyyaperumal alias Villavarayan for a perpetual lamp in the temple.

The next ruler to the throne of the declining Chola empire was **Rajaraja-III** (1216 A.D.- 1246 A.D.), who was an unfortunate ruler to be captured by his own subordinate Kopperunjinga-l in 1231 A.D. - 1232 A.D. and imprisoned at Sendamangalam. However he was rescued by the Hoysala ruler Narasimha-II (1220 A.D.-1238 A.D.). There are six inscriptions of Rajaraja-III ranging from his tenth to forty fourth regnal year are found at this Margasagaya Iswara temple.[19]

The first inscription issued in his 10th regnal year dated 1225 A.D. records that the donor **Sengeni Virasani Ammaiappan, Alagiya Cholan, Palavayuda Vallavan Tanivasikatti-tanininruvenra Edirilichola-Sambuvarayan** renovated the temple with stones. He also repaired the Srivimana and the gopuram of the temple and put up a compound wall caller Alagiya Cholan. The inscription further states that the same donor also constructed a car and presented certain utensils to the temple.

The second record found on the north wall of the central shrine was issued in his 22nd regnal year dated 1237 A.D. It refers to a gift of land by Atkondavilli Eppoduminiyan the head man of Valivalam village for burning a perpetual lamp in the temple. The third inscription dated 1243 A.D. is found on the western wall of the Central shrine. It mentions a gift of the village Thiruvirunjuram (the ancient name of Virinchipuram) as devadana with all its taxes to the temple by Edirilichola Sambuvarayan, referred to above.

Another record of the Rajaraja-III dated 1244 A.D. is found on the north wall of central shrine. It is incomplete and only the date portion remains. The ruler's 5th inscription was issued on his 41st year corresponding to 1257 A.D. It is found on the west wall of the central shrine. It refers to a gift of 32 Gandagopalan Pudumadai by a certain Kumaran Sankaran for burning a perpetual lamp in the temple[20].

The last inscription of the monarch is found on the east wall of mahamandapa belonging to the 44th year dated 1260 A.D[21]. It mentions the construction of Nrittamandapa (dancing hall) in the temple by Ottuvar-nayan alias llangesuradevan son of Nambattal of Alagiyasiya nattur, a palace maid servant (agampadippendu) of Edirili Chola Sambuvarayar.[22]

The above records of Rajaraja-III show the dominant role played by Sambuvraya chieftains. Due to weakness of Rajaraja-III who gave Sambuvarayas an excellent opportunity to strengthen their hold in Virinchipuram region with a quasi - independence status, owing only nominal allegiance to the Chola overlordship. Even the nominal hold on Virinchipuram region is found disappeared in the time of Rajendra-III (1246 A.D. - 1279 A.D) whose inscriptions are virtually absent in the temple. His rule marks the end of the Cholas power in South India[23].

After Rajaraja-III, but before the advent of the Later Pandya king, Maravarman Kulasekara Pandya-l (1268 - 1308 A.D.[24] it seems that this region was occupied by **Ganda Gopalan** (1250 A.D. - 1285 A.D.), the Telugu Chola and **Koperunjinga-II** (1229 A.D. - 1278 A.D.)[25] the Kadava. They subjugated the Sambuvaraya and became the masters over this region and it is clearly depicted by the records of Vijaya-Ganda gopala dated c.1267 A.D. and Koperunjinga dated 1275 A.D.

They appeared as dead lock to the success of Sambuvarayas. Otherwise the Sambuvaraya's independent rule must have been incepted immediately after Rajaraja-III.

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Pattern and Practices of Religious Endowments of the Cholas in the Eastern Kaveri Delta Region

Devilalitha S[1] and Dr K. Thangapandian[2]

Geography, Economy, and Religious Patronage in the Kaveri Delta under the Cholas

The Eastern Kaveri Delta region lies between approximately 10.7°N to 11.3°N latitude and 79.5°E to 80.5°E longitude, covering the fertile plains of the area, and is bounded by the Kollidam River in the north, the Bay of Bengal in the east, and is irrigated by the Kaveri's distributaries. The geographical bounty of the Kaveri Delta, created by the meandering course of the Kaveri River and its tributaries, made it an agricultural heartland. This fertility supported a dense population and allowed for urban centres and monumental architecture development. In this context, the Chola dynasty emerged as a dominant power, using the wealth generated by the land to support large-scale religious and cultural projects. The Cholas patronised the construction of the majestic temples.1 Temples facilitated land administration, taxation, and irrigation in these regions while fostering cultural identity and religious devotion. The inscriptions in this region offer valuable insights into governance, local elites, and the socio-economic fabric of the period. Thus, the Eastern Kaveri Delta is a testament to how the Chola dynasty used temple patronage to reinforce its political power, ensure economic growth, and promote religious and cultural advancements in South India.

Temple Patronage during the Chola Period

Forms of Temple Patronage

In the Eastern Kaveri Delta, temple patronage expressed itself through various channels, with religious endowments emerging as the most prominent. These endowments served as enduring contributions that ensured the sustenance of temples and the continuity of their multifaceted functions. They encompassed donations of land, revenues from agricultural produce, gifts of gold and other wealth, and provisions for festivals, rituals, and daily worship. Such endowments reinforced the spiritual significance of temples and strengthened their roles as centres of economic management, social welfare, and cultural activity.

Land Grants

Land endowments represented the most valuable and enduring contributions among the various forms of temple patronage in the Chola period. Commentators of the *Dharmasastra* regarded land gifts as the highest form of donation, since they ensured long-term sustenance and stability for religious institutions. Chola rulers, queens, royal functionaries, and wealthy individuals frequently granted extensive tracts of fertile

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agricultural land to temples. These benefactions are documented in inscriptions that provide meticulous details regarding the size of the donated lands, their precise boundaries, irrigation facilities, and the tax exemptions attached to them.2 Such lands generated a stable and renewable source of income, enabling temples to finance daily worship, festivals, the feeding of pilgrims, and charitable distribution to the poor.

Numerous inscriptions from the Eastern Kaveri Delta illustrate the diversity of such endowments. For example, in 1173 A.D., Rajathiraja II's inscription from the Tyagarajasvamin temple at Tiruvarur stated that a land brought as *Irajathiraja-pperuvilai* as *Kani* in the name of goddess Paraloka Menmoli Nachchiyar.3 Similarly, during the Rajendra I regnal year, an inscription seems to register a gift of land donated to the Kiranur, Sivalokanathar temple by the queen of Rajendracholan.4 In the 20th regnal year of Rajaraja III, engraved in the *maha-mandapa* of the Tiruvanjinathar temple, Nannilam taluk in Thiruvarur District, another inscriptional note about a gift of land that was donated to the same temple in the name of the goddess by a local native.5 The inscriptions from the Marudeeswara temple's north wall of the mandapa register the land grant and a tank called *Murukkangulam* by the residents of the *Devadana* village, Sattamangalam. The land was to be utilised as a flower garden for the god of Tirutturaipoondi.6 The inscriptions within the Sowriraja Perumal Temple at Thirukkannapuram documented the endowment of land for the Central purpose of a lamp to the temple's central deity.7

Monetary and Material Contributions

In addition to land endowments, monetary and material contributions constituted an essential dimension of temple patronage in the Chola period. Donations in gold, silver, and coins were regularly made to finance temple upkeep and commission ritual objects necessary for worship. Members of the royal family, alongside wealthy patrons, also gifted precious jewels and metal ornaments, which were employed to adorn temple deities during festivals and other ceremonial occasions.8 In some instances, monetary gifts were deposited as fixed capital, with the accrued interest designated for sustaining routine temple services, thereby providing temples with a reliable financial resource. Thus, monetary grants occupied a significant and indispensable place within the spectrum of donations directed to temples.

Epigraphic evidence from the Eastern Kaveri Delta illustrates this practice in considerable detail. At the Tiruvanjinathar temple in Tiruvanjiyam, Nannilam taluk, an inscription engraved on the south wall of the central shrine, dating to the third regnal year of *Tribhuvanachakravartin* Rajadhiraja, records a monetary contribution for perpetual maintenance of five temple lamps.9. On the Vedaranyesvara temple south wall, there was an inscription about a Gift of 150 *Kasu* of gold by Kottappichcholar for a perpetual lamp in the Tirumaraikkadu temple.10 Further, a record from 1249 CE (3rd regnal year of Rajendra III) at a temple in Thiruthuraipoondi documents a financial gift earmarked for the annual Adippuram festival at the shrine of the goddess.11. These inscriptions collectively demonstrate that monetary and material endowments not only supplemented the agrarian-based resources of temples but also ensured the uninterrupted performance of worship, festivals, and ritual observances, reinforcing the religious vitality and the socio-economic significance of temples in the Chola realm.

Lamp Endowments

Lamp endowments formed a distinctive and highly symbolic category of temple donations in the Chola period. Lighting lamps held deep religious significance within Hindu tradition, serving as a practical element of ritual worship and a spiritual metaphor for the eternal presence of divinity. Inscriptions across the Chola realm frequently record gifts dedicated to maintaining perpetual lamps (*nandavilakku*)12. Such provisions ensured that the sanctum remained illuminated without interruption, reinforcing the idea of unbroken worship and continuous divine presence. Devotees contributed not only the lamps themselves but also arranged for a regular supply of oil, ghee, or sesame seeds, thereby guaranteeing the eternal flame. The act of sustaining perpetual light was considered a sacred duty and

believed to confer enduring spiritual merit upon the donor and their lineage.

Epigraphic evidence attests to the widespread nature of this practice. At the Thyagarajaswami temple in Thiruvarur, an inscription from the 20th regnal year of Rajakesari Aditya I records the donation of three *velis* of land to the Araneri shrine to maintain two perpetual lamps.13 In the period of rajaraja III, on the temple wall of Rajatagirisvarar, Tiruttengur, it says about the undertaking that the *Sivabrahmanas* of the temple gave to burn the lamp for which they received 4000 *kasus*.14 Another inscription comes from the west wall of the first *prakara* in the Thyagarajaswami temple, Tiruvarur, during the reign of Kulottunga II, documenting the purchase of tax-free land from Brahmins, the produce from the land for three perpetual lamps.15 The Tyagaraja temple in Thirukuvalai, during the period of Rajendradevah, had a damaged record of an endowment of 135 *kasu* by an unnamed donor for three perpetual lamps in the temple, providing one *ulakku* of oil daily (totalling 91 *nali* and 1 *Ulakku* annually).16 The inscription from the Tyagarajaswami temple, Thiruvarur, dated on the 32nd regnal year of Parantaka I, records an endowment. It states that the *sabha* (assembly) of Pandanainallūr undertook to provide oil for a perpetual lamp in honour of God Sri Arur-tiru-araneri Mahadeva Bhattaraka. The expenses were to be met from the interest on 30 *kalanju* of gold endowed for this purpose.17 The revenue from this land supported various temple services, including the continuous lighting of lamps.

Livestock and Agricultural Produce

Alongside land and monetary donations, livestock and agricultural produce endowments represented a crucial dimension of temple patronage in the Chola period. Cows were gifted to provide a steady supply of milk, goats were donated for ritual sacrifices, and paddy was offered for festivals and daily worship. Such contributions not only sustained temple rituals but also integrated agrarian resources into the functioning of religious institutions. These donations were usually entrusted to temple officials or priests, who were central in administering the temple economy.18. Offerings of agricultural produce, particularly rice, were prepared and presented to the deity as *neyvaidyam*, symbolising both devotion and the channelling of agrarian surplus into sacred service.19 Epigraphic records from numerous temples reveal that hundreds of such endowments, especially of livestock, were specifically instituted to ensure the perpetual burning of lamps, underscoring the interconnection between agrarian wealth, ritual practice, and devotional symbolism.

Inscriptions from different periods illustrate the diversity of these endowments. An inscription at the Punyanathasvamin temple, Thiruvidaivasal, Nannilam, from the 11th regnal year of Rajendra Chola I, records a woman devotee who gifted paddy to the temple for the feeding of the dancing girls during the *Chithirai* festival.20 When the period of Rajaraja I, on the north wall of Tiruvidaikkali Subramanya temple, registers about the provision made by the assembly of that place as annual payment of 287 *kalam* and odd of paddy to the temple by some nearby specified land owners.21 Another inscription from 1229 CE, the 13th regnal year of Rajaraja III, at the Piravi Marudheswarar temple, Thiruthuraipoondi, notes a grant dedicated to providing rice three times daily as temple offerings.22 In the Ramanatheswara temple at Thiruviramisvaram, during the period of King Rajendran I, the inscription records the sale of land to feed Siva *yogis* in the temple.23 The temple inscriptions of Viratesvara in Korukkai describe a gift of paddy for meeting the expenses of maintaining servants of *Tiruppalliyarai*, who constructed the cave called *Tirunavukkarasu-tirukkuhai*, for feeding the destitute during the period of Kulothungachola.24 These inscriptions highlight how livestock and agricultural produce were systematically integrated into temple institutions as ritual offerings and essential economic resources. Such endowments exemplify the symbiotic relationship between agrarian society and religious institutions, reinforcing temples' central role as spiritual and financial hubs in the Chola realm.

Art and Ritual Items

Temples of the Chola period accumulated a rich and diverse collection of artistic and ritual objects,

which played an indispensable role in religious life and communal identity. Among the most significant were bronze icons, temple chariots (*rathas*), palanquins, musical instruments, bells, and vessels, all integral to performing rituals, festivals, and grand processions. These objects enhanced worship's visual and auditory splendour and reaffirmed the temple's function as the central locus of collective religious and cultural expression.25 Through patronising artisans, particularly bronze casters, sculptors, carpenters, and musicians, temples sustained specialised crafts, fostered artistic innovation, and preserved traditional skills across generations. Committing processional icons and elaborate ritual platforms further enriched ceremonial practices while reinforcing community participation, shared identity, and devotional engagement.

Inscriptions provide detailed insights into such practices. At the Thyagarajasvamin temple in Thiruvarur, King Rajendra I made notable gifts for performing special rituals, including the ceremonial bathing of the deity with scented water on his father's birthdays, Rajaraja I.26 An inscription dated on the 15th regnal year of Uttama Chola from the Kailasamudaiyar temple in Nagapattinam, records the benefactions of Tribhuvana Madeviyar, the chief queen, who endowed resources for monthly sacred baths (*abhisheka*) and ritual offerings during the new moon days. Her donation further included provisions for feeding 200 Brahmins during the solstitial transitions of *Uttarayana* and *Dakshinayana* Sankranti, with a detailed enumeration of items such as perfumes, garments, grains, rice, ghee, sesame, and curd.27 Inscriptions in the 6th year of Rajendra Chola, on the Gomiktisvara temple in Tiruaduthurai, give a list of the gold and silver vessels and ornaments, and also images of some deities, presented by the royal persons like Iraman Abhimanatongiyar, the mother of Trilokya-Mahadeviyar, the mother of king Rajendracholadeva, and by the perception (*gurudevar)* of Rajadhiraja and the servants of the place.28 These records illustrate how the accumulation and ritual use of art objects and ceremonial items embellished religious practice and articulated broader patterns of Patronage, piety, and cultural production in the Chola realm. Temples thus emerged as dynamic centres where artistry, devotion, and community converged, leaving a legacy of material culture and ritual traditions that continues to resonate.

Conclusion

From the 9th to the 13th century CE, the Imperial Cholas dedicated their Patronage in the form of land, agricultural produce, gold and other wealth given for temple worship, festivals, rituals, and daily life, particularly in the fertile Eastern Kaveri Delta Regions of the modern districts of Thiruvarur, Nagapattinam, and Mayiladuthurai. Temples were not merely sacred spaces but dynamic institutions that sustained resources to manage the economy. The diverse endowments of the Cholas ensured that temples flourished as centres of devotion, economic activity, and social organisation. The temples became the cornerstones of the Chola empire, serving as centres of spiritual life, economic activity, and social organisation, and their Patronage remains a profound testament to the intricate relationship between devotion, power, and prosperity in medieval South India.

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From Nagapattinam to Canton: Reconstructing Chola-China Relations through Textual Evidence

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Introduction

The Chola Dynasty (9th to 13th century CE) stands as a monumental force in South Indian history, renowned not only for its military conquests and architectural marvels but also for its far-reaching maritime trade and diplomatic networks. Among its most significant international relationships was its engagement with Imperial China, a connection that transcended mere commerce to encompass cultural exchange, technological diffusion, and political diplomacy. Positioned strategically along the maritime Silk Route, the Cholas leveraged their naval prowess and bustling ports like Nagapattinam to facilitate a vibrant exchange of goods—from Indian pearls, ivory, and textiles to Chinese porcelain, silks, and exotic fruits.

This article delves into the multifaceted Chola-China relationship, drawing from Chinese historical chronicles (*Ling-wai-tai-ta*, *Chu-fan-chih*), that records the presence of Chola dynasty, and its nature and relation with China. It examines the diplomatic missions sent by Chola emperors like Rajaraja I, Rajendra I and Kulottunga I, the navigational routes that linked Tamil Nadu to Canton i.e Guangzhou, and the profound cultural imprints left by this transoceanic dialogue. By synthesizing the literary evidence, this study illuminates how the Cholas shaped—and were shaped by—medieval globalization, positioning Tamil Nadu as a pivotal hub in the Indian Ocean's interconnected world.

The Literary Evidences in China

The historical records in China written by various authors serves as the primary source to study about the presence and the existing contact of Cholas with the Chinese while Tamil literature is silent about their connection. The earliest reference of Cholas was written by Huan-Tsang who came to India as a part of his pilgrimage tour, visited South India. He was a

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contemporary of King Harsha, Pulikesin II and Narashimavarman I of the Pallava dynasty. In his book *Datang Xiyu Ji* which was translated as 'The Great Tang Dynasty record of the Western Regions' mentions about a kingdom named '*Chu-li-yeh'.* His statement is as follows:

"From here going southwest for more than one thousand li, reached the country of Cola (in the Domain of South India). The country of Cola is two thousand and four or five hundred li in circuit and the capital city over ten li in circuit. The empty land and fields lie in waste amid desolate marshes. There are few inhabitants and band of robbers openly run around."[1]

But considering the fact that Huan-Tsang visited India in the 7th Century A.D, the Chu-li-yeh he mentions in his book cannot be the Imperial Cholas. Thus, the Chu-li-yeh he mentions in his record must be the Telugu Chodas.

The first record of the Imperial Cholas in the Chinese records appears in the book called *"Ling-wai-tai-ta"* written by Chou ch'u-fei. The book is roughly translated as 'Information on what is beyond the southern passes' and it was written in the year 1178 A.D. The book mentions about the Kingdom of Chu-lien being present in the Chinese court.[2]

The second record where we can find the information about the Chu-lien kingdom (Cholas) is the book named *'Chu-fan-chih'* which means 'Description of the Barbarous People' written by Chao Ju-kua in 1225 A.D. This book has incorporated the last parts of the book Ling-wai-tai-ta in it. It was mentioned in this book about the kingdom Chu-lien which was the kingdom of Cholas as follows:

"The Kingdom of Chu-lien is the southern Yin-tu of the west"[3]

The book called *'Wen-hsien t'ungk'ao'* translated as General History of Institutions and a Critical Examinations of Documents, written by Ma Tuan-lin in 1319 A.D, and Studies and the book called *'Sung Shih'* which means Dynastic History of the Sung written by T'o-t'o in 1345 A.D details about the notices sent to the Cholas. The fact about these authors is that, unlike Husan-Tsang, none of the other authors have visited India or Chola kingdom in person. The way they collected this information must be from the merchants or the diplomatic envoys of the Cholas who went there.

For instance, Chou ch'u-fei is the Assistant Sub-Prefect of Kui-lin of the Kuang-his province. His duty is to collect information on maritime trade and foreign countries while passing through Canton.[4] Canton is one of the leading ports in maritime trade. Many foreign royalties, envoys, merchants and monks settled here in the port city. Fan-fang (Foreign Quarters) were appointed to look after the growing population of the foreign people in the port city. It is possible that these authors gathered information from the Chola merchants and envoys who visited China.

Chao-Ju-Kuo the author of the book Chu fan-chih was the descendant of the Emperor Tai-tsung, in the eighth generation through the Prince of Shang, younger brother of Emperor Chentsung (998-1023).[5] He held the governmental position called ti-chu shih-po shih (Superintendent of the Bureau of Maritime trade). His duty is to Levying taxes, inspecting income and outcome of goods in the ports, welcoming the tributary envoys. In the book Sung Hui-yao (Collection of Important Documents of the Sung) records that in 1016, Chang Fu – the supervisor of the court of Diplomatic reception was ordered to compile a chart of the customs and clothing of the Chola kingdom and present it to the emperor.[6]

Navigational route of Cholas to China

The Cholas followed two different paths to reach China. One was the easiest while the other route took some time to reach the ports of South China. The first and easiest way to reach China is through passing the Ten-degree channel in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and sailing through the Malacca Strait and reaching the South China Sea. This was followed by the information found on the Inscription from Tanjore dated 1025 A.D.[7]

The next possible route followed by the Cholas to reach China was recorded in Sung Shih according to the details obtained from the Chola envoy who came to China in the year 1015 A.D. The record says that the Chola envoy started their journey at Na-wu-tan-shan (Nagapattinam). The areas crossed by the envoy are: So-li his-lan (Ceylon), Chan-bin (Jambi), L-mo-lo-li (Irrawaddya in Burma), Ku-lo (in Java), Chia-pa (Langkwai Islands), Kou-pu-lao (Cham), Chou-pao-lung (Salat Sembilan), San-fo-ch'I (Srivijaya), Man-

shan (Muntok), Tien-chu shan (Pulo Aor), Pin-t'ou-lang shan (Panduranga), Yang Shan (Pulo Gambir) and Chiu-hsing shan (near Hong Kong). The total days it took the Chola envoy 1,150 days.

Goods Exchanged: The flourishing economic exchanges between the Chola Kingdom in South India and Imperial China laid the foundation for their diplomatic relations, with vibrant maritime trade serving as the driving force behind their political and cultural connections. The Cholas exported highly sought-after commodities such as pearls from the Gulf of Mannar, intricately carved ivory, fragrant frankincense and camphor used in religious rituals, and finely woven cotton textiles renowned for their quality. These luxury goods found eager buyers in Chinese markets, enhancing the Chola Kingdom's prestige as a dominant trading power in the Indian Ocean region.

In return, Chinese merchants supplied the Cholas with exquisite Chinese porcelain, prized corals and lapis lazuli for jewellery and temple decorations, aromatic rose water favoured by the nobility, and exotic fruits like jackfruit and peaches that introduced new flavours to South India. Additionally, the trade included practical goods such as indigo for dyes, mica for decorative purposes, medicinal pulchock resin, and possibly Cho-chin, which may have referred to silk or other aromatic substances. This two-way exchange of goods not only brought economic prosperity but also facilitated the transfer of technologies, artistic influences, and cultural practices between the two civilizations.

Chola Envoys at the Courts of China: The Chinese accounts record 4 different envoys from the kingdom of Cholas denoting that there was a diplomatic relation established between Chinese and Cholas. The first envoy was sent by Rajaraja Chola I. The envoy, consisting of 52 people , reached Canton on 21.05.1015. The Chief Envoy was Sa-li-san-wen, the name of the vice envoy is P'u Chiahsin who seems to be of Arab Origin, Weng-wu the staff and Ya-ch'in-chia was the embassy guard. The envoy was given the status Ch'iu-tse which means tributary state of China. The envoy presented the Chinese emperor 800kg of pearls, sixty pieces of ivory, sixty pounds of incense and 3,300 pounds of perfumes.[8]

The second envoy from the Cholas reached Canton on 29th of February 1020 A.D. The Chief envoy P'a-lan-te-ma-lieh-ri fell ill on reaching Canton and passed away. The other members of the envoy went to the capital where they were received with a great welcome, banquet and return presents. On 15th of November 1033, the third envoy from Rajendra Chola reached Canton. The chief envoy of this group was P'u Ya-t'oli who was of Arab origin. Between the dates 22 of February and 22 of March 1034, the envoy was presented with various titles. To show the etiquette, the chief envoy poured pearls down the seat of the emperor.[9]The fourth and the final mission from Cholas was sent by Kulottunga Chola I. The envoy reached China on 26 June 1077. The chief envoy of this mission was Ch'i-lo-lo, vice envoy was Nan-pei-p'a-ta, the staff was Ma-t'u-hua-lo. The Chief envoy presented the emperor with Pearls and Camphor. The presence of Arabs in the envoy might be due to the navigation. Just like Cholas, Arabs were also great shippers. Maybe, the chola envoy travelled on the Arab ships which resulted in Arabs being present in the envoy group.[10]

Conclusion

The Chola-China relationship epitomizes the dynamism of medieval globalization, where economic interests seamlessly blended with cultural and diplomatic ties. Through meticulous analysis of Chinese records, this study reveals how the Cholas emerged as a key player in the transoceanic trade, exporting luxury commodities like pearls and cotton while importing Chinese innovations such as porcelain and medicinal resins. The presence of Hindu relics in Quanzhou and the bilingual Tamil-Chinese inscription attest to a shared cultural sphere, while the detailed accounts of Chola envoys—bearing gifts of pearls and camphor—highlight the diplomatic sophistication of these exchanges.

Far from being a mere footnote in history, the Chola-China nexus underscores the interconnectedness of the premodern world. The Cholas' mastery of maritime routes and their role as cultural intermediaries left an indelible mark on both regions, fostering mutual prosperity and intellectual exchange. As modern scholarship continues to unearth new evidence—from sunken shipwrecks to forgotten chronicles—the legacy of this relationship serves as a testament to the enduring power of cross-cultural collaboration.

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A Study on Pottery Classification and Making Techniques in Salem Region

K. Karneshwaran

Salem District is located on the extreme north of Tamil Nadu, mostly bordered by Karnataka State, Salem District was officially established in 1772. Geographically, it is located between 11°14’ and 12°53’ North latitude and 77°44’ and 78°50’ East longitude. The district is bordered by several regions in North Dharmapuri District, in South Tiruchirappalli (Trichy) and Namakkal Districts in East Kallakurichi and Perambalur Districts, in West Erode District and the state of Karnataka. Salem's landscape is defined by its many hills and is surrounded by mountains. The district has a rich cultural history, with roots in the ancient Kongu Nadu region.

Pottery Making

There are two primary methods for creating pottery by the use of wheels and handmade pottery. Handmade pottery like large jars, is often shaped using techniques such as coiling and pinching. The pinching method involves shaping a lump of clay from the center outward to form the desired vessel. Wheel-made pottery is created using a potter's wheel. This technique typically results in thinner, more refined vessels with evenly spaced grooves. It was often used for making higher-quality pottery. After a pot has been formed and is partially dry, it undergoes several finishing processes.

Shaping and Finishing: Techniques like scraping are used to smooth the pottery's surface and remove uneven areas. The beating or padding method uses a wooden paddle and a stone to beat the clay into its final shape and size.

Surface Treatments: A thin layer of liquid clay called slip is applied to the pot's surface for color and a smoother finish. Common slip colors include red, orange, and black. Burnishing is a polishing process that uses a stone or a piece of pottery to create a shiny, glazed appearance.

Decoration: Pottery is often decorated with two types of ornamentation: painted designs and surface effects. Painted designs include geometric shapes, animals, and wavy lines. Surface effects are created by techniques such as salt glazing, which involves adding salt during firing to produce a unique cracked surface. Other designs are incised or carved directly into the clay with tools, creating patterns or perforations.

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Firing Method

For pottery making various firing methods were included; which includes the open kiln firing method, inverted firing method and firing at the reduced condition. These methods and the various techniques employed in pottery making are shown by the available pottery.

Open kiln firing is a basic method where pots are stacked and covered with flammable materials like straw and dung. The pots are directly exposed to the flames, and the specific results, such as color and finish, depend on the kiln's atmospheric conditions, including whether it's an oxidizing or reducing environment. The placement of the pots can also affect the outcome, as seen in inverted and straight firing techniques.

Firing in a Reducing Condition: This method fires pots in an environment with little to no oxygen. The pots are not directly exposed to the flames. This lack of oxygen causes the pottery to turn black or gray, and this process is responsible for the creation of ancient black, gray, and black slipped wares.

Inverted Firing: Used to create black and red pottery, this technique involves placing pots upside-down in a firing platform. The pot's exposed parts (the body, neck, and base) turn red from the direct flames. However, the rim, which is concealed in the slot, turns black due to limited oxygen. The inside of the pot is also filled with combustible material, making the interior consistently black.

Straight Firing: Similar to inverted firing, this method also produces black and red pottery. The main difference is that the pots are placed right-side up in the slots. This causes the hidden base of the pot to turn black while the rest of the pot turns red. The interior, filled with combustible material, also remains black.

Saggar Firing Saggar firing is a method that uses a closed kiln to achieve a uniform burn on pottery. In this process, pots are placed inside rectangular wooden boxes, which are then arranged at various levels within the kiln. The kiln is sealed on all sides, with heat entering from a single opening at the bottom, directly underneath the boxes. This indirect heating method ensures that the pots are fired evenly, resulting in a consistent color and finish without any variation. This technique is used for pottery where a perfectly uniform appearance is desired.

Ceramics The archaeological excavation yielded a variety of ceramics like Red ware, Red slipped ware, Black and Red Ware, All Black Ware, Red and Black ware, Brown slipped ware, coarse Red ware, perforated ware, painted ware, chocolate brown ware.

Black-and-Red Ware: distinctive type of pottery frequently found at Iron Age and early historic sites in southern India, such as Uraiyur and Kaveripattinam. This pottery is typically located in the oldest layers of archaeological sites, alongside all-black ware and painted pottery. This type of pottery was crafted on a potter's wheel and gets its unique two-tone appearance from a process called inverted firing. During this technique, the pot is placed upside down in the kiln. The lower part of the pot is exposed to the air, causing it to turn red, while the upper section and the rim are in contact with flammable materials, which makes them turn black. The inside of the pot is also consistently black. The pottery's shiny, polished surface is a result of salt glazing. Fragments of black-and-red ware are commonly found at the lowest levels of excavations, with the earliest examples dating back to the 3rd century BCE. Common shapes include pots, bowls, dishes, and small vessels.

Black Ware: a high-quality pottery type from southern India, often compared to the Northern Black Polished (NBP) Ware from the north. It's typically found alongside Black-and-Red Ware at various archaeological sites across the region. This type of pottery is completely black on both the inside and outside. The black color is achieved by firing the pottery in a reducing atmosphere, which is a kiln environment with very little oxygen. This process causes the clay to turn black, resulting in a consistent color throughout the vessel.

Black ware is made from finely prepared clay. If it was created on a potter's wheel, it has a very thin and delicate structure, while handmade pieces tend to be thicker. A slip (a thin coating of liquid clay) is usually applied to the outside of the pot, and sometimes to both

sides, to give it a smooth finish. As an associated pottery type with Black-and-Red ware, Black ware is found in almost all sites in southern India and is dated to the 3rd century BCE.

Red Ware: a very common type of pottery found at archaeological sites. Its surface is typically red to reddish-brown. This pottery has a long history, with examples found from the Neolithic period all the way up to the present day. The main shapes for this type of pottery are pots and bowls.

Red Slipped Ware: a type of pottery found in archaeological layers that are more recent than those containing Black-and-Red ware. This pottery is made on a potter's wheel and gets its name from the red slip, a thick mixture of clay and red ochre, applied to its surface.

Potters applied the slip to either the exterior, interior, or both sides of the pot once it was firm enough. After being fired, the surface was often rubbed to give it a smooth finish. This type of pottery dates from the 4th to the 9th century CE.

Chocolate Brown Ware: a type of pottery found at early historic and Iron Age sites throughout southern India. It is made from very fine, well-prepared clay, giving it a thin, delicate feel. As its name suggests, the pottery is characterized by its distinct chocolate brown color

Coarse Red Ware: a type of pottery made from low-quality, impure clay mixed with materials like husk, grass, and sand. This results in a dull red color and a rough, uneven surface. The pottery is often poorly fired, indicating a decline in ceramic craftsmanship. Fragments of this pottery are commonly found at all levels of archaeological sites, but they are particularly prevalent in the middle and later layers, dating from around the 4th century CE onward.

Painted Ware: a type of pottery distinguished by its decorative designs. These decorations are primarily linear or geometric patterns, often applied using white paint. This type of ornamentation is commonly found on various kinds of pottery, including black-and-red ware and russet-coated ware.

Red on Black Ware: a type of pottery found at early historic sites, with a distinct color pattern: the outside is black and the inside is red. The exterior's glossy black finish is achieved through a special treatment. This pottery type has been found from early historic times to the present day.

Perforated Ware: a type of pottery with small holes or perforations. It was likely used to drain water or starch from cooked rice.

Graffiti Marks on Pottery During the excavation, archaeologists discovered various pottery shards with graffiti symbols. These symbols were found at different depths, and their exact age will be determined by analyzing the other artifacts found with them. The symbols varied in design and appeared on different types of pottery: multiplication symbol, ladder symbol, a symbol placed inside a U-shaped semicircle, a pattern of oblique lines, a way line superimposed over another symbol.

Additionally, several other pottery fragments with incomplete symbols were also recovered, making them difficult to identify fully.

Conclusion

The comprehensive analysis of pottery from this region confirms its invaluable role as a primary source for archaeological and historical research. As a durable and versatile artifact, pottery offers a unique window into the social, economic, and cultural life of ancient societies, particularly during the Sangam Age in Tamil Nadu. The wide variety of ceramics uncovered—including Black-and-Red ware, Black ware, Red ware, and others—reveals not only their daily utility for purposes like storage and cooking but also the sophistication of ancient pottery-making techniques.

The distinct methods of production, surface treatment, and firing, such as the inverted firing that created the iconic black-and-red vessels and the specialized reducing condition firing, highlight a deep understanding of materials and processes. Furthermore, the presence of graffiti symbols on these artifacts provides intriguing evidence of early symbolic communication. The continuity of pottery traditions from the Sangam period to the present underscores its

enduring cultural significance in Tamil Nadu. Ultimately, pottery serves as a tangible index of human innovation and cultural evolution, making it an indispensable tool for reconstructing the history of ancient civilizations.

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Copper Plates of Villupuram District

R.Mayakrishnan[1] and Dr.T.Kamalakkannan[2]

Copper Plates of Villupuram District

The copper plates such as Esalam copper plate, Villupuram copper plate, AiyyurAgaram copper plate, Rettanai copper plate and Melsevur copper plate are found in Villupuram district.

Esalam Copper Plate

The set of copper-plates, accidentally unearthed in the year 1987 from the premises of the RamanathaEechvaram temple, Esalam, a small village in Villupuram district and brought to the notice of Tamilnadu State Department of Archaeology, belongs to Rajendra Chola I of Chola dynasty.[1]It consists of 15 plates measuring 34 cm length and 16.5 cm breadth. The royal seal is found embossed and soldered with a big ring which runs through all the plates. The seal bears the figures of tiger, two fishes, bow, boar and the chamaras, umbrella, swastika and chakra. The chakra is believed to be representing the king's independent sovereign authority over vast empire (Chakravarthi).[2]

The legend found in Sanskrit language and in Grantha character, written on the periphery of the seal is as follows:

"Rajad-rajanya-makuta-sreni-ratnesu sasanam, Etad Rajendra Cholasya Parakesarivarmanah"

As usual this set also has two parts, the first part being written in Sanskrit language and in Grantha characters, the second part is in Tamil language and in Tamil script. The Sanskrit portion is written on four plates while the Tamil portion is engraved on the rest of the plates. All the plates are written on both sides. The

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Sanskrit portion of this charter delineates the pedigree of Rajendra Chola, the establishment of the Ramesvara temple at Eithar by the preceptor Sarvasiva and the endowment made to it by the emperor. At the end of this part the names of the composer and the engraver are given. The Tamil portion has 345 lines which narrate the circumstances which caused the king to make this endowment while he was at Kanchipuram and the details of the donated lands.[3]

The format of the Tamil portion is exactly similar to Karanthai copper plates of the same king, Rajendra Chola I. The Tamil portion begins with the same title "Konrinmaikondan" and describes the gift made by the king on the tenth day of his twenty fourth regnal year to Nattars, Brahmadeyakkilavars and to the villages and towns which possess the lands of Devadanam, Pallicchandam, Kanimurruttu, Vettaperu and Salabhogam.[4]

The king made this endowment while he was taking bath in the palace of Kanchipuram, a town in Jayamkondacholamandalalam. Having measured the lands of Jananathacharuppedimangalam of Vavalurnadu and Sri Rajarajaccharuppedi-mangalam, a Taniyur of Panaiyur Nadu, it was found that the lands of Nannadu and Erappakkam were 90 Nilam and Mukkale Munru ma Makkani Araikkani Muntirikaikkil Nalu makanikkil araiye nalu ma Kani araikkani after having deducted the lands of drinking water tank and its bund, stream, vadi and channels, small river that irrigates the lake of Jananadaccharuppedimangalam and Manimuttaru, Madevar temple and its surroundings, its gardens, Pidari (Durga) temple and its surroundings, Ayyanar (Sasta) temple and its surroundings, garden of Ramisvaram temple, Kammanacceri, Paraicceri, waste land of cattle grazing, marshy and salty land, etc.[5]

The king gave the oral order stating that the total dues of 3,400 kalams of paddy levied from Nannadu and Erappakkam alias Vikramacholanallur as permanent land tax from 15th regnal year of the king have been gifted as devadana for daily offerings to the God of Tiruviramisvaram temple, a stone temple, built by Sarvasiva Pandithar, at Eithar a hamlet of Rajarajaccharuppedimangalam, Taniyur, a self governed village of Panaiyur Nadu.[6]

After having completed the usual procedures, the king's oral order (tittu) became the royal order (Tirumukam) with the endorsement of all the concerned officers such as Olaieludum, Olai Nayagam, Naduvirukkum, Karumamarayum, Puravuvarittinaikkalam, Puravu varit tinaikalattuk kankani, Varippottakam, Mukavetti, Varippottakakkanakku, Pattolai, etc., in the 76th day of 24th regnal year. Then the king seems to have ordered his revenue officials to demarcate the gifted lands by making round the she elephant and by implanting boundary stones and milk bushes.[7]

Finally on the 55th day of the regnal year 25th, the gift document (Vivasthai) was written demarcating the boundaries of the gifted land in detail. Other details regarding irrigation and cultivation of those lands and the ban on certain practices are also given.The description of the lands and the places that are located within four boundaries of the gifted area is very interesting since it is more or less similar to the description found in Karanthai copper plates.[8]

One important point that could be made understood from this charter is that the execution of a royal endowment seems to have passed through four stages. First stage was the king's oral order, the second stage followed with the official procedure of drafting, checking, entering into the revenue records and the endorsement of the officers. The third stage was the issue of Tirumukam-written royal order-affixed with royal seal through an official to the gifted village where the official order was received with full honour by Nattars by bowing their heads.[9]

The fourth and final stage was the issue of Araiolai, boundary document prepared by the Nattars with the help of the revenue officials to the donee who was to enjoy the gifted land. In this case the donee was Thiruviramisvaram Temple of Eithar which is known as Esalam at present. In the Araiolai i.e. the boundary document it is found that all the important officials, the

Nattars and other villagers signed their signatures as witnesses.[10]

In this instance the oral order, issued in the 15th regnal year of the king, seems to have taken ten more years to get it issued as written order since it had been issued in the 25th regnal year after having followed the usual government procedures.[11]

Villupuram Copper Plate

An individual from Villupuram who is belonging to the Vanniyar community has this copper plate. This copper plate is different from the others which are found.It is new that there is information about a person named Kelakembala Ramasamy, a MalayalaMandirigar from Cochin who was brought by Idangai community and there was also a remark about his pregnant wife Avalu Sithammal. In this copper plate, it was mentioned that there were three chariots, one for Kamatchiamman, the other for Kachapeswarar and the last one for Ekampareswarar for which the black magician had sacrificed his wife, his child in her womb and his younger brother as there were three chariots. The diagram image of the three chariots is given at the end of the copper plate.[12]

Conclusion

In this way, the copper plates are the most important documents to write the history of Tamil Nadu.Some unconfirmed opinions and new information are clarified through these copper plates which are found unexpectedly. The copper plates which are found in Villupuram district give new information to the history of Tamil Nadu. These copper plates are safely secured now in a great way.

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The History of Annamputhur Sri Nitheeswarar Temple

Dr. K.Saranya[1] and Dr. V.Vijayarangam[2]

Location

This temple is located 5 kilometers away via Thenkalavai in the road which is on the eastern side of Thenbazaar which is 6 kilometers away from Tindivanam in Tindivanam to Villupuram National Highways in Villupuram district and in Annamputhur which is 4 kilometers away via Varagupattu in the road which is in the southern side of Idayankulam that is 3 kilometers from Tindivanam in Puducherry National Highways.[1]

History of the Temple

Brahma who is called Anna Vaganan who is the God of creation and the god of preserving, Lord Vishnu competed to find the best among them. Lord Brahma took the incarnation of swan and searched for the hair of Lord Shiva while Lord Vishnu took the incarnation of boar in search of the foot of Lord Shiva as it is told that the one who sees the hair and foot of Lord Shiva is the winner. At one point, Lord Vishnu who could not find the holy feet of Lord Shiva accepted that he has lost. But Lord Brahma lied that he has seen the hair of Lord Shiva. He has included the screw pine flower which fell down towards the earth from the head of Lord Shiva as an evident to it. On hearing this, Lord Shiva got very angry and cursed Lord Brahma to be the swan forever. Lord Brahma went to many worlds as a swan to attain salvation. Finally he reached the earth and created a natural spring. Then he made a Shiva Linga and brought water from the spring he created and did Abhisheka. Overwhelmed by the Poojas done by Lord Brahmma, Lord Shiva appeared with his bull as a vehicle and gave his old form. As Lord Brahmma worshipped in the form of swan here which means Annam in Tamil, this temple is called as Annamputhur.[2]

Kubera is the head of the eight kinds of wealth of money such as Pathumanithi, Mahapathumanithi, Mahanithi, Kachabanithi, Mukundanithi, Kundanithi, Neelanithi and Sanganithi. Kubera has another name called Nithipathi as he is the leader of the wealth. When Kubera visited this temple once, he prayed to God that he should have infinite amount of wealth and he should be the head of all kinds of wealth forever. It is said that God has granted him everything as per his prayer. As Kubera worshipped here, the deity of this temple is called Sri Nitheeswarar.[3]

Origin and Development of the Temple

The archaeologists say that it is known from the bricks found in the basement of this temple that it is built during the Pallava period even before the period of Rajaraja Chola I and it is further confirmed by the sculpture of Lord Vinayaga that belongs to the Pallava period found in this temple. It is known from the inscription found in this temple that the Cholas played a prominent role in renovating this temple. Many grants have been given by the Chola emperor Rajaraja Chola to this temple. The archaeological scholars say that Sri Nitheeswarar temple in Annamputhur which was once a big temple could have become mound using sand in order to escape the attacks during the invasion of the foreigners. The people of that place informed the archaeological department that a Shiva Linga is there in a mound in the Village of Annamputhur and the disintegrated portions of the temple is seen there. Then the archaeological department visited and researched and found the mound in which a Shiva Linga is seen is a disintegrated portion of Lord Shiva temple. Later the villagers started to build this temple in the year 2008 with the support of Kanchi Maha Periyavar and some volunteers. The construction work of building with

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stone temple happened without affecting the antiquity. The huge consecration ceremony was done by the priest named Sivasri Pichai from Pillayarpatti on 09.04.2014. The holy wedding ceremony of goddess Parvati and Lord Parameshwar grandly in this temple on the same eve and the people of that village worshipped when they saw Sri Nitheeswarar along with his wife goddess Sri Kanagathiripurasundari coming as a procession.[4]

Structure, Architecture and Sculpture of the Temple

This temple is located facing the east in the northern side of the village. The sanctum sanctorum, Artha Mandapa, Maha Mandapa made of tin shed, altar, Nandi Hall, Vimana, the altar of Sri Lakshmi Ganapati, the altar of Kalyana Sundarar with Lakshmi-Deivanai, the altar of Ambal, shrine of Chandikeshwar, Navagrahas, Bairavar, Siddha Sivaguganathar, Vanadurga, Sri Gopalakrishna, a cow shed, well and pond are found in this temple. The whole temple is built using granites. Sri Nitheeswarar temple and Sri Kanagathiripurasundari shrine are built in a mounded place. Five steps are there to reach the top. The construction work of the huge tower of this building was begun and going on successfully. There is a common tin shed for Sri Nitheeswarar temple and the shrine of the goddess. A small Nandi and an altar is there in this tin shed facing the sanctum sanctorum. A big Nandi and an altar is situated facing the sanctum sanctorum right after the entrance. The main deity here is called Sri Nitheeswarar. He is in the form of Linga facing east inside the sanctum sanctorum and blesses everyone. Dwarabalagas are found at the entrance of the sanctum sanctorum. The sculpture of Dhakshanamurthy in the southern side, a sculpture of Lord Vishnu in the west and a sculpture of Lord Brahmma are found in the niches of the sanctum sanctorum. The sculptures of Dhakshanamurthy in the south and goddess Durga in the north are found in the niches of the Artha Mandapa. The shrine of Chandikeshwar which is facing the south is situated in the left side of the sanctum sanctorum.

The goddess here is called Sri Kanagathiripurasundari. She is in the standing posture in the shrine which faces the south. This shrine is found along with a sanctum sanctorum and Artha Mandapa. A small level of altar and Simmam are found opposite to this sanctum sanctorum by facing the goddess. The goddess has only two hands. The shrine of Sri Lakshmi Ganapati is found facing towards the east in the southwestern corner inside the campus of the temple.

A small level of altar and a mouse are found facing Sri Lakshmi Ganapati opposite to this shrine. The shrine of Kalyan Subramaniyar along with Valli-Deivanai is seen facing the east in the northwestern corner. There is a small altar and peacock found opposite to this shrine by facing Kalyana Subramaniar. Vatabi Ganapati of Pallava period who is in Artha Mandapa of the temple is seen having the Patali flag. A separate shrine is there for the Navagrahas in the northeastern corner of the temple. Bairava and Dhana Akarshna Bairava appear facing the west in a separate rooms in the same shrine in the east. A shrine is there for Siddha Sivaguganathar which faces the east next to the shrine of Sri Lakshmi Ganapati. The shrine of Vana Durga is found facing the north in the northern side of the temple. The sculpture of goddess Durga is placed in the sanctum sanctorum of this shrine. A sculpture of goddess Durga belonging to the Pallava period and broken into three pieces is found at the backside of that sculpture. The shrine of Sri Gopalakrishna is found in the northern side of the temple. A cow shed is situated near to it. The office is found in the southeastern side of this temple.

The sculptures of Sapta Matrikas such as Abirami, Mahalakshmi, Goumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indirani and Samundeeshwari are found facing towards the north in Selliyamman temple near this temple. These Sapta Matrika sculptures belong to the 13-14th century A.D. The sculpture of Ayyanar belonging to the Pallava period is found in the lake which is at the back side of the temple. Aavudayar of Pallava period and oil swing

stone used for preparing Mahua oil are found in the campus of this temple.

The metal idols of Lord Vinayaga, Valli - Deivanai along with Kalyana Subramiyar, Chandrasekar, Swami Ambal, Pratosha Nayakar, Chandikeshwarar and Aadipura Amman are there in this temple. The Nandi vehicle made of wood is found here. A well is found in the northeastern corner and a pond is found in the northern side of this temple. Golden rain tree which is the sacred tree of this temple is seen near the shrine of Siddha Sivaguganathar. Brahmma Tirtha is the holy water of this temple.[5]

Poojas and Festivals

This temple opens from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the morning and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the evening. The ritual takes place twice a day everyday in this temple. The monthly Pratosha, full moon day, Tiruvathirai, Sankatahara Chaturthi, Kiruthikai, Sashti, waxing moon Ashtami, waning moon Ashtami, Chaturthi, Atchaya Tritiya, Navaratri, Deepavali, Skanda Sashti, Aippasi Deepa Annabisheka, Karthikai Deepam, Karthikai Somavaram, Maasi Magan, Panguni Uthiram and Aadi Puram are the festivals celebrated in this temple. Then the festivals like Mahashivaratri, Navaratri along with Chandi Homa and Aippasi Annabisheka are being celebrated grandly in this temple. The Varshabisheka and Kalyana Utsav are done greatly in the Poosa Nakshatra of Panguni month. Many devotees from the districts like Chennai, Kanchipuram and Villupuram and the state of Puducherry take part in the important festivals in this temple.[6]

Specialty of the Temple

The specialty of this temple is that it is one of the places where Kubera worshipped for money and the place where Lord Shiva himself who has rewritten the fate of Lord Brahma who used to write the fate of human beings here. Another special thing about this temple is that the Chola emperor Rajaraja Chola has done many endowments and holy works for this temple.[7]

Conclusion

It could be known from the inscription found in this temple that the Chola emperor Rajaraja Chola had done many charities and offered many endowments for this temple which is said to have been built by the Pallavas. It is believed that the fate of the devotees will be rewritten and their sins of previous birth will be nullified and their poverty will disappear and wealth and happiness will get increased if they come and worship the deity here. Sri Nitheeswarar temple in Annamputhur prevails as the pilgrim center which is praised and honored by all the devotees.

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Navakandam in the Worship of Kotravai in Tamil Nadu

C.Arumugam[1] and Dr.V.Vijayarangam[2]

Introduction

It could be known from the sculptures, hero stones, literature, inscriptions and copper plates that there was a habit for the soldiers to sacrifice themselves before the goddess of war named Kotravai in order to their kings to get victory in war and to have good recovery, to make the welfare activities done successfully without any obstacles. Sacrificing themselves for Goddess Kotravai is called 'Navakandam'. Navakandam means sacrificing themselves by dividing their body parts into nine and cutting them off starting with their hands, legs, stomach and finally their head. 'Navankanda sculptures' which reflects them are found in many places in Tamil Nadu.

Reasons for giving Navakandam

It is necessary to seek the blessings of God if there is a situation when there is no scope of winning while waging war against the most strong opponent. Navankam was given in the belief of giving sacrifice to Goddess Durga. Navakandam was given by the believers of the king for his recovery when the king is bedridden with complicated heath condition.

Navakandam is also given for the one who is badly affected by disease in order to attain heaven.

It is also given to a criminal who is sentenced to death but with the permission of the king, he could be given Navakandam and attain heaven.

A person would pray to God to postpone his death, if he had some duties to finish while he is in his death bed caused by wounds due to war or due to a disease. After the completion of his duties, he would give Navakandam to God. The one who faced a huge disgrace and does not want to live anymore would give Navakandam by wanting a heroic death by neglecting being a coward.

The Cholas and the Pandiyas had a defence force named *'Velakara Padaigal'* and *'Thennavan Aabathuthavigal'* respectively. When a danger is nearing the life of the king, they shave their heads off and die in the temple of Kotravai.

Navankanda Festival

This festival is celebrated in a grand manner. All the relatives would be invited before giving Navakandam. The one who gives Navakandam would wear a sword in his hip and an armor in his chest and look like a soldier. After the rituals are done for Kotravai, they would divide their body parts into nine and cut them off starting from hand, leg, stomach, finally their head and die.

Navakandam in Literature

The information of shaving their own head for Goddess Kotravai is seen in literary works like Silapathikaram, Kalinkathu Barani and Thakkayaka Barani. The Maravas at Maruvur region in Kaveripoompattinam and the soldiers in Pattinapakkam would keep their head in the altar, pray that all the sorrows of their kings should disappear and sacrificed their lives. They are called 'the ones who grant sacrifice'.

Navakandam in Copper Plates

The festival committee get together and discuss the car of Kaliyamman temple in Chidambaram which is called Thillai has stopped while moving. At that time, a woman in Chidambaram has the ascension of God and said that the car will move only if a human sacrifice is given. So a man named Veera Perumal who was the son of the commander of army named Pazhayatharayan who

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came forward to shave off his own head and sacrifice himself. He asks to give gifts for his family and a special respect to his community as a reward for his sacrifice. He also asks to buid a Navakandam statue for him and keep it at Kaliyamman temple in Chidambaram. The festival committee had also accepted to his request. Then he prayed to god that if the car of any temple stops while running, the devotees shall think of him and the next moment the car shall run and he shaved off his head and kept before the altar of the goddess of Chidambaram. Then the car started to move. This story is briefly mentioned in a copper plate. It is also written in Agavarpa form in a palm leaf manuscript. It could be known from this that a car has moved in Chidambaram too by giving a human sacrifice as given in Kanchipuram.

Navakandam Sculptures

The people worship the soldier who sacrifices himself for the God, leader or his place. It is found in a posture of the soldier shaving off his head in a standing, sitting or kneeling posture. It looks as the soldier keeps the sword on his neck. Though Silapathikaram has denoted about Navakandam, the Navakandam Sculptures are found starting from Pallava period itself in Tamil Nadu. The sculptures of shaving off the head for Kotravai are found in Draupati chariot in Mahapalipuram, the hill in Singavaram and Thiruvanaikavu.

These Navakandam Sculptures are majorly found in Thagadur region. Three Navakandam sculptures are kept in the archaeological museum in Dharmapuri. One among them was brought from a place called Kunthani and the remaining two were brought from a place called Penneswaramadam. The Navakandam sculpture which was brought from Kunthani which is near Krishnagiri has been created as a relief sculpture in a rectangular shaped plank stone. The soldier is seen in a standing posture and shaving off his head using his right hand. A long dagger is shown in the backside of the neck. Many jewels are found around the neck of the soldier. His hair is tied into a bun at the right side. Another sculpture near this shows that the shoved head is taken in a basket and kept on his head. It is shown that the one who takes the head is sitting on the horse and carries the basket with both of his hands. The scene of shaving off the head and the scene of taking the shoved head in the horse is sculpted as the relief sculpture using the single stone. It is considered by the researchers that this sculpture might belong to the 15th century A.D.

Two Navakandam Sculptures have been brought from a place called Penneswaramadam near Krishnagiri. The bun is tied at the center of the head of the soldier who is in a standing posture. Jewels in the neck and waist corset have been worn. He is seen holding a dagger using both the hands and the dagger is shown at the backof the neck. Its form shows that the soldier is shaving his own head off and giving it as an offering. Researchers consider that this sculpture might belong to the 12th century A.D.

Navakandam Sculptures are found on both sides of the entrance of the Kali temple which is located on the way from Puthur near Thirubuvanam in Sivagangai district to Madapuram. The inscription that belongs to the 8th century A.D. is there in the Navakandam sculpture on the left side of the entrance. It is inscribed in rounded letters. A very simple sentence "ThoonguthalaiKuduthan Vallavan" is inscribed here. A sentence which comes as "ThoonguthalaiKuduthan Chitra Sarithan" inscribed in the Tamil inscription that belongs to the 10th century A.D. is in the Navakandam sculpture found in the right side.

A sculpture which is two feet tall and one and half feet wide which is located at Sozhapuram in Sivagangai district fold a leg forward and another leg backward in a sitting posture by holding the tuft of the hair by its left hand and shaving off the head using the sword by the right hand. Then the person is shown as a wealthy person who is wearing earrings in the ears, bangles in the wrist, an armlet in the arms, a medal like jewel on the neck, cloth around the waist. So it is said that he

might have been the commander of the army. It is believed that this sculpture could belong to the 15th century A.D.

Navakandam given by Women

Women also had the habit of praying to God that their king should succeed in the war and give their heads as a sacrifice to Goddess Kali in Kongu region. The inscriptions of Rajakesarivarman also known as Veerappandi Devar belonging to 1265-1285 A.D. stand as an example. As per that tradition, the idols of women warriors who sacrifice their heads which are found in Anthiyur Sri Patrakaliyamman temple proves that women also have Navakandam. It is to be mentioned that the sculpture of a Navakandam soldier with his wife on his left side by wearing unique clothes and jewels is also found.

Conclusion

A custom named Navakandam in the worship of Kotravai is in practice since the ancient times. These navakandam sculptures have been the symbol of the ones who did heroic actions in history. This event is held like a big festival. The information regarding cutting off their own heads as a sacrifice to Goddess Kotravai are found in the literatures like Silapathikaram, Kalinkathu Barani and Thakayaga Barani, copper plates, palm leaf manuscripts and the inscriptions. Navakandam Sculptures are found in various places in Tamil Nadu. The habit of women shaving off their heads and giving them as a sacrifice to Goddess Kali prevailed in Tamil Nadu. These become the important sources which show the periodic history in many places. So these are the important historical symbols which have to be preserved. So it is not an exaggeration to say that it is our sole responsibility to preserve them for future generation.

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Hero Stones in Kallakurichi District

C.Emmanuel[1] and Dr.V.Vijayarangam[2]

Introduction

The Tamil people have formed certain ethics for wars and considered bravery and wisdom as important as their eyes. They considered dying in war as the greatest pride. It is not only the responsibility to save the nation not only for the Indians but also for the Tamil people.*The Rigveda* and *Atharvanaveda* say that the one who dies in war will get more spiritual virtue than the ones who have donated thousand cows. The great epic *Mahabharata* also definitely says that "the soldier who

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dies in war will get place in heaven". Beeshma says that the one who dies will get place in the other world. Sri Krishna also preaches Arjunathat the one who sacrifices in war will attain heavenly abode*(Bhagavat Geeta)*. Manu author of*Manusmriti* says that when one dies in war he will be in heaven.[1]

The soldiers who participated in the war have been created memorial stone which is called 'Hero Stones' for the ones who died in war. There was a culture of creating hero stones for the dead soldiers who sacrificed their lives in war. Even though the death symbol has been created for the ones who died naturally, hero stones have been built for the soldiers who attained death in war. The Hero stones have been raised up for the soldiers who gave their lives in war for beheading the animals, for adding more nations to the crown, for safeguarding the dignity of women, for safeguarding people from animals and for various other reasons.[2]The main reason for the creation of these hero stones was to encourage the soldiers. It is also due to the belief that the soldiers attained heavenly abode.

These kinds of hero stones are mostly found in different districts of Tamil Nadu such as Salem, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Vellore, Tirupathur, Kanchipuram and Ranipet and Mysore regionsin the state of Karnataka.In the same way some hero stones are found in Kallakurichi district which is a historical place and they gave much new information to the history of Tamil Nadu. The hero stones found at Melsiruvalur, Pakkam, Kanankadu, Chinnasalem, Eduthavaainatham, Sirunaagalur, Karadi, Vanjikuzhi, Kariyalur and Thatchur in Kallakurichidistrict.

Hero Stones in Kallakurichi District

Melsiruvalur Hero Stone - 1

A hero stone which begins with the statement *'Kovisaya Parumarku Irupathu Naalkaavathu'* is near Pandurangan Kollai which is situated in a small place called Melsiruvalur at Sankarapuram taluk in Kallakurichi district. The soldier is sculpted in a way in which he is going to the war by holding the bending sword in his right hand and a shield in his left hand. The inscription of eleven lines which is inscribed in the *Vattezhuthu* is there in the left side of the soldier. There is a small festoon above the head of the soldier.

TheParuma who takes place in the inscriptions might be Simma Varma. So the period is 6th century A.D. A person named Kundrattu Araisar in Keezhkovalur ruled Tirukovalur. His son Singa Mayanchiyar Neelakandaraisar along with his servant's son named Neelakandar died while rescuing the herd of cows. In this Neelakandaraisar was the king and the second one was the son of the servant.[3]

Melsiruvalur Hero Stone - 2

There is another hero stone near this stone. This also starts with *'Kovisaya Parumarkku'*. This can be considered as the hero stone of Simmavarma. In the 29th ruling year of Simmavarma, Pon Saathanar who was the son of Neelakanda Athiyaraisar fought war against Thansur Athiyaraisar Sambavinar. The servant of Ponnuzhuthanar and a soldier called Veerathanaruman died in this war. Some of the words in the inscription are in the disintegrated form. Neelakandaraisar and Ponnuzhuthanar in the first hero stone have also taken place in this one too. The name Neelakandaraisar is in the first inscription. But it is mentioned as Neelakandathiyaraisar (Athiyaraisar instead of Araisar). The name Ponnuzhuthanar is inscribed as Ponnuzhuthanaru. The name of the soldier is Veerathanar. Ponnuzhuthanar who was the son of Neelakandaraisar is in the first hero stone. The servant of Ponnuzhuthanaru died in the war. But it is not mentioned. So the word 'Makkal' in the hero stone might not only be used to describe the relationship, but also the name of the position. It might be the position which is above the servant and soldier which might the position of administrator. It might be denote the position of the head of the village. They might have worked under Araisar or Athiyaraisar.

The soldier in the second hero stone is in the position of fighting in the war by having the arrow in the left hand and little sword in the right hand. The hair looks like a ponytail behind him. There is a half dress with a knot shown beautifully. The inscription which has six lines is there above the head of the hero. This inscription been inscribed in *Vattezhuthu*.[4]

Kanankadu Hero Stone

This hero stone is situated at the social forest consisting of eucalyptus forest at Kanankadu in Sankarapuram taluk in Kallakurichi district. This has been erected in the 15th ruling year of the Pallava King Mahendravarma I. The hero in the stone is seen fighting by having the sword and shield. This hero stone which has ten lines contains *Vattezhuthu*. A person named Melur Aathan who was the king of Meekondrai Naadu died in this battle during the rule of Mahendravarma. In the Tamil name of this place Kanankadu has the letter '**ண**' instead of '**ன**'.

Chinnasalem Hero Stone

The sculpture of the hero in a hero stone sitting on the elephant by holding a goat on one hand and controls the lion on the other hand is there in Goddess Draupati temple in Chinnasalem near Kallakurichi. The hair style shows him as the highest form of leader. There is a small sword in the hero's hip. A kettle has been shown above his head. He might be the head of the hunters. The hero might have died in the fight while attacking the lion along with the elephant. This could be denoted as 14th- 15th century A.D.[9]

Conclusion

Even though the stones have been created in memory of the dead ones, it is considered greatly about building "Hero Stones" for those who gave their lives in the war around the world. The worshipping of bravery which has been found all over the world has also been found in Kallakurichi district. These hero stones show bravery as well as will power of the heroes. So it is not an exaggeration to say that it is the sole responsibility to safeguard these heritage symbols, to register them in the history and to inform about them to the future generations.

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The South Pennar River Festival - An Overview

A.Arun[1] and Dr. V.Vijayarangam[2]

Purpose of the River Festival

It is a belief that the holy rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Godavari and Narmada join the South Pennar river which is called Thatchina Pinagini during the first five days of the tamil month of Thai when the sun moves towards north. The people believ that it is good to take bath in that river during this time. The river festival is celebrated as the closing ceremony of the Pongal festival which is the festival of Tamil people on its fifth day. The Tirtavari event is held in all the water bodies in order to give thanks to the rivers which act as an essential need for agriculture and drinking water.[2] Among them, the Tirtavari festival celebrated in the South Pennar river is the most special one.

People come to this festival along with their families and friends and enjoy seeing various deities like Lord Shiva, Goddess Parvati, Lord Muruga and Lord Vinayagar who unite to take part in Tirtavari in the various places of the South Pennar river. The deities who move towards their own places with holy water in the jar called Kalasa, would roam in their places throughout the night and bless the people.

Beliefs of the People

It is a belief of the people that only good will happen and no evil will come near their place as the deities of their place take Tirtavari during the month of Thai which comes after the month of Margazhi. They believe that all their prayers are fulfilled by taking part in this festival.[3]

Places of Celebration

The river festival is celebrated in the rivers of the districts such as Kallakurichi, Villupuram and Cuddalore and the places belonging to Puducherry. This festival is celebrated widely in places through which this South Pennar river flows. This festival is celebrated in a grand manner in the South Pennar river regions of Kallakurichi such as Manalurpettai and Tirukovilur, the South Pennar river regions of Villupuram district such as Arakandanallur, Puthupalayam, Andarayanallur, Enathimangalam, Pidagam, Athiyurthiruvathi, Perangiyur, Chinnakallipattu, Mettupalayam and Kalinjikuppam, the South Pennar river regions of Puducherry like Soriyankuppanm near Bagur and the South Pennar river regions of Cuddalore district such as Kandarakottai near Panruti, Sornavur and Manjakuppam. The festival is held from 10 a.m to 7 p.m. in the regions of the South Pennar river.

The South Pennar River

The South Pennar river which is one of the important rivers in South India has a religious significance. This is the second longest river of Tamil Nadu after Cauvery. This is called 'Dhatchina Pinagini' in Karnataka, *"Thenpennai Aaru"* and *"Ponnaiyaru"* in Tamil Nadu. As this river flows alongside Tirukovalur which was once the capital of Malayamans during Sangam period, the pride of this river has been mentioned in Sangam literatures like Aganannooru and Purananooru and the literatures which came after the Sangam period like Nalayira Divya Prabantam and Periya Puranam. The poets have described the specialty of this river when they sing about the Gods who dwell in the temples situated in the shores of the South Pennar river in the Devotional literature such as Devaram and Thiruvasagam.

This river is born in Nandi Hills at Chikkaballapur district in Karnataka as Pennai river, travels 432 kilometers and finally mixes with the Bay of Bengal in Tamil Nadu. This South Pennar river flows 112

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kilometers long in Karnataka, 180 kilometers long in Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri in Tamil Nadu, 34 kilometers long in the districts such as Tiruvannamalai and Vellore, 106 kilometers long in the districts like Villupuram, Kallakurichi and Cuddalore and finally confluences with the Bay of Bengal near Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu.[3]

River Festival in Kallakurichi District

The river festival is celebrated grandly in places like Manalurpet and Tirukovalur at the South Pennar river in Kallakurichi district on the fifth day of the month of Thai every year.

Manalurpet

Manalurpet is a place situated on the bank of Pennai river at Tirukovalur in Kallakurichi district. The festival is celebrated on all the first five days of Thai month every year. Lord Annamalaiyar takes part in Tirtavari as Chandrasekar along with his female deity in the South Pennar river which flows through Manalurpet situated 25 kilometers in the south of Tiruvannamalai on the fifth day of Thai month every year. Lord Annamalaiyar with other main deities has been brought to this region with procession. Tirtavari would happen after 12 p.m. in the river. Lord Annamalaiyar roams in a Rishabha vehicle in that place throughout the night and bless the people of that region. After the Tirtavari ends, he goes back to the temple during the next day. The devotees would worship Lord Annamalaiyar throughout the place on these two days. All the arrangements for this event are done by the administrative officers of the temple.[4]

Tirukovilur

The river festival is celebrated in a grand way on the fifth day of Thai month at Tirukovilur in Kallakurichi district. In this festival, the main deities from various temples like Keezhayur Veerataneswar, Erikarai Mokkai Rettai Vinayaga, Arakandanallur Athulya Nadeswar and Narayur Varadaraja Perumal will come as a procession, take bath and would be taken back to their temples. Lord Varadaraja Perumal and Veerataneswar taking bath at the same time is a specialty here.

The poojas like Vigneshwar pooja, Kalasa pooja, Pancha Sasana pooja, Panchavarana pooja and Abhishekas using special fragrant things done at the Tirtavari event organized on behalf of the villagers of Manapoondi. Sriruthra Maha Abhisheka is done followed by the other poojas. Then the Maha Abhisheka will be held with the chanting of Veda mantras by Sivachariyas. At that time, Tirtavari will be done along with the chanting of Sivapurana and Nama Shivaya mantras by the devotees. The devotees belonging to Villupuram district also take part and holy bath. Then the special decoration and lamp worship are done to the deity. Apart from this, Tirtavari is done to the main deities coming from the 10 villages around this place. Nearly one and half lakhs people take part to witness this festival.[5]

River Festival in Villupuram District

The river festival is usually held in 24 places in Villupuram. Among them, it is celebrated in the South Pennar river regions like Arakandanallur, Puthupalayam, Andarayanallur, Enathimangalam, Pidagam, Athiyurthiruvathi, Perangiyur, Chinnakallipattu, Mettupalayam and Kalinjikuppam in a special manner every year.[6]

Pidagam, Athiyurthiruvathi

The public from Villupuram and the places around it gather for the river festival held on the fifth day of Thai month in the South Pennar river regions like Pidagam and Athiyurthiruvathi near Villupuram. The worship with Abhisheka is done to the deities in the river, decorate them and do special rituals. The idols of more than 50 main deities are being brought from the surrounding areas and Tirtavari is held for them during this river festival. Lakhs of people gather at the South Pennar river from the morning itself to witness the union of many deities in the same place.[7]

The event of Tirtavari is held in the places where the South Pennar river flows through for the deities in all the water bodies in order to give thanks to the rivers which acts as the essential thing for agriculture and drinking water. This river festival which is celebrated on the fifth day of Thai month is the important event for the people belonging to the places like Villupuram,

Cuddalore and Puducherry. Lakhs of people gather in this river to witness many Gods in the same place. People believe that all their prayers become fulfilled by taking part in this festival.

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The History of Anniyur Sri Ramanatheeswarar Temple

R. Mohanraj[1] and Dr. V. Vijayarangam[2]

Location

Sri Ramanatheeswarar temple is located at a place called Anniyur at Vikravandi Taluk in Villupuram district. This temple is located at 8.6 kilometer in the north western direction from Surapattu bus stop which lies on the way from Villupuram to Tiruvannamalai.[1]

Anniyur- Etymology

This place was initially called Vanniyut by the name of its holy tree called Indian Mesquite tree which means in Tamil as 'Vanni Maram' and later people called it Vanniyur which incourse of time became Anniyur.[2]

Puranic History

It is stated through the purana that this god is called Sri Ramanatheeswarar as Rama worshipped Lord Shiva in Anniyur in order to get relieved of the sin of murdering Vaali while hiding.[3] The pilgrim centers around Anniyur are majorly related to the story of Ramayana. The place where Janaki Devi stayed with Rama is called 'Janakipuram', the place where Janaki saw the feet of the magical deer is called as Kanda, Man, Adi (Saw, Deer, Feet) as 'Kandamanadi' and the place where the emerald colored magical deer ran is 'Maragathapuram' even today.[4]

Origin of the Temple

The temple that is seen in Anniyur is built during the Pallava period. The God of this temple is called Sri Ramanatheeswarar. The goddess of this temple is Tripurasundari.[5]

Structure, Architecture and Sculpture of the Temple

Ramanatheehwar temple in Anniyur is situated facing east in 53 cents land area.[6] This temple has a main tower which has three stages, two circumambulatory paths including inner circumambulatory path and outer circumambulatory path. This temple has a sanctum sanctorum, Artha Mandapa, Maha Mandapa, entrance hall, main tower, Vimana, the proximities of Lord Vinayaga, Lord Arumuga along with Valli and Deivanai, Ambal, Natraja, Parasakthi, Navagraha and Chandikeshwar, the room where the things are kept, circumambulatory path

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hall, Mutt school, oil warehouse, altar, flag mast, Nandi hall and Utsav hall.

The relief sculptures of Lord Shiva and Parvati are in a sitting posture above Nandi above the entrance of outer circumambulatory path of this temple. The relief sculptures of Agathiyar is seen standing and bowing to them. The relief sculptures of Lord Vinayaga is seen near to it and the relief sculpture of Naradha is on the left side and the relief sculpture of Lord Muruga is seen near to it in a standing posture. Nandi sculptures are found at the four corners of the compound wall. Altar, flag mast, Nandi hall and Utsav hall are located in the outer circumambulatory path after crossing the entrance door.

An Utsav hall that is built with black stones is situated facing south in the northern side of outer circumambulatory path of the temple. This is a huge hall which has 15 pillars and a stage. Many sculptures like the dancing sculptures, the sculptures of the sages and Bairava are found on the four sides of the pillars of this hall. But some stones on the eastern wall seem to be in a collapsed state. Now this hall is not in use.

The inner circumambulatory path is situated next to the outer circumambulatory path. The main tower is located above the entrance. The new relief sculptures of Lord Vinayaga in the right side and Lord Muruga in the left side are placed. After this, a main hall with above thirty, eight-bar shaped pillars is located. The oil warehouse is located facing the west in the circumambulatory path hall in the left side and a mutt school is located facing the south in the eastern direction near to it. A Kitchen is situated facing north on the right side next to the entrance in the circumambulatory path hall. A room to keep things is there which has east faced entrance.

The shrine of Parasakthi is situated facing south in the circumambulatory path hall. This shrine is found without any sculptures. The shrine of Natraja is seen facing the south on the northern side of the Maha Mandapa. This shrine also does not have any sculptures. The sculpture of Kalabairava is seen facing south in the right side of the entrance of this shrine.

Sri Ramanatheeswarar temple is found having the sanctum sanctorum, Artha Mandapa, Maha Mandapa and entrance hall. The sanctum sanctorum of this temple is built using black stones. The Vimana of Sri Ramanatheeswarar temple which is built of stucco has three layers is called Tritala.

The sculpture of Dakshanamoorthy in the south, Lingathbovar in the west and Brahma in the north are found in the devakoshta of the sanctum sanctorum. These sculptures belong to the Vijayanagar period. Dakshanamoorthy is seen in a sitting posture facing south in the southern devakoshtaa of the sanctum sanctorum. He is seen hanging his right leg and folding the left leg in the rocks below the banyan tree. The meditation belt is found in his leg. Abhayamutra is seen in the lower right hand and a serpent in the upper left hand. A palm leaf script is seen in the lower left hand and flame in the upper left hand. Lingothbavar is seen in a standing posture with four hands in the devakoshta in the western side. A deer is found in the left hand and an axe in the right hand. Among the other two hands, he shows varada and abhayahastam in his right hand and left hand respectively. The image of the pig is found in the feet and the swan is found above the head. A brave chain is found on his neck. Lord Brahma is found in the northern devakoshta of the sanctum sanctorum facing the north in a standing posture by having four heads and four hands. The right and left hands are found showing Abhaya and Kadi hasta. A string of beads and a conch shell are found in the upper right and left hand respectively. Coiffed crown is found above the head. The ornaments of the neck such as kandikai, sarabali, Savadi and holy thread are worn.

The sculpture of Nartana Vinayaga in the south and the sculpture of Vishnu Durga in the north are found in the devakoshta of the Artha Mandapa. These sculptures belong to the Vijayanagar period. Nartana Vinayaga is seen in a standing posture facing south in a dancing position by having four hands and a moral in the trunk. Lord Vishnu Durga is seen in a standing posture facing north with four hands. A girdle is seen on the chest and the neck ornaments like Kandikai, Sarabali and Savadi are found. The conch shell and a

chakra is found in the right and left upper hands respectively. The right and left lower hands are seen showing the Abhaya mudra and Kadi hasta.

Dvara Balakas are found on both sides of the entrance of Muga mandapa. The sculptures of Lord Vinayaga are found next to Dvara Balakas. A sculpture of a snake is found next to the sculptures of Dvara Balakas and Lord Vinayaga. An altar and Nandi are found in the Maha mandapa. After crossing the Maha mandapa, Muga Mandapa which has four pillars and Artha Mandapa with no pillars are there. The sanctum sanctorum is seen next to the Artha Mandapa. The main deity Sri Ramanatheeswarar appears in a Linga form in the sanctum sanctorum. The inner roof of the sanctum sanctorum is in the octagonal shape.

The shrine of Tripurasundari Amman is located facing east in the left side of the shrine of Sri Ramanatheeswarar. This shrine is found having the sanctum sanctorum, Artha Mandapa, and Maha Mandapa. The sanctum sanctorum of this shrine is built with black stones. The altar and Simha are found in the Maha Mandapa of this shrine. The Vimana of the goddess Tripurasundari shrine has three layers called Tritala. The devakoshtas of Amman shrine is found without any sculptures. The goddess Tripurasundari is seen having four hands in a standing posture.[7] Among the four hands of the goddess, upper right hand has a *angusam* and a *pasam* in the upper left hand. The lower right hand is seen showing Abhayahasta and the lower left hand is seen showing the Varadahasta. The ornaments in the neck and an anklet are found.

A small level of the shrine of Lord Vinayaga is found facing east in the southwestern part of the temple. Lord Vinayaga who is the first one among the companion deities is seen in Sukhasana. He is called Kannimoola Ganapathy.[8] The right and left hands of Lord Vinayaga are seen showing the Abhaya and Varadamutra respectively. A moral in the trunk and the mouse which is a vehicle of him on his feet are also shown.

Next to it, the shrine of Lord Muruga is situated facing east on the backside of the sanctum sanctorum. Lord Muruga is seen in a standing posture along with Valli and Deivanai. Among the four hands of Lord Muruga, the upper right has the power tool, the upper left hand has a flag. The lower right hand shows the abhayahasta and the lower left hand shows Varadahasta. Valli is situated in the right side and Deivanai is situated in the left side of him. A peacock is seen in the foot of Lord Muruga.

The shrine of Chandikeshwarar is seen facing the south in the left side of the sanctum sanctorum. In this Chandikeshwar is found in a hero pose having two hands.

The Navagrahas sculptures like sun, moon, mars, mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Raghu and Kedhu are found next to the entrance. These sculptures are found as the small ones facing all the four directions in three rows on the stage. Though the temple of God Saturn is found all over India, the holy appearance of God Saturn who solve all the sorrows in Anniyur Sri Ramanatheeswarar temple is phenomenal. He appears in a position of departing by placing his leg on his vehicle crow. The devotees say that this appearance means that he is ready to immediately depart to answer the prayers of his devotees to solve their sorrows.[9]

The sculpture of Kala Bairava is found in the right side of the entrance of Lord Natrajas's shrine. He is also called Kshetrabalar. He is seen having four hands by carrying a dumb bell, rope, trident and skull which are his tools.

The religious saints like Thirugnana Sambandhar, Thirunavukarasar, Sundaramoorthy and Manikavasagar are found facing north in a standing posture without a separate shrine in the circumambulatory path hall in the southern side.

The sculptures of Saptamadhas like Brahmi, Maheswari, Gaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indirani and Samundeeshwari are found facing north in the southern circumambulatory path hall.

Totally 19 copper idols are found in this temple. The sculptures of Vinayagar, Arumugar, Somaskandar, Chandrasekarar, Thirugnanasambandar, Natraja and Sivagami, Parasakthi and Sundarmoorthy Nayanar belong to the Vijayanagar period.[10]

A well is situated next to the shrine of Lord Muruga. The Indian Mesquite tree which is a holy tree (Sthalavruksham) of this place is situated in the northwestern part next to it. The sculptures of Lord Vinayaga, Rishaba and Linga are situated under this tree.

Then some sculptures which are broken completely are found as a separate sculptures in the backyard of this temple. Various vehicles made of wood are found in this temple.

Conclusion

Sri Ramanatheeswarar temple in Anniyur which was built during the Pallava period is the most flourished temple praised by the devotees. The devotees praise and laud this God and worship here sincerely as they think that all the resource, wealth and health could be attained if the deity of this temple is worshipped. The God also listens to the prayers of the devotees and blesses them. So it is the important responsibility to worship and get the blessings of God in this temple and to praise and preserve this ancient temple.

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The Uvari Suyambulinga Swamy Temple in Tisaiyanvilai Taluk - A Historical Perspective

S. Jegansamraj & Dr. C. Asha

Introduction

The Uvari Syambulinga Swamy Temple, located on the tranquil shores of Uvari village in Tisaiyanvilai Taluk of Tirunelveli Tirunelveli district, boasts a fascinating history interwoven with local legend and faith. Its origins date back to a time when this coastal settlement was a simple fishing hamlet, and it is believed that the temple's principal deity, suyambulinga Swamy (self-manifested Shiva), appeared miraculously. The temple's establishment is often attributed to the story of a milk vendor who witnessed Kadambakodi manifestations at the site, inspiring the villagers to

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construct a shrine that has now stood for centuries. As the temple grew in prominence, it became a significant spiritual center for Shiva devotees from Tamil Nadu and beyond. The architecture exhibits the characteristic Dravidian style, with its sanctum facing the sea a rare feature among South Indian temples. Over the years, the temple has undergone numerous renovations, with contributions from both local rulers and devotees, who view the sanctity of the suyambulinga as a source of healing and Kadambakodi intervention, especially renowned for its reputed powers to cure illnesses.[1] Today, the temple remains not just a place of worship, but a testament to the region's rich religious heritage, drawing countless visitors fascinated by its blend of legend, history, and sacred atmosphere.

A vessel descends and shatters upon being obstructed by a kadambakodi

This village, which is rich in natural resources, is divided into two parts, the lower village and the upper village, with only a single-track path connecting the two. Here, a woman from the pastoral clan would come along this route every day to do her business. She used to transport her milk and pure yogurt along this route every day. Similarly, although many women carry it, one woman in particular's pot gets knocked over and breaks. This causes all the milk and yogurt she carries to go to waste. Seeing this, she goes home and tells her husband.

In A Blaze of Fury, The Husband Arrives At The Scene

When the husband, who heard all about this incident, leaves the house in anger, he takes a shovel and a sickle with him, and angrily returns to the place, taking his wife with him. When the husband angrily asked where that place was, the wife replied, "This is where it is." The husband pushed the soil away with the shovel he had brought and began to cut the roots of the Kadambakodi instead of cutting it. He began to cut the kodi's roots, thinking that if he cut it down, it would grow back. Shortly after they started cutting, blood began to spurt out. Seeing this, the two of them ran into the village in fear and gathered all the villagers to the spot[2]

What They Did to Stop The Bleeding From The Kadambakkodi

All the people of the village came to that place, then an elder among them, Sami Arul, came and said, "Cut down the tree and rub it with it, and the bleeding will stop immediately." The people there said, "This is a beach place." The elder asked how to get sandalwood, "Go to this place." He said that there is a sandalwood tree there. They immediately went and cut the branch and applied it to the Kadambakodi. The blood stopped and immediately Lord Shiva appeared from under the Kadanbakodi in the form of a SuyambuLinga. The elder who gave the blessing at that time said that God himself dedicated him to that temple as a Dharmakartha, and he continues to do the work of this temple. That means that to this day, his family continues to carry out the work of this temple.

Ceremony And Worship Method Held in The Temple

Special monthly puja and Swami VidhiUla are held at the Uvari suyambulinga Swamy Temple on the last Friday of every Tamil month. On the Vaikasi Visakha festival held in the month of Vaikasi, lakhs of devotees come and stay, visit the Suyambhunatha temple, participate in the night procession of the Swami, and then leave for their homes. After first taking a dip in the holy Uvarik Sea, the devotees come to the nearby Theppakulam and take a dip. After taking a dip in the nearby well, they circumambulate the Kanni Vinayakar and offer their prayers.[3]

One should circumambulate the temple of the great Swami Uvari SuyambuLinga Linga and worship it, wear clean, dry clothes, and then enter the temple. One should approach the kodimaram in the outer courtyard and circumambulate the sanctum sanctorum of the temple three times. Thereafter, one should prostrate oneself in front of the kodi tree from the south to the north and bow down. Women are required to perform Ashtanga Namaskar and a special ritual of worship at this temple is to observe a 41-day fast and carry soil from the beach around the temple to worship the deity.

Temple Structure And Expansion Works in The Early Period

Following the manifestation of Lord Shiva in the form of a linga as a self contained linga, the people immediately decided to build a stone shed here and worship there, and so they built it. One day, a heavy storm accompanied by rain occurred. Many houses in Uvari village were damaged by the wind. Seeing this, the people came to see the temple as soon as the rain started to subside. But the temple did not suffer even a little damage due to rain or wind, and then they decided to build a temple. As a result, the temple was built with the help of sages to make efforts for the cause. The temple's sanctum was first built when Balavesamuthu Nadar was the Dharmakatha. Later, the temple's vimana was constructed when Karuthakannu Nadar was the Dharmakartha.[4]

The foundation stone for the expansion of the temple was laid by the Honorable Speaker Mr. M. Appavu M.L.A during the Thaipusam festival chariot procession held on Thursday, 25.1.2019 at 7:30 am. A special feature of this temple is a 108-foot-high, 9-tiered tower made of black stone, which is being constructed behind the Thanjavur Big Temple, and work on a beautiful sculptural Rajagopura is underway.

The Glory of Suyambulinga Swamy Spread

The Hindu Nadars in Kanyakumari district are the ones who spread the fame of the venerable suyambulinga Swamy, known as Nan Periyasamy. The priests would drive the sheep they raised and come to Kanyakumari district on foot to graze them during the summer. They would graze their sheep in grassy areas during the day and at night build cages about three feet high in a coconut grove and confine the sheep inside them. Coconut grove owners usually give money, rice, and coconuts in exchange for goat manure. The goat dung becomes a natural fertilizer for the coconut tree, which gives the tree a good yield.[5]

Then, if anyone in your village has an incurable disease, please donate a sum of money to the coconut grove owners. When they said that they would say that we are offering it to the suyambulinga Swami in our village, they immediately said that they would give the money. Their illness will go away. In this way, when they enter the village, they will know that we are also coming with you and will come with the coconut grove owners. Thus, the fame of Sami spread. People from many towns in Kumari district come to Uvari to do palmyra farm work. People who come for such work have had darshan of Suyambu Linga Swami and have received many benefits. Thus, Sami's fame began to spread everywhere.[6]

Contribution of Uvari Suyambulinga Swamy Temple In Tourism Development

Uvari suyambulinga Swamy Temple, located in the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, is a prominent pilgrimage center dedicated to Lord Shiva. The temple is renowned for its self-manifested (suyambu) Shiva Lingam and is visited by devotees seeking spiritual healing, particularly those suffering from illnesses. Over the years, the temple has played a vital role in promoting tourism and contributing to the socio economic development of the region. One of the key contributions of the temple is its ability to attract **religious tourists** from across Tamil Nadu and neighboring states. Devotees visit the temple not only for worship but also to bath in the sea, which is believed to have healing properties.[7]

This spiritual tourism has led to the growth of supporting services such as lodges, restaurants, shops selling puja items, and transport facilities, thereby boosting the **local economy**. The increased footfall has encouraged improvements in **infrastructure,** including better roads, sanitation, and communication facilities in and around Uvari village. Additionally, the temple is a site of cultural significance, hosting religious festivals like Maha Shivaratri and Pradosham, which draw large crowds and promote **cultural tourism.**Furthermore, the scenic coastal location of Uvari enhances its appeal. Many tourists are drawn to the natural beauty of the beach and its peaceful environment, combining pilgrimage with relaxation, thus fostering **eco-religious tourism**. In recent years, social media and online platforms have increased the temple's visibility, attracting more tourists and pilgrims. The temple's growing popularity has led to greater awareness and preservation efforts of both spiritual and natural heritage.[8]

Conclusion

The Thamirabarani River, full of sacred texts that add pride to Tamil culture, flows along the coast of

Tirunelveli, a landscape that looks like a mat on the ground, on the edge of the sea. Surrounded by towering palm trees and the sound of their leaves, flowers bloom here and there in a beautiful natural setting. Uvari is a small village located on a beautiful beach with a canopy of palm trees nearby. Uvari Suyambunatha Temple is located in Kumari district, on the shores of a beautiful beach, a peaceful place to visit and enjoy. The chariot parade held here is a very special event. Thousands of people gather to witness it, have a glimpse of the chariot, and then leave. Also, it is surprising that even though the temple is located on the beach, the water from the well near the temple is suitable for drinking. Also, this temple has a very special Thiruvodu, a vessel structure, but it is very rare to find a Thiruvodu tree that can be used to make a plate. All these special features are found in the Uvari Suyambulinga Swamy temple complex

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Mapping Divine Rule through Healing and Ritual Purity in Tiruvalithayam Temple in Puzhal Kottam through Sambandar HYMNS

Drishya S[1] and Dr. K. A. Kavitha[2]

Introduction

The Devaram hymns, written by three illustrious Nayanmar saints between the seventh and ninth centuries CE, form the basis of Tamil Saivism. The Devaram hymns consecrated 274 temples as Paadal Petra Sthalams, thus giving them a sacred geography that still shapes Tamil devotional practice. Of these, Tiruvalithayam, in the ancient Tondainadu region that is now northwestern Chennai, occupies a special place since it is uniquely sung only by Sambandar.

The Sacred Geography and Legends of Tiruvalithayam:

Tiruvalithayam, located in Padi, was one of the shrines within Puzhal Kottam of the ancient Thondai Nadu, a landscape popular for its fertile fields, tanks, and vibrant settlements that cultivated a distinctive devotional tradition [1]. According to the Sthalapuranam, Bharadvaja Maharishi was once cursed to be as a bird named Valiyan and attained deliverance here by creating a sacred pond and offering worship to Shiva and from this event [2].

Legends further enhance the sanctity of the site. Tradition recalls that Hanuman visited the temple and worshiped there [3]. Another belief holds that

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Brihaspati, the divine preceptor, performed penance here, situating the temple within the background of Vedic cosmology [4].

These narratives interweave local memory with wider traditions, giving Tiruvalithayam its composite identity as both a Tamil and universal sacred space.

The natural features of the temple also contribute to its holiness. Two wells, Bharadvaja Tirtha and Hanuman Tirtha, are celebrated for their pure and curative waters. Devotees believe that drinking from them removes ailments and sins, as described in the Sambandar's hymns [5]. Ritual manuals further describe the use of this water for the daily rituals of the deity, thereby adding elements of the natural environment into religious practice [6]. In this way, landscape, legend, and rituals together shape the sacred identity of Tiruvalithayam.

Historical Background and Inscriptions:

The Tiruvalithayam temple provides a strong indication of its past from the fourteen Chola period inscriptions that are still engraved on the walls [7]. One of the most significant dates is from Rajaraja Chola I's 28th year it documents the granting of land for offerings and the construction of a temple for Kshetrapala Pillaiyar [8].

Additional documents also provide information on the contributions made by private benefactors and local leaders. Kanchipuram's Vijayakanda Gopala Thevar provided lands, ceremonial items, and dancing ladies to sustain the devotion [9]. In addition, several inscriptions discuss presents for lamps that never go out, highlighting the significance of light as a representation of unwavering loyalty [10]. Sambandar's influence was felt in temple management as well as in his songs, as seen by the "Tirugnanasambandar Naazhi," a grain measure bearing the saint's name [11].

Later inscriptions suggest that the temple had consistent funding from trade guilds and local populations [12]. The Devakottai Pazhala S. Sabapathi Chettiar undertook extensive repairs in the temple and they staged a kumbhabhishekam during which Sambandar's songs were sung as part of the consecration [13]. When taken together, these inscriptions demonstrate how the

temple was kept alive via the joint efforts of rulers, merchants, and common people throughout generations, combining spiritual devotion with temporal assistance.

Architectural Features and Iconography:

The early Chola architectural style is shown in the Tiruvalithayam temple. Its moolasthanam is constructed with the unusual Gajaprashta style [14]. Only a few early medieval shrines exhibit this architectural style, suggesting that it originated during the early Chola era.

Tiruvalithayanathar, also called Vallisvarar, is the main deity and is worshipped here as a self-manifested (swayambhu) lingam [15]. Thayammai (Jagadambal), his consort, is a symbol of Shakti's nurturing force. When viewed from a particular angle, the god and goddess appear together, signifying the unbreakable bond between the male and female facets of the divine [16].

One of the temple's unusual features is the placement of the Somaskanda shrine in the position normally assigned to Vinayaka [17]. This unusual configuration sets Padi apart from other Chola sanctuaries by highlighting its particular theological objectives and ritual procedures. Textual sources glorify and ritually sanctify the two sacred wells as living manifestations of divine favor [18].

The temple's architecture, despite its small size, effectively conveys a Tamil Saiva ethos, where sanctity is found in the depth of holy memory, the testimony of inscriptions, and most importantly, the presence of devotional lyrics.

Festivals and Ritual Continuity:

The ritual calendar of Tiruvalithayam continues to revolve around Sambandar's hymns. The annual Brahmotsavam in Chithirai month features processions of the deity accompanied by recitations of the eleven verses, transforming the streets of Padi into an extension of the temple's sacred space. During Mahasivaratri, devotees chant his hymns through the night as devotion.

Water from the sacred wells is drawn for ablutions, reinforcing the link between nature and sanctity [35].

The hymns are sung in morning and evening pujas, sustaining the continuity of Sambandar's poetic presence [36]. Through these practices, the hymns remain not only as texts but as living voices that shape the rhythms of devotion.

Conclusion

Tiruvalithayam temple emerges as a site of extraordinary significance through Sambandar's hymns. Myths of Bharadvaja, Hanuman, and Brihaspati and inscriptions of Chola kings and local donors; and the architecture of the shrine all contribute to its sanctity. Yet these are secondary to its literary dedication in the Devaram. Sambandar's eleven hymns are filled with imagery of blossoming groves, buzzing bees, and healing waters blessing the temple as a sacred ecosystem were grace flows in abundance. The theology of grace assures healing and salvation. Through their joy and rhythm, the hymns transform worship into visual and spiritual bliss. The centuries that followed institutionalized Sambandar's presence in temple administration and festivals. Today, his voice continues to echo in the courtyards of Padi, making Tiruvalithayam a living confluence of saint, song, and shrine.

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The Role of Perumal Temples in Preserving Religious and Cultural Memories in Travancore

Prameetha K

Historical Background of Travancore and Vaishnavism

Travancore, historically a princely state, was deeply influenced by Hindu traditions. Vaishnavism, the worship of Vishnu and his avatars, held a prominent role in shaping the religious landscape. The Perumal temples emerged not only as religious shrines but also as cultural landmarks, embedding themselves in the political, social, and educational history of the region[4].

From the medieval period onwards, Travancore kings patronized temples extensively. They saw themselves as servants of the deity. At the same time, local communities, artisans, and scholars used these temples as spaces for ritual practices, storytelling, and education[5]. Thus, the temples of Travancore became living institutions where religion and cultural memory converged[6].

Suchindram Temple: Memory of Inclusiveness

The Suchindram temple, dedicated to Thanumalaya Perumal, is unique as it unites the three Hindu deities Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma into a single form. This theological inclusiveness reflects a deep cultural memory of unity and harmony among diverse religious traditions[7].

Rituals at Suchindram temple emphasize community participation. The temple preserves oral traditions, hymns, and myths that reinforce the idea of religious coexistence. The temple thus acts as a cultural archive of inclusiveness, reminding devotees that devotion transcends sectarian boundaries[8]. By preserving the memory of unity, Suchindram temple contributes to the shaping of a collective identity where diversity is acknowledged and celebrated[9].

Padmanabhaswamy Temple: Political and Ritual Memory

The Padmanabhaswamy temple at Thiruvananthapuram is one of the most significant centers of Vaishnavism in South India. It is historically tied to the Travancore royal family, whose kings styled themselves as "Padmanabha Dasa" (servants of Lord Padmanabha)[10]. This political and ritual link ensured that the temple became a site of both religious and cultural memory[11].

Through daily rituals, grand festivals, and royal patronage, the temple has preserved traditions for centuries. The enormous wealth stored in the temple's vaults, including gold and ancient artifacts, symbolizes not only prosperity but also the preservation of cultural memory[12]. Inscriptions, donations, and architectural expansions record the continuity of devotion and political legitimacy[13]. Legend stories surrounding the unopened vaults such as divine protection or curses have become part of oral memory, reinforcing the temple's mystical identity[14]. The fact that the vaults remain unopened reflects a cultural value where faith and reverence for the divine outweigh human curiosity or greed[15].

Parthivapuram Temple: Ancient Learning and Heritage Memory

The Parthivapuram temple, dating back to the 9th century, represents one of the earliest centers of Vaishnava devotion in Travancore. It is particularly significant for its role in education and preservation of early devotional practices[16]. Inscriptions reveal its connections to grants for Salais and traditional learning[17], highlighting its role as a hub of intellectual and spiritual training[18].

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Unlike larger temples, Parthivapuram maintains simpler rituals, which themselves preserve the memory of early worship traditions[19]. Its continuity over more than a millennium makes it a crucial site for understanding how culture is preserved not only in grand ceremonies but also in modest and consistent practices[20]. The inscriptions at Parthivapuram are crucial. This shows how temples preserved memory not only of worship but also of knowledge systems[21].

Adikesava Perumal Temple: Devotion and Mythological Memory

The Adikesava Perumal temple, situated in Thiruvattar, is famous for its deity reclining in yogic repose, symbolizing cosmic balance[22]. Associated myths, such as Vishnu defeating the demon Kesi, are preserved in oral traditions, songs, and ritual recitations[23]. These narratives form a crucial part of cultural memory, ensuring that myth and devotion remain alive in the community's imagination[24].

The temple is also a center for Bhakti traditions. Devotional gatherings, music, and festivals preserve intangible heritage[25]. Pilgrims and devotees collectively contribute to memory preservation by retelling stories and engaging in ritual practices that have continued for centuries[26].

Cultural Memories transmitted through festivals and poojas

1. Padmanabhaswamy Temple

Murajapam refers to the 56-day Vedic chanting festival that occurs once in six years. Lakshadeepam refers to lighting one lakh oil lamps across the temple[27]. These festivals show continuity of devotion and scholarship, preserving oral traditions (Vedas) and visual memory (lamps)[28].

2. Suchindram Temple

The Aarudhra Darshan (Thiruvathirai) festival celebrates Lord Nataraja's cosmic dance, accompanied by special abhishekams, music, and dance performances[29]. This demonstrates how the temple fosters both ritual and artistic traditions[30]. The Navaratri festival highlights the temple's cultural inclusivity[31]. The temple mandapams host music, dance, and drama, thus becoming cultural centers of transmission for oral and artistic heritage[32].

The temple's iconic Hanuman statue, one of the tallest monolithic figures in South India, has made Hanuman Jayanthi a special festival here. Devotees offer abhishekam (ritual bathing) and vada malas (garlands of vadas) to Hanuman[33]. This unique practice blends devotion with food culture, symbolizing abundance and gratitude[34].

3. Parthivapuram Temple

Vedic chanting forms the core of ritual practice at Parthivapuram Temple[35]. The temple follows Rig, Yajur, Sama, and Atharva Vedas, with recitations scheduled at specific times of the day[36]. These chants are not only devotional but also serve as vehicles for preserving oral knowledge, linguistic precision, and sacred intonations[37]. Annual Brahmotsavam with flag hoisting, Vedic recitations, and lamp-lighting rituals shows that cultural memory is not only in grandeur but in continuity of small-scale traditions[38].

4. Adikesava Perumal Temple

Adikesava Perumal Temple is historically associated with the Alvar saints, whose devotional hymns (Divya Prabandham) are recited daily[39]. Vaikunta Ekadasi refers to the opening of the Paramapada Vaasal (gateway to salvation)[40]. Garuda Sevai processions and seasonal utsavams through village streets create shared cultural geography[41].

Conclusion

The Perumal temples of Travancore are more than sacred spaces. They are guardians of memory, linking past, present, and future[42]. In a modern context where globalization and secularization challenge traditional institutions, these temples continue to be the centers of cultural preservation[43]. By preserving inclusiveness, political legitimacy, ancient traditions, and devotional myths, these temples create a living archive of religious and cultural identity[44]. This study has highlighted how the four Perumal temples of Travancore preserve and transmit religious and cultural memory[45].

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The History of Thiruvakkarai Chandramouleeshwarar Temple

M.Thandavamoorthy[1] and Dr.V.Vijayarangam[2]

Location

Thiruvakkari is situated in Vaanur Taluk of Villupuram district. It is located 27 km NorthWest of Puducherry and 24 km SouthWest of Tindivanam and 30 km NorthEast of Villupuram town, Tindivanam to Puducherry enroute Mayilam 7 kms South of Perumpakkam. Buses are available to this place from Puducherry, Villupuram and Tindivanam.[1]

Puranic History

The demon Vakirasuran, an ardent devotee of Shiva, did severe penance to please Lord Shiva who appeared in front of him. The demon made the request for immortality. Lord Shiva, who would grant the wishes to those who ask, granted his wish too. The demon became arrogant because of this wish and troubled the Gods and *Indralokam*with his arrogance. The Gods who could not withstand his arrogance asked for the mercy of Lord Shiva who abides in mount Kailash. Lord Shiva invited Lord Vishnu who abides in *Vaikuntam*. Then Lord Shiva asked Lord Vishnu to kill the demon Vakirasuran. Accordingly, Vishnu, who came as Varadaraja Perumal, fought with the demon and destroyed him using his Sri Chakra.[2]

Tunmuki, the younger sister of Vakirasuran also committed atrocities like her brother. Lord Shiva ordered Parvathi Devi, who is a Chamundi to annihilate the demon Tunmuki. Parvathi came to earth to destroy Tunmuki. Parvathi was little hesitant as she saw Tunmuki, who was pregnant. According to morality, one should not kill a pregnant lady or the fetus which grows in her womb, because this Parvathi was hesitant first and later took the form of Kali and tore apart the womb of Tunmuki and removed the fetus from the womb and wore on her right ear as ear ring. Then she killed Tunmuki. Since she destroyed the sister of Vakirasuran, Parvathi remained there as Vakira Kali. Since they killed Vakirasuran and Tunmuki, Lord Shiva, Parvathi, Vishnu together came and blessed Thiruvakkari.[3]

The Origin and Development of the Temple

This Temple was constructed with burnt brick by Kochozhan alias Kochenganan who lived around Sangam Age. Thiruvakkarai Temple is one of the 70 storied temples (*Mada koyils*) dedicated to Lord Shiva by Kochengannan. The Varadaraja Perumal Temple which is in the same Temple complex was also built by the same king. The Shiva Temple which was first built with brick was later turned into stone Temple by Aditya I. Vishnu Temple was built during the second year of Adi Rajendran.[4]

According to Saiva Religious History Shiva's devotee Paranthka Chola's (907 A.D. - 953 A.D.) and Rajadhitya Chola paid donation to this and during his younger brother Kandaradhitya Chola's rule between 950 A.D. - 957 A.D. the royal tower was built and in his honour it is called as "KandaradhityanThirugopuram" and also "Kandar Suryan Thirugopuram". It is also said that Sembian Matheviyar, the wife of Kandaratidhan sang in many Temples and renovated them and she donated land and gold to Thiruvakkarai Temple and during this time the Temple began to develop.[5] Thus, the Temple developed during the successive periods and the royal tower and various shrines were completed and conducted *Kumbabishegam* consecration on Friday 21.03.2003 and the same was done in a grand manner.[6]

The Special Features of the Temple

The speciality of this Temple was that it was sung by Thirugnanasambandar, Thirunavukkarasar, Sekizhar, Arunagirinathar and Ramalinga Adigalar. The three faced sanctuary lingam was only one of its kind in India.[7] The holy water of this Temple is Varaga River also known as Sangarabharani and the holy Indian bael (Vilvam) is the holy tree.[8]

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Temple Structure

The Chandramouleeshwarar Temple is located majestically with a royal tower on a 10 acre land on the North bank of the river Sankarabharani, also known as the Varaga River. Amirthambigai known as Vadivambigai and three deities Chandramouleeshwarar, Vakrakali, Varatharaja Perumal are kept adorned in this Temple.[9]

Architecture and Sculpture of the Temple

The sky high majestic royal tower of the Temple is located above the main entrance of the Temple. Inside the royal tower, there is a beautiful lotus flower in the middle of the nine phases on the roof. The guards of the directions (Ashtathikku Balas) are seen around the flower. Next to the Chandramouleeshwarar Royal tower is the Vakirakaliamman Sannithi. In this shrine Vakirakali is calmly leaning facing the North direction.[10]

Vakirakali Temple, which has a separate Sanctum Sanctorum, has a fear evoking dreadful look. The head has burning flames as the background, skull as the crown, the corpse of the child as the right ear ring, eight sacred arms on the right hand, warmth, wheel, sword, axe and on the left hand drum, shield, skull and closer to the left leg the hand fingers are folded and the index finger is pointing towards the earth. The heads of the enemies are made as a garland and it is tied like a bra around her breasts. Kali's garland made of head goes down from the left shoulder to the chest and ends with the right hand hanging down to the abdomen. Approximately it is found across the chest in a sacred thread structure. The fangs on the face and the large round eyes that guard the anger look slightly down at the earth. Thus the form of Kali is seen in beauty.[11]

Generally we can worship the deity from the Temple tower gate. But in Thiruvakkarai Temple Royal tower, flagpole, Nandi, Chandramouleeshwarar, who resides in the Sanctum Sanctorum, is seen in a perverted position and not in a straight line. Since Kali, the chief deity is in perverted condition, the Temple is also in a perverted shape. Not only the Temple but also the statues are in the perverted shape. Lord Ganesha is rolling his trunk to the right instead of to the left. In all the Temples, it is customary for the crow, the vehicle of Lord Saturn, to be on his right. But here Saturn is unusually on the left side of the Lord. The Nandi of this Temple is not placed straight to the Sanctum Sanctorum and flagpole but slightly to the right in a perverted position.[12]

The Atmalingam Temple located on the West side, opposite to the Kali Temple is also known as Kanda Lingam. It is said that this lingam got its name from the worship of Vakrasuran. This lingam is cold during the summer and it is hot during the monsoon season. We can see water droplets on the lingam. It is confirmed as belonging to the period of Pallava King Rajasimha by historians. This Temple also has a separate Nandi.[13]

On the left side of the Kali Temple and in front of the parrot tower, there is a Nandi. This huge scale Nandi is not located straight to the Lord but away from it. To the right of Nandi is the *Tirukkalyana Mandapam* towards the *Atma Lingam*. It is called the centennial hall because it contains a hundred pillars.[14]

The hall has eight seated lion pillars on either side with two wheels drawn by two horses resembling a chariot. Inscriptions refer to it as the thousand pillar hall belonging to the period of Kulothunga III. During the *Brahmotshava* held during the rule of Cholas, *Thirukalyanam* festival used to take place in this hall on the tenth day. Then God and Goddess will come together and give visions to the people. Parrot tower is situated next to the Nandi. Lord Ganesha Temple is on the right side of Nandi.[15]

Sanctum Sanctorum of the Lord is 20 feet long and 18 ½ feet wide. The foundation is 4 feet above the ground. The half pillars are 5 feet high. Under the bent hand, instead of rows of monsters, lime statue rows are placed. The *Vimana* above the sanctuary is newly set up. At the headquarters, the Lord is displayed as the facial lingam. This is an amazing scene which cannot be seen anywhere else. It is the only place in India where three faced lingam is found in the Sanctum Sanctorum.

In the Sanctum Sanctorum the Trinity Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma appear as Divine Facial Lingam. Here the face is that of Thatpruda on the East, Vamadeva on North and Agora on the South. On this Shiva Lingam there are two fangs on the either side of the mouth as the name Agora suggests. This can be seen only when we anoint the Lord with milk.[16]

On the right side of the three faced Thirumoolanathan, Sathyanathan one who burnt Thiripuram and spouse of Uma keeps his left leg firmly on the surface and lift his right leg and performs *Rudra Thandavam*. Here Natarajan's braid is a sharp braid without spreading. The scene of the Lord performing *"VakiraThandavam"* is one to behold.[17]

On the either side of the sanctuary are two ten feet tall porters with their two feet raised and kept on the mace. To the right of the sanctuary are set 16 bar lingams. Veerabhadra appears on the left. Being the first round in the sanctuary is the statue of the four priests. Next to it, Subramanya is seen with Valli and Deivanai. On the other side are the statues of Vishnu, Durga and Ganesha of Pallava Period.[18]

On the North of the sanctuary a small form of Vakira Kali is seen. To the South of the Sanctum Sanctorum is the living tomb of a *Siddha* known as Kundalini Mamunivar. When he attained Jiva Samadhi, the lingam became a separate Temple. In Thalapuranam Kundalini Mamunivar is seen as the grandfather of Vakirasuran. As the manifestation of this, the sculptures of the Kundalini Sage and his grandson Vakiran are found in the Southern region.[19]

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"A Historical Study of Catholic Churches in Manapad, Thoothukudi District"

M. Thangaraja[1], Dr. M. Joseph Raj[2] and Dr. R. Selvaraju[3]

Introduction

Manapad is renowned for its rich Christian history and missionary activity. Its significance emerged in the 16th century when European missionaries, particularly Jesuits, journeyed along India's Coromandel Coast to propagate Christianity. Among them, St. Francis Xavier played a defining role, residing in a cave near the site that would later become Holy Cross Church, and actively engaging with local communities to promote the Christian faith. During the early period, the Church of Our Lady of Assumption served as the primary Christian worship center, catering to both European settlers and indigenous converts. However, in 1585, the Dutch transformed this church into a military arsenal, leaving the Catholic population without a central place of worship. To meet the spiritual needs of the growing community, St. James Church was established as the principal parish. Under Jesuit guidance, both churches flourished spiritually, socially, and architecturally.

The Jesuits not only oversaw structural renovations and expansions but also implemented community programs, promoted education, and facilitated cultural exchange, ensuring that the churches served as centers of learning and missionary coordination. Holy Cross Church, founded in 1581, became a prominent pilgrimage site due to its relics of the True Cross and its association with St. Francis Xavier. Over the centuries, these churches have evolved to meet the changing needs of the faithful while preserving their historic and architectural heritage. This study examines the history, architectural development, Jesuit influence, and cultural significance of St. James Church and Holy Cross Church in Manapad.[1]

Early Christian Presence in Manapad

The introduction of Christianity to Manapad can be traced to the arrival of Portuguese missionaries in the 16th century, who sought to establish the faith along India's southeastern coast. Among these missionaries, St. Francis Xavier emerged as a key figure, dedicating himself to spreading Christian teachings among local populations and maritime communities. His travels along the Coromandel Coast brought him to Manapad, where he engaged with both European settlers and indigenous communities, conducting catechism and facilitating religious instruction. The Church of Our Lady of Assumption served as the earliest Christian worship center in Manapad. It functioned not only as a place for Mass and sacraments but also as a hub for education, social gatherings, and missionary activities. The church provided literacy instruction, religious education, and guidance for converts, while also acting as a center for Christian literature and cultural exchange. Portuguese missionaries introduced vernacular printing and religious texts, helping disseminate Christian values across the region.1

In 1585, the Dutch occupation of the Coromandel Coast led to significant changes. The Church of Our Lady of Assumption was repurposed as a military arsenal, interrupting the local Catholic community's spiritual activities. This disruption necessitated the establishment of a new parish to serve the growing population of Christians in Manapad. St. James Church was conceived as the replacement parish, with the Jesuits spearheading its construction and administration. Jesuit missionaries were central to sustaining Christianity in the region. They were known for their educational initiatives, architectural expertise, and organizational skills. They not only ensured continuity of worship but also worked to integrate local communities into the Christian fold, blending European traditions with indigenous practices. Early Christian

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structures in Manapad served multiple purposes: spiritual centers, educational institutions, and community hubs, providing a foundation for the enduring presence of Catholicism in the region. Their efforts laid the groundwork for the churches' continued influence in subsequent centuries.[1]

Holy Cross Church Origins and Significance

Holy Cross Church, founded in 1581, occupies a prominent hillock in Manapad and holds a special place in the religious landscape of the region. Rev. Fr. John D. Salanova S.J. laid its foundation, with the first Mass celebrated in 1582. The church's significance is heightened by the presence of two small relics of the True Cross, brought to the church by Rev. Fr. Caldius Aqua Liva. The church is closely associated with St. Francis Xavier, who reportedly resided in a nearby cave while undertaking missionary work. In his honor, Rev. Fr. Louise Lousus S.J. planted a cross above the cave, and later, Msgr. Paul Robinston constructed a small chapel in 1975. These associations transformed Holy Cross Church into a major pilgrimage site, attracting devotees from across Tamil Nadu, especially during annual festivals dedicated to the Exaltation of the Cross.1

Architecturally, the church reflects a harmonious blend of Portuguese design and local construction techniques. Its coastal hillock location offers a panoramic view of the surrounding sea, adding a spiritual and aesthetic dimension to the pilgrim experience. The church's layout, vaulted ceilings, and altars demonstrate Jesuit attention to functionality, symbolism, and beauty, while local artisans contributed to its construction using indigenous materials and techniques. Holy Cross Church serves not only as a spiritual center but also as a hub for community gatherings, education, and missionary coordination. The Jesuit integration of European ecclesiastical practices with local culture ensured that the church became a symbol of enduring faith, bridging centuries of Christian tradition and local devotion.[1]

Foundation and Development of St. James Church

St. James Church was established to serve the Catholic community after the Dutch converted the original Church of Our Lady of Assumption into an arsenal. It quickly became the principal parish of Manapad, meeting the spiritual needs of the local population. The church's development was guided primarily by Jesuit missionaries, who played a pivotal role in its construction, expansion, and administration. In 1745, Rev. Fr. Duarthu, the superior of the Jesuit Malabar region, undertook significant renovations, enlarging the church to accommodate a growing congregation. Subsequent expansions included the extension of the nave, reinforcement of walls, and enhancement of the sanctuary, reflecting the European ecclesiastical architectural style adapted to local climatic and cultural conditions. Notable features of St. James Church include vaulted ceilings, ornate altars, and spacious interiors designed for large congregations, demonstrating a blend of European and Tamil architectural influences.1

St. James Church also functioned as a center for community life. The Jesuits emphasized education, social cohesion, and religious instruction, providing catechism classes, literacy programs, and training for local clergy. The church hosted festivals, social gatherings, and missionary meetings, becoming a hub for both spiritual and cultural activities. Its consecration by Bishop Tiburtius Roche in 1929 marked a milestone in its spiritual and administrative history. Over time, St. James Church became more than a place of worship; it emerged as a symbol of continuity and resilience for the Catholic population of Manapad. The Jesuit approach to church management, combining architectural excellence, pastoral care, and community engagement, ensured that St. James Church retained its significance across centuries, bridging historical legacy and contemporary relevance.[1]

Jesuit Influence in Manapad

From 1695 to 1752, Manapad served as the headquarters of the Malabar Jesuit Province, known as the Collegium. This institutional presence elevated the village into a key center for Jesuit missionary administration, education, and cultural coordination. Jesuits stationed at the Collegium supervised religious

activities, trained clergy, and directed missionary efforts across the Coromandel Coast. Jesuit influence extended beyond spiritual guidance. They established schools, provided literacy training, and introduced social welfare initiatives, including healthcare and community support. By promoting education and religious instruction, the Jesuits empowered local communities, challenged social hierarchies, and facilitated intercultural exchange. Churches under Jesuit supervision became centers of learning, social cohesion, and cultural preservation, ensuring that Manapad retained its prominence as a hub of Christian influence in southern India.

Their architectural and administrative initiatives reflected a synthesis of European models and local traditions. Jesuit missionaries trained artisans, supervised construction, and maintained meticulous records, preserving both the spiritual and historical significance of the churches. By integrating pastoral care with education, social services, and cultural activities, the Jesuits created enduring institutions that continue to shape the religious and cultural landscape of Manapad.

Renovations and Modern Developments

Over the centuries, St. James Church and Holy Cross Church underwent several renovations to preserve their architectural integrity and adapt to the needs of growing congregations. St. James Church saw expansions in the 18th and 19th centuries, including structural reinforcements, enlargement of the sanctuary, and improvements to seating arrangements. These renovations reflected both practical considerations and aesthetic enhancements, aligning the church with contemporary European and local design trends.

Holy Cross Church was renovated in 2007 under Rev. Fr. Theophilus, restoring its architectural grandeur, repairing structural damage, and conserving religious relics. Modern amenities, such as lighting, sound systems, and pilgrimage facilities, were incorporated while respecting historical authenticity. These efforts ensured that the churches remained accessible to contemporary devotees while preserving their historical and cultural significance. Both churches continue to serve as focal points for worship, community engagement, and pilgrimage. Their preservation and modernization reflect a balance between maintaining heritage and meeting present-day spiritual needs, illustrating the enduring relevance of these religious institutions in Manapad.[1]

Conclusion

St. James Church and Holy Cross Church stand as enduring symbols of Christian faith, Jesuit missionary activity, and cultural heritage in Manapad. Established during the era of St. Francis Xavier, these churches have witnessed centuries of devotion, architectural evolution, and community engagement. St. James Church emerged as the principal parish, providing spiritual guidance and social cohesion, while Holy Cross Church, with its relics of the True Cross and association with St. Francis Xavier, became a major pilgrimage site. Continuous renovations and modern developments have preserved their architectural integrity and spiritual significance. Today, they attract pilgrims, foster community cohesion, and maintain the rich Christian heritage of Manapad. These churches exemplify the lasting influence of Jesuit missions in India, serving as living monuments that inspire devotion, historical awareness, and cultural pride among generations of believers.

End Notes

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Kolumam Through the Ages

***M.Mathialagan[1] and Abdul Kafoor A[2]**

Introduction

Kolumam is located 13 km South East of Udumalpet and comes under the control of Thirupur district in Tamilnadu . It is located on the eastern bank of the river *Amaravathi* bordering the western Ghats and hence the Kolumam area enjoys a moderate climate. Kolumam is surrounded by the small hills in the south west and east the Kolumam region is surrounded by the Dindigul district which lies in the East , Idduki district in Kerala Coimbatore district in the North and South . Kolumam region comprised a number of ancient villages in the ancient and medieval period. This paper highlights the antiquity of the present Kolumam areas.

Sangam literature mentions many towns .The place Kolumam was also one of the towns which covers vast of pasture lands with shepherds.The Sangam literature mentions Cennikodu[1] (Chennimalai), Naura[2] (Sivan malai), Kurumporai (Kuttikaratu)[3], Nakam (Arachalur) [3]Ayirai (Aivarmalai) [4]Vakai (Vijayamangalam)[5], Perundurai (modern Perundurai)[6] kotimangalam (Kutimangalam)[7] Karuvur (Karur)[8], Anti(Antiyur)[9], Perunthaliyur)[10], Ponmudi[11](orakatam)[12] Thirupor[13](Thirupur) ,Mulam[14] (mulanur) and vellati[15]

The story of the possession of the Kongu region by Cheras first referred to in the *Pathirupathu.* Umberkadu was the pure Tamilname of *Anaikadu* or the forest of the elephants[16] .The conquest of this forest region of the *Polilvaych*i (modern Pollachi) area of the groves and Anaimalai was first ruled by Palyanai Selkelu Kuttuvan and the Cheras established his victory in the conquered tract (Tankon Nirai)[17].

The conquered region of *Umberkadu*[18] was a vast area made up that this Cheras younger brother named Nedum Cheraladan gifted away five hundred villages to a lord Kannan of Kumattur .The areas control within the its region of the chiefdom of Kumanan whose Muthiram[19] locates south of the Kolumam with lot of antiquities .Ayirai malai[20] which was modern Aivarmalai close to Kolumam having in its caves with Jain sculptures . The early Cheras worshipped Korravai in the mountain. Airaimalai became a Jain centre during the medieval period.

The place Kolumam is called in different names in the Sangam literature[21]. The Sangam literature also denotes many names for Kulumam as Kulumur and Kulumam[22]. In the ancient kolumam has an antiquarian interest[23]

Potini [24], the place located south east of Kolumam became Palani in the later days. Palani was also known as *Avinankudi f*ollowing the tribal name of *Avi* to which bekan belonged. *Ay kudi* is place near Palani and it was possible that it was connected with the chieftains *Ay*[26] *muthiramalai* belonging to the chieftain of Kumanan is modern Kuthiraimalai[27] in udumalpet taluk of Thirupur district

The small areas covering Palani region were left under Virakerala house after the Sangam period .The North Kongu region was also ruled by Konattars. The South Kongu region comprised of *karaivalinadu* , Kolumam region *kavadik*ka nadu (Udumalpet and Pollachi taluk) Raja raja *valanadu* (Kolumam area) *vaikavur valanadu* (Palani) *Virakerala valanadu* (Pollachi and Udumalpet Taluk [28]

Early people of this region

Long before the down history of the region covers Amaravathi river basin which was inhabited by primitive people who belonged to the Mesolithic age [29]. This is evidenced by large number of cairns , kistuaens or cromlechs besides what are called pandavas kulis and virakals found in various parts of kolumam and Palani areas.30

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In the pre-historic times the *Kurumbas* and *Eiyanas* or *Vedans* , the ancient pastoral and hunting tribes that were fast receding in the gloom just before the dawn of history. The Sangam literature also shows that the Amaravathi river basin was then inhabited by the great tribes known as Kosar and *Konga*[31]. In course of time the *Malavars* the *Kosars* and *Kongars* [32]fell under the sway of their powerful neighbours of the Cheras

During the 3rd century A.D the *Velir* chieftain had established their power in the Kongu country and a brisk trade was carried on in the first three centuries of the Christian era between the kongu country and Rome Egypt and Greece and it was evident by the large number of Roman coins found in the river side of Amaravathi [33].When the Roman trade was in the height a branch of the Rastrakutas known as as *Rattas* occupied the Kolumam area .After the Ratta rule Kalabharas , Pandyas and Cheras occupied this region[34] .During the period of Kalabharas the Jainism spreads out in the Amravathi river basin

Aditya I (871-907A.D) made a conquest of the Kongu country and drove away Pandyas and formed friendly relations with Chera kings , the Virkeralas. Among the Virkerala chiefs, Kokandan is surmised as the first ruler of their family Chera prince. He was the contemporary of Aditya I[35]. After the Virakerala ruler, the Konattar occupied the Kolumam areas and constructed one military cantonment and *velam* in Kadathur and Kolumam . One Abimanchola Pallavarayan constructed *one Abimana chola pallavarayan kottai* at Kadathur on the name of the chief[36] .

Another Virakerala king Virkerala Vira Narayana (1196-1207A.D) developed the mud forts on the Amaravathi river basin[38] . He was succeeded by one Rajakesari Virarajendra(1206-1256 A.D). He ruled both the North and South Kongu region. He developed agriculture and trade in Amaravathi river basin. He established many mutts and *chathurvedimangalam* in Kadathur , Kannadiputhur and Cholamadevi and Kolumam areas[39] . He was succeeded by Vikirama Chola III (1264- 1267 A.D). During his rule many Kaikolas settled in the Amaravathi river basin[40] .After the Kongu Cholas the Hoysals occupied this region and the Dandanayak collected the taxes from the people and ruled on the name of the Hoysalas .After the Hoysala rule the Pandyas occupied the region .The Vijayanagar rulers and Nayaks ruled the Amaravathi river basin and they developed the trade and commerce in the south kongu region

Conclusion

Kolumam acted as the ancient trading centre ,army contentment and centre of art and culture in the medieval period. During the beginning of the century in the first war of independence(1799-1805) the British occupied the kolumam region and demolished the many mud forts in Amaravathi river basin . In the pre modern period the South Kongu region, especially the Kolumam region lost its importance due to the modern development of roads in Palani ,Udumalpet and Pollachi .

End Notes

1. Narrinai, 28, Kurunthogai,144
2. Pathirrupathu 7th pathigam
3. Kurunthogai,282
4. pathirrupathu,21,70,79, 88,90
5. Akam, 199
6. ibid. No.199
7. Ibid No.172
8. ibid
9. ibid No 50,309
10. ibid No.71
11. ibid No13, Puram 153, 164,165,205,209,291
12. Puram, 299,310,312
13. Akam , No 25, 95,191 ,kurunthogai,155
14. Puram , No 74 Akam,44, 60,75,119,129 ,287,315
15. Narrinai, 73
16. Akam, No 29
17. Maylai seeni Venkatasamy , Kongu Nattu Varalaru Upto 200 A.D Pavai publication , Chennai, 1974, PP.46-47
18. ibid.
19. The place muthiram is located 5 kilometres south of kolumam where a lot of ancient antiquities are found .

The place muthiram once upon a time famous for muthrai trade (Kollu tamil and muthirai in Malayalam). A new route to Kochi port (Kerala) was found in the area called kochi kundru) The place muthiram was famous in sangam period for horse trade and muthrai trade .

20. Ayiraimalai was famous during the sangam period for korravai worship. During the Kalabhara period many Jain scholars settled in the hill and established the mutt and developed the Tamil language and literature.
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27. Puram, No 143,145, 146, 147, 159, 160 161.
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31. Ibid
32. Arokiaswami, M., The Kongu Country , University of Madras , 1956.pp.40-74
33. Ibid .,
34. Manickam .V., Kongu nadu ,Opcit, p.92
35. E.I .Vol. NO XXXVIII. P.237.
36. Coimbatore Mavatta Kalvettugal, Vol,I NO 27/2004, 14/2003
37. S.I.I., Vol. XXVI , No. 223
38. Ibid.,Vol. No. 240
39. .Ibid., No .231
40. Ibid Vol No XXVI No. 249, 229

கரூர் மாவட்டத்தில் உள்ள கல்வெட்டுகளில் மதுரை நாயக்கர்கள் காலக் கொடைகள்

வீ. கோவிந்தராஜ்

மூக்கணாங்குறிச்சி வீரபாண்டியேசுவரர் கோயில் கல்வெட்டு

கரூர் மாவட்டம் தாந்தோணி வட்டம் கிருஷ்ணராயபுரம் சட்டமன்றத் தொகுதியில் மூக்கணாங்குறிச்சி அமைந்துள்ளது. இக்கல்வெட்டு வீரபாண்டியேசுவரர் கோயில் தேவஸ்தானத்தில் உள்ளது. இதன் காலம் இரங்க கிருஷ்ணப்ப நாயக்கர் காலம் ஆகும். இக்கல்வெட்டு மூக்கணாங்குறிச்சி பங்கயச் செல்வி அம்மன் வழிபாட்டிற்குக் கவுடன் இனச் சமூகத்தினர் வரி செலுத்தி உள்ளனர் என்ற விவரத்தைக் குறிப்பிடுகிறது. மூன்று கண்களை உடையன் மூக்கண்ணன் என்று அழைக்கப்படுகிறான். மூக்கண்ணன் குறிச்சி என்ற சொல்லே நாளடைவில் மூக்கணாங்குறிச்சி என்று ஆனது. மூன்று கண்களை உடையவன் சிவபெருமான் ஆவார். குறிச்சி என்பது குறிஞ்சி நிலத்து ஊரைக் குறிக்கும் சொல்லாகும். மலையும் மலை சார்ந்த இடம் குறிஞ்சி ஆகும். கல்வெட்டில் முக்காங்குறிச்சி என்று அழைக்கப்படுகிறது.

கல்வெட்டு வாசகம்

பிறபவ வருசம் வைய்யாசி மாசம் 27 பாண்டி மண்டலத்துக்கு கர்த்தரான மதுரைக்குக் கர்த்தரான விசுவனாத நாயக்கரய்யர் அவர்கள் ரெங்க

முனைவர் பட்ட ஆய்வாளர் (முழு நேரம்), தமிழ்த்துறை, கொங்குநாடு கலை அறிவியல் கல்லூரி, (பாரதியார் பல்கலைக் கழகத்திற்கு உட்பட்டது.), கோயம்புத்தூர்.

கிருஷ்ணப்ப நாயக்கரய்யர் அவர்கள் புண்ணியம் கருவூர் சீர்மை மணியம் நமசிவாயம் பிள்ளையவர் கிராமமும் வெங்கிட்டெசுபரய்யனவர்கள் புண்ணியமாக கருவூர் ஆதிபுரமான முக்காங்குறுச்சியில் வீரபாண்டியபறருக்கு பங்கயற்செல்வியம்மனுக்கும் அபிஷெக நெவெத்தியத்துக்கு விட்ட சுவாமிதயத்தக்கு விபர காணியான கடவுகளும் மானீபத்துக்கு கிழக்கு நடுப்புடி நந்தவன வரைக்கு தெற்கும் மளபாடி கருங்கல்பட்டி யெல்லைக்கு மேற்கு வரப்பட்ட மாமடிமந்தைக்கு வடக்கு யிந்த நாங்கெல்லைக்கு உள்பட்ட கருஇமக் கவுடன் செட்டியப்பக் கவுடன் நல்லண்ணக் கவுடன் கட்டவீசகுழதசில விட்ட சுவாயீதம் செதெடஷ---- யெருக்கு நாளியும் பதக்கு கலியாணம் பண்ணின வீட்டுக்கு பெண் வீட்டுக்கு ஒரு பணமும் மாப்பிள்ளை வீட்டுக்கு ஒரு பணம் தேவணக் கவுடன் செட்டியப்ப கவுடன் நங்கப்பன் கட்டி விச்ச அணையும் நந்தவனமும் கூட கட்டளையிட்டோம். வீரபாண்டீசுவர சுவாமிக்கு குளத்துல பத்து செய்யளவுலெ அந்த குளம் ஊருக்கு மேற்கு தம்மனாய்க்கன்பட்டி குளம் அகவு மண்ட குளம் பழ 110 காசு அளவு --- யாகும் தலத்தாற் பனிரெண்டு பெறுமாக கட நல்லணக் குளம் செட்டியப்ப கவுடன் தேவணக் கவுடன் முதலான பெறும்மாயிகு--- அந்த குழந்தைக் கட்டி முகுபித்துச் சொல்லி சொன்னார்கள் ஆன படினாலெ--- பணம் போட்டு குளத்தை கட்டி முகிப்பிவிச்சார்கள். குளத்துலெ வெகு பணம் போட்டு கட்டுவிச்சு தர்மமாயி நடத்தி நானக் கவுண்டகளுக்கு அந்த குளத்துலெ அரைமனையாரும் தலத்தாருமாக நாலு பேருமாக கூடி தர்மமாக விட்டோம். இந்தச் செயம் கவுடர்களும் சந்திர சூரியர் உள்ளமட்டுக்கும் சகலரும் கண்டு சுகத்துலெ யிருக்கவும் யாதாமொருத்தர் யிந்த தர்மத்தை நடத்தி பரிபாலனம் பண்ணி நடத்திவிச்சுக் கொண்டு வருவார்கள். (உத்திராடம்.கோ; நாயக்கர் காலக் கல்வெட்டுகள், பக்கம் 50)

இக்கல்வெட்டில் பாண்டி மண்டலம் என்பது மதுரையைக் குறிக்கிறது. விசுவநாத நாயக்கர் மதுரை நாயக்கப் பேரரசைத் தோற்றுவித்தவர் ஆவார். ரெங்க கிருஷ்ணப்ப நாயக்கர் ஆட்சிக் காலம் ஆகும். கருவூர் ஆதிபுரம் என அழைக்கப்படுகிறது. நில எல்லைகள் நான்கு கொடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. கோயில் அம்மன் பெயர் பங்கயச் செல்வி அம்மன் ஆகும். குளம், செய் உருவாக்கிய செய்திகள் இடம் பெற்றுள்ளன. வரிகள் பெற்றுக் கொண்ட விவரங்கள் இடம் பெற்றுள்ளன. ஓம்படைக் கிளவியாக இக்கல்வெட்டு சந்திரன் சூரியன் உள்ளவரைக்கும் அனைவரும் நலமுடன் இருக்க வேண்டும் என்கிறது.

இனுங்கூர் சிவன் கோயில் கல்வெட்டு

கரூர் மாவட்டம் குளித்தலை வட்டத்தில் இனுங்கூர் அமைந்துள்ளது. இனுங்கூர் இரட்டை வாய்க்கால் கரையிலுள்ள சிவன் கோயிலில் இராணி மங்கம்மாள், சொக்கநாத நாயக்கர் காலக் கல்வெட்டுகள் உள்ளன. கோயில் கருவறையில் முன் வடபுறச் சுவரில் சொக்கநாத நாயக்கர் திருவுருவமும் மங்கம்மாள் திருவுருவமும் புடைப்புச் சிற்பங்களாகப் பொறிக்கப்பட்டு அருகில் மூன்று கல்வெட்டுகள் காணப்படுகின்றன. கோபாலய்யன் என்ற பெயர் இடம் பெற்றுள்ளது. இதன் வரலாற்றுக் காலம் 17,18 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டு ஆகும்.

கல்வெட்டு வாசகங்கள்

1. ராசஸ்ரீ சொக் 2.கநாத நா 3. யக்கர் நித் 4.தியம் சதா 5.சேர்வை.
2. ராச ஸ்ரீமங்கம் 2.மாள் நித்திய 3.ம் சதா சேர்வை.
3. கோபாலய் 2.யன் நித்திய 3.ம் சதா சேர் 4.வை.

(உத்திராடம்.கோ; நாயக்கர் காலக் கல்வெட்டுகள், பக்கம் 82)

(ஸ்ரீதர்.தி.ஸ்ரீ(பதிப்பாசிரியர்); தமிழ்நாட்டுக் கல்வெட்டுகள் தொகுதி 3, பக்கம் 140)

கரூர் பசுபதீசுவரர் கோயில் கல்வெட்டு

கரூர் மாவட்டம் கரூர் வட்டத்தில் பசுபதீசுவரர் கோயில் அமைந்துள்ளது. இக்கோயில் கொங்கு ஏழு சிவத்தலங்களுள் முதலாவது தலம் ஆகும். இக்கோயிலில் உள்ள கல்வெட்டு பசுபதீசுவரர் கோயில் கட்டைக் கோபுர வாசல் வடபுறம்

குறட்டின் கீழ்க் கல்லில் பொறிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. காலம் மீனாட்சியம்மாள் ஆட்சிக் காலம் ஆகும்.

கல்வெட்டு வாசகம்

பார்திப வருசம் கார்த்திகை மாசம் 1. ஸ்ரீமது மீனாட்சி நாயக்கர் அவர்கள் யிசக பல்லி றாமாபட்டர் சம்மதியில் செட்டி பாளையத்தில் கெர்ப்பாபுரி நட்சத்திரத்தில் பசுபதி யீசுவர சுவாமியாருக்கு வில்வார்ச்சினை நாள் 1க்கு ஆயிரங் கிளை வீதம் மாசம் 1க்கு 30000 ஆக வருசம் 1க்கு ஆயிரங் 30060 வில்வம் அர்ச்சனை பண்ணுகுரத்துக்கு விட்டது 200 தூரு புஞ்சை காடு. யிந்த தர்மத்துகு விகாதம் பண்ணினவள் வனமஞ்சமாயி போவானாகவும் யிந்த தர்மம் யாதாமொருவன் பரிபாலனம் பண்ணின பேர்கள் வனமீசம் அபிவிர்ந்தியாகி இருப்பாராகவும் பழனியப்பன். அம்பலவாணன். முத்துனல்லான். (உத்திராடம்.கோ; நாயக்கர் காலக் கல்வெட்டுகள், பக்கம் 92) பசுபதியீசுவரர் சுவாமிக்கு அர்ச்சனை செய்ய வில்வ இலை கொடுத்தமையைப் பற்றி இக்கல்வெட்டு கூறுகிறது.

ஆண்டிபட்டிக் கோட்டை சந்தைக் கல்வெட்டு

கரூர் மாவட்டம், அரவக்குறிச்சி வட்டம், ஆண்டிபட்டிக் கோட்டை பழைய சந்தைப் பாறையில் இக்கல்வெட்டு உள்ளது. இதனை எழுத்துப் பாறைக் கல்வெட்டு என்று அழைப்பர். இக்கல்வெட்டின் காலம் பொம்மாநாயக்கர். கலி ஆண்டு 4802. சகம் 1623. விஷு வருடம் சித்திரை மாதம் 25 ஆம் தேதி. பொது ஆண்டு 1701 ஆகும். இவர் ஆண்டிபட்டி பாளையக்காரர் ஆவார்.

கல்வெட்டு வாசகம்

இக்கல்வெட்டு வரிகள் மதுரை நாயக்கர் ஆட்சிக் காலத்தில் பாளையக்காரராக இருந்த சக்கம் பொம்மைய நாயக்கர் வம்சத்தில் வந்த பொம்மைய நாயக்கர் உடையது ஆகும்.

1. கலியுக சகற்கம் சாலிய சகாற்தம்
2. மேல் செல்லா நின்ற விஷு ஸூ சித்திரை மீ உ ய ரு உ ஆண்டிப்பட்டி
3. பெரிய தம்பி னாயக்கரய்ய னவர்கள் குமாரன் குமாரர் பொம்மை
4. னாயகரய்ய னவர்கள் னாளையில ஆண்டிபட்டி சீர்மை க
5. ணக்கு கருப்பூர் குஞ்சா கவுண்டர் மகன் வெள்ளை
6. யப்பன் ஆண்டிபட்டி மந்தையில் மடமும் தெற்(ப)கு(ள)ம் தற்மம்
7. நடப்பிச்சமயினாலே ஆண்டிபட்டி சீர்மையில் ராணுவு
8. ம் குடிகாப்பு கம்புங் கடின ஏருக்கு குறுணி த
9. வசம செட்டி வற்தகர் எட்டு வகை பலரும் கூடி கட்டளை
10. யிட்டபடி எடுத்த எருத்துக்கு ஒரு காச் குடுத்து தற்மம் சந்திர ஆ
11. தித்தர் உள்ள வரைக்கு நடத்தி விப்பார்க்கு வம்யிருக்கும்
12. ஆண்டிபட்டி சீர்மையில் உள்ள சகல சனமும் தற்மம் நடத்தி
13. விப்பாராகவும் இதற்கு ஆதா ஒருவறு இசகு பண்
14. ணின பேர்கள் கெங்கைகரையிலே காரம்
15. பசுவையும் மாதா பிதாவையுங் கொன்ற
16. தோசத்திலும் குரு நிந்தனை பண்ணின
17. பாவத்திலேயும் போவாராகவும் தற்மம் வற்த்தணை தெற்பகு(ள)ம் ம
18. ருவார்ப் பலா பலனை அனுபச்ச பேர்கள் மேல வாரத்தில் னா
19. லிலே ஒரு பங்கு தெப்ப குழத்துக்கு குடுத்து வெட்டி விச்ச பேர்
20. களை மகா சம்பத்து தற்மவற துணையிருப்பார்கள்
21. பெரிய நாயக்கர் துணை
22. யிலங்க
23. மலை அய்
24. யா துணை (விஸ்வநாத தாஸ்.ந.தி; ஆண்டிபட்டி கோட்டை சந்தைக் கல்வெட்டு, ஆவணம் இதழ், 35,2024, பக்கம் 130,131)

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(சிறப்பு நோக்கில் விருதுநகர், மதுரை, தஞ்சாவூர் மற்றும் திருவண்ணாமலை)

முனைவர்,பொ.தீபா, துறைத்தலைவர்

''சமன்செய்து சீர்தூக்கும் கோல்போல்

அமைந்தொருபால்

கோடாமை சான்றோர்க் கணி''

நேராக நின்று சரியான எடையை காட்டும்தராசின் முல்லைப் போல் நடுநிலையோடு வாழ்வதே சான்றோர்க்கு அழகானதாகவும் என்ற வள்ளுவரின் சொல்தான் இங்கே நினைவில் நிற்கின்றது. ஒரு கருவி தனக்கு இட்ட பணியை முறை தவறாமல் செய்வதை போல மானுட சமூகமும் நடுநிலை தவறாமல் அக்கருவியை போல செயல்படவேண்டும் என்பதே இதன் பொருள். ஆயினும் இந்த குறளின் உள்ளார்ந்த பொருள் ஒன்றும் நம்மால் காண முடிகின்றது. எங்கே தவறுகள் நிகழ்கின்றதோ, அங்கே நியதியை செயல்படுத்த நடுநிலையாளர்கள் வேண்டும். அப்படிஎன்றால் தவறுகளும் நிகழும் அதை சரிசெய்ய நடுநிலை கொண்ட சான்றோர்களும் வேன்டும் என்பதே அதன் மறைபொருள்.

மானுட சமுகம் என்பது மனிதர்களின் சமூக வாழ்வியலை கட்டமைக்கவும், நெறிப்படுத்தவும், தனக்குத்தானே சில வாழ்வியல் நெறிமுறைகளை மானுடம் தோன்றிய காலங்களில் இருந்து தற்போது வரையிலும் பின்பற்றி வருகின்றது. எனினும் அவ்வப்போது நெறிபிறழும் சமயங்களில் மன்னர்களும், சான்றோர்களை கொண்ட ஊர் சபையினரும் அதில் தலையிட்டு நீதியை நிலை நிறுத்தியுள்ளனர்.

ஆயினும், மின்சாரம், எரிபொருள் வாகனங்கள், தொலைபேசி வசதிகள் என இந்த நவீன வசதிகள் தான் இல்லை என்பதை தவிர, மானுட சமுகம் நெறி பிறழ்ந்த போது நெறியை எடுத்துரைக்க மன்னர்களும், சான்றோர்களும் தவறியது இல்லை என்பதை, சாட்சிகளின் நிலையமாக, தகவல்களின் களஞ்சியமாக திகழும் நமது ஆலயங்களில் காணப்படும் கல்வெட்டு சான்றுகள் இன்றும் நம்மை வியப்படைய வைக்கின்றன.

தனிமரம் தோப்பாகாது என்பதைப்போல மக்களை குடியேற்றி அவர்களுக்கு தொழில்களை பிரித்து கொடுத்து அவ்விடத்தை ஊராக மாற்றி, ஊரை நிர்வகிக்க சபைகளை ஏற்படுத்தி, மக்களின் அன்றாட நிகழ்வுகளை ஆலயத்தின் வழியே சமூகம், பொருளாதாரம், கலாச்சாரம், ஆன்மீகம், வேலைவாய்ப்பு, பாதுகாப்பு என பல்வேறு துறைகளும் ஒன்றாக செயல்பட்ட இடமே ஆலயங்கள் ஆகும். ஊர்களின் பாதுகாப்பை மன்னர்களிடமும், மக்களின் செயல்முறைகளை ஊர் சபையோர்களிடமும் கொடுத்து இருகரைகளுக்குள் பாயும் நீர் போல

வரைமுறைகளோடு செயல்பட்டு வந்ததே நமது தமிழ் சமூகம்.

கல்வெட்டின் சிறப்புகள்: ஊரின் பெயர்கள், எல்லைகள், விளைநிலங்களின் வகைகள், நிர்வாக அமைப்புகள் அவற்றின் அதிகாரங்கள், மன்னர்கள், அதிகாரிகளின் பெயர்கள், மெய்கீர்த்திகள், நாட்டில் உள்ள வரிகள், விதிகள், அவற்றிற்கான விதி விலக்குகள், தொழில்கள், தானங்களின் வகைகள், ஆலயங்களின் செயல்பாடுகள், அதன் சொத்துகள் அதை நிர்வகிப்போர் என அனைத்தையும் ஆலயங்களில் கல்வெட்டுகளாக வெளிப்படை தன்மையோடு எழுதி உள்ளனர்.இத்தகைய சிறப்புகளோடு நல்லாட்சி நடக்கும் பொழுது ஆங்காங்கே சில தவறுகளும், கால தாமதமும், பூசல்களும், வரி ஏய்ப்புகளும் நடந்திருக்கின்றன. அத்தகைய சூழ்நிலையில் மன்னனோ அல்லது ஊரின் சபையோர்களோ, இன்ன பிற நிர்வாக அமைப்பை சார்தவர்களோ தலையிட்டு ஊரின் பொது வெளியில், உரிய அதிகாரிகளின் முன்னிலையில்,பாரபட்சம் பாராமல், வெளிப்படை தன்மையோடு, முறையான விசாரணைக்குப் பிறகு உகந்த நியோகங்களை (ஆணைகள்) பிறப்பித்து அவற்றை ஊரில் உள்ள ஆலயங்களின் கல்சுவர்களில் கல்வெட்டாக எழுதினர். அவ்வாறு எழுதும் போது பிணக்கு ஏற்பட்ட இருவரின் ஊர், பெயர், அடைமொழி, அவர்களுக்குள் ஏற்பட்ட பிரச்சனை, பாதிக்கப்பட்டவர் இருந்தால் அவருக்கான இழப்பீடு, தவறு இழைத்தவருக்கான தண்டப்பணம் அல்லது தண்டனை விவரம், தண்டப்பணம் பெறப்பபட்டால் அப்பணம் எந்த நிதியில்சேர்க்கப்பட்டது அல்லது எவ்விதம் செலவு செய்யப்பட்டது, சம்பந்தபட்டவர்களுக்குள் ஏற்பட்ட உடன்படிக்கை என இவைகளை எழுதும் பொழுது அதற்கு முன்னதாக அரசனின் மெய்கீர்த்தி, ஆட்சியாண்டு, நாடு, ஊர், நடப்பாண்டு, நாள், சபை நடைபெற்ற இடம், விசாரணை நடைபெறுவதை ஊர் மக்களுக்கு வாத்தியங்களின் மூலம் தெரிவித்தது, ஊர்கணக்கன் அல்லது மத்தியஸ்தன் போன்றவர்களின் பெயர்கள், சாட்சியாக கையொப்பமிட்டவர்களின் பெயர்கள் உள்ளிட்ட அனைத்து செய்திகளும் குழப்பத்திற்கு சற்றும் இடமில்லாத வகையில் தெரியப்படுத்தபடுகின்றன. இதன்படி நியதி என்பது மக்களுக்காக மக்களின் முன்னிலையில் வெளிப்படைதன்மையாகவும் அக்காலத்தில் அனைவரும் ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளும் விதத்திலும் இக்காலத்தில் அனைவரும் வியக்கும் விதத்திலும் அமைந்துள்ளன என்பது சிறப்பு.

இனி அவ்வாறு நடைபெற்ற சில பிரச்சனைக்குரிய வழக்குகளில் எவ்வாறு திறம்பட நடு நிலைமை தவறாது தீர்வு கண்டுள்ளனர் என்பதை ஆதாரத்துடன் பார்க்கலாம்.

அதிக வரி வசூலித்தல்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் பாபநாசம் வட்டம் திருமண்டகுடி ஊரை சேர்ந்த சிவன் கோவிலில் கருவறை சுவரில் உள்ள தமிழ் கல்வெட்டு மூன்றாம் ராஜராஜ சோழனின் 25வது ஆட்சியாண்டில் கி.பி.1241ல் குலோத்துங்கசோழ வளநாட்டை சேர்ந்த திருநறையூர் நாட்டு அகரம் ஸ்ரீஇராசராச சதுர்வேதி மங்களத்தை சார்ந்த மகாசபையார் வழங்கிய ஆணையாகும். இதன்படி வரி வசூல் செய்கின்ற வன்னியர்கள் கோயில் பட்டார்கள் செலுத்த வேண்டிய வரியையும் சேர்த்து குடிமக்களிடம் அதிக வரி வசூல் செய்ததால் மக்கள் முறையிடவே மகா சபையார் தலையிட்டு மூன்றாம் குலோத்துங்க சோழன் காலத்தில் கடைபிடிக்கப்பட்ட விதிகளை மாற்றமில்லாமல் அப்படியே செய்ய வேண்டும் எனகட்டளையிட்டுள்ளனர். மேலும் கூடுதல் வரி வசூல் செய்பவர்களை கிராமதுரோகி எனவும் நாட்டுத்துரோகி எனவும் இக்கல்வெட்டில் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது.1

கணக்கு காட்ட மறுத்தல்:தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் பாபநாசம் வட்டம் புள்ளமங்கை ஊரை சேர்ந்த பிரம்மபுரீஸ்வரர் கோயில் கருவறை சுவரில் உள்ள சோழ மன்னன் பரகேசரிவர்மனின் மூன்றாம் ஆட்சியாண்டை சேர்ந்த கல்வெட்டு. இதில் கிளக்கூற்றது பிரம்மதேயம் புள்ளமங்கலத்து மகாசபையார் ஊர் கூட்டம் பற்றி பறையடித்து இக்கோயிலின் வாசல் மடத்தில் ஒன்றுகூடிஇவ்வூரில் உள்ள காளி கோவிலுக்காக

நடிவிற்சேரி கணத்தாரிடம் இருந்து 25காசு பெற்றுக்கொண்டு மூன்றுமா நிலத்தினை விற்றுவிட்டனர். அவ்வாறு விற்கப்பட்ட நிலத்தில் இவ்வூரினை சேர்ந்த மத்தியஸ்தனான திருவெண்காட்டடிகள் மற்றும் அவரது தம்பிமாறும் காவிதிக்காணியாக பெற்ற நிலமும் அடங்கும். இதற்கு காரணம் அரசு அதிகாரியான சுந்தரசோழ முத்தரையர் ஆன பிராந்தக முத்தரையர் கணக்கு கேட்டபோது இவர்கள் கணக்கு காட்டததால் இவர்களின் நிலங்களும் விற்கப்பட்டன.2

குளத்தினை பறிமுதல் செய்தல்: மதுரை மாவட்டம் மேலூர் வட்டம் சொக்கலிங்கபுரம் ஊரில் உள்ள சிவன் கோவிலின் கல்வெட்டில்முதலாம் மாறவர்மன் குலசேகரனின் 11ம் ஆட்சியாண்டில் சுரநாட்டை சேர்ந்த மேல்மலை ஊரவையினர் இசைந்து, இந்த ஊரின் அழகிய சோழீஸ்வரமுடைய நாயனார் கோவிலின் தேவகன்மிகள், ஸ்ரீமகேஸ்வரர்கள், ஸ்ரீகாரியம் செய்வார்கள் ஆகியோர் தங்களுடைய ஊரில் உள்ள புரவேரி குளத்தினை அனுபவித்து வந்த மருதாலப் பேரையன் தான் செலுத்த வேண்டிய கடமை, குடிமை உள்ளிட்ட வரிகளை செலுத்தாமலும் ராஜதுரோகம், நாட்டுதுரோகம், ஊர்துரோகம் செய்தமையால் அவனுடைய நிலங்களை பறிமுதல் செய்து இந்த ஊரின் அழகிய சோழீஸ்வரமுடைய நாயனார் கோவிலின் கணக்கன் வசம் ஒப்படைத்தனர்.3

வாராதவர்க்கு அபராதம்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் நெய்யாடியப்பர்கோவிலில்உள்ள
கிபி-931ம்ஆண்டை சேர்ந்த பாரந்தகசோழனின் 25ம் ஆட்சியாண்டில் உள்ள கல்வெட்டின் படி ஸ்ரீகாரியம் ஆராயும் பவதநக்கனானர் மன்னனின் திருமுகத்தில் உள்ள படி நகரவாரிய பெருமக்கள் கூட்டத்தை கூட்டினர். திருமுகத்தின் ஆணைப்படிசபையை கூட்டியும் கூட்டத்திற்கு வாராதவர்களை தண்டிக்கும் பொருட்டு தண்டம் விதிக்கப்பட்டு அதன் மூலம் வந்த பொன்னால் இறைவனுக்கு பட்டம் செய்யப்பட்டதையும், வைகாசி மற்றும் சித்திரை திருவிழாக்கள் நடைபெற சுவராமொழி மாதவன் ஏற்பாடு செய்ததையும் குறிப்பிடுகின்றது.4

தானத்தை மீண்டும் வழங்குதல்: விருதுநகர் மாவட்டம் சிவகாசி வட்டம் மங்கலம் ஊரில் உள்ள சிவன் கோயில் அதிஷ்ஸ்டானத்தில் உள்ள கல்வெட்டு. இதன்படி கிபி-1176ம் ஆண்டின் பாண்டிய மன்னன் சடையவர்மன் குலசேகரனின் 14ம் ஆட்சி ஆண்டில் ஆயிரத்தெண்ம ஈஸ்வர உடையார் கோவிலுக்கு முன்பு தேவதானமாக வழங்கப்பட்ட நில ஆவணங்கள் ஊர் அழிந்த பின்னர் இல்லாமல் போயின. ஆயினும் பின்னாளில் ஊர் மீண்டும் தோன்றிய போது ஓன்று கூடிய பிரம்மதேயத்து சபையார் அந்த நிலங்களை மீண்டும் பிராமணர்களுக்கு வழங்கி தேவதானத்தை உறுதிப்படுத்தினர்.5

நிலத்தை பறிமுதல் செய்தல்:விருதுநகர் மாவட்டம் ராஜபாளையம் வட்டம் தேவதானம் ஊரில் உள்ள நச்சாடை தவிர்த்தருளிய நாயனார் கோவிலின் அர்த்த மண்டபத்தில் உள்ள கல்வெட்டு. இதன்படி மன்னர் பராக்கிரம பாண்டியன் இக்கோயிலில் எழுந்தருளிய போது கோயிலின் சிவ பிராமணர்கள் வேள்வி செய்யும் பொருட்டு தன்பொருநை கரைக்கு சென்று விட்டதால் இக்கோயிலின் பூசைக்கு வராது போனதாலும், பூசைக்கு வேண்டி காணிஆட்சியில் உள்ளசிவ பிராமணர்களை மூன்று முறை அழைத்தும் அவர்கள் வராததாலும், காணியாட்சி செய்யும் சொக்க முதலியையும் அது சம்பந்தபட்டவர்களையும் வரச்சொல்லிய போது சொக்க முதலி வந்து மற்றவர்கள் வராததாலும் நிலம் பற்றிய கணக்கு முழுமையாக தராத காரணத்தினாலும் அந்நிலங்கள் பறிமுதல் செய்யப்பட்டு தற்போது கரிவலம்வந்த நல்லூரை சார்ந்த கோவிலின் தேவகன்மி சூரியபட்டன் என்பவருக்கு வழங்கப்பட்டன.6

மாற்று நிலம் வழங்குதல்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் பாபநாசம் வட்டம்உடையார்கோவில் உள்ள கரவந்த்தீஸ்வரர் கோவிலில் முதலாம் குலோத்துங்கசோழனின் 16ம் ஆட்சியாண்டு கல்வெட்டின் படி இவ்வூரில் உள்ள குலோத்துங்கசோழ விண்ணகர ஆழ்வார்

கோவிலில் நடைபெற்ற கூட்டத்தில், நித்தவிநோத வளநாட்டு வீரசோழ வளநாட்டு பிரம்மதேய ஸ்ரீபூதிசதுர்வேத மங்கலத்து மகாசபையார் திருக்கிளாவுடையார் கோவிலில் தாங்கள் பெற்ற நாற்பது மூன்று கலஞ்சு செம்பொன், ஏழு மாற்று பொன், அறுபத்திரெண்டு மற்றும் முப்பது காசுக்காக தாங்கள் கொடுத்த நிலங்கள் பல துண்டுகளாகவும், கடைசியில் இருந்ததனால் நீர் பாயாமல் விளைச்சல் இல்லாமல் இருந்ததாலும் அதற்கு பதிலாக வேறு நிலங்களை கொடுத்ததை பற்றியும் சொல்லபடுகின்றது.7

வரி கட்ட இயலாத நிலையில்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம்பாபநாசம் வட்டம் திருவைகாவூர் ஊரில் உள்ள விஸ்வநாத சுவாமி கோயிலில் மூன்றாம் குலோந்துங்கசோழனின் 33ம் ஆட்சி ஆண்டின் கல்வெட்டில் திருவைகாவூர் உடையார் நித்தவிநோதீஸ்வரமுடையார் கோவிலுக்கு சிலர் தாங்கள் கட்ட வேண்டிய கடமை மற்றும் குடிமை வரிகளுக்கான நிலுவை தொகையை அரசு அதிகாரியான பிள்ளை முனையதரையர் மூலம் கணக்கிட்டு தாங்கள் கட்ட வேண்டிய தொகைக்காக தங்களின் நிலத்தை விற்று அதன் மூலம் 5000காசினை கட்டியதாக தெரிவிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.8

மேல குறிப்பிட்ட அதே ஆண்டு அதே கோவிலில் உய்யவந்தாள் என்பவள் தனது திருமணத்தின் போது பெற்றோர்களால் ஸ்ரீதனமாக வழங்கப்பட்ட நிலத்திற்கு ஒன்பது பாசனதிற்க்கான வரியை கட்ட தவறியதால் ஸ்ரீதன நிலத்தை 28,800காசுகளுக்கும், மனை நிலத்தை 21,600காசுகளுக்கும், இக்கோவிலுக்கு திருநாமத்து காணியாக விற்று கொடுத்தார் என்ற செய்தி தெரிய வருகின்றது.9

வரி முறைபடுத்துதல்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம்பாபநாசம் வட்டம் திருவைகாவூரில் உள்ள விஸ்வநாத சுவாமி கோயிலில் வீரபிரதாபதேவராயர் என்னும் விஜயநகர மன்னரின் ஆட்சி காலத்தில், ஹோய்சாளர் காலத்தில் ஏற்பட்ட வரிமுறைகளால் முறையான வரி இல்லாமலும், வரிகளை மறைத்தும், கூடுதலாக வரி விதித்தும் ஏற்பட்ட அநீதிகளை போக்க வலுதலம்பேடு ஊர் சாவடியில் ஒன்றுகூடிய இன்பர் நாட்டு ஸ்ரீ பராந்தக நாட்டு சபையாரும், இடங்கை சாதியை சேர்ந்தவர்களும் நாட்டு வரி, அரண்மனை வரி குறித்து தங்களுக்குள் சம்மதித்து முடிவு செய்தனர். இதன்படி இராவியபாடான் எனும் அளவு கோலால் ஒரு வேலி நிலம் அளந்து அதை தேவதான இறையிலி நிலமாக மாற்றி இக்கோவிலுக்கு வழிபாட்டிற்காக வழங்கினர்.10

இயற்கை சீற்றம்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் பாபநாசம் வட்டம் திருசக்கராபள்ளியில் முதலாம் சுந்தரசோழனின் 3ம் ஆட்சியாண்டில் ஏற்பட்ட பெருவெள்ளதினால் கரை உடைந்து பயிரும் நிலமும் அழிந்ததால், கிழார்க்கூற்றத்து அகழிமங்களத்து சபையார் திருசக்கராப்பள்ளியின் சக்கரேஸ்வரர் கோவிலுக்கு இறையிலி நிலம் வழங்கி அமுதுபடிக்கும் ஏற்பாடு செய்ததை தெரிவிக்கின்றது. இதன் மூலம் ஆலய வழிபாடு தடைஇல்லாமல் நடக்க வேண்டும் என்பதில் எவ்வாறு உறுதியோடு இருந்தனர் என்பதை அறியலாம்.11

மன்னனுக்கு கீழ்ப்படிதல்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் பாபநாசம் வட்டம் புள்ளமங்கை ஊரில் உள்ள பிரம்மபுரீஸ்வரர் கோவிலில் உள்ள முதலாம் ராஜராஜனின் ஆட்சியில் கிபி-997ம் ஆண்டில், கிழார்க்கூற்றத்து பிரம்மதேயம் புள்ளமங்களத்து சபையார் அரசனின் ஆணைப்படி இந்த ஊரில் உள்ள சாம மற்றும் இருக்கு வேதங்கள் ஓதும் வேதியர்களுக்கு நிலம் தானமாக கொடுக்க இவ்வூரின் ஆரிதன் மன்றன் சுவரன் என்பவன் வீட்டில் ஒன்றுகூடினர். அப்போது நக்கன் காளி என்பவன் இறந்த நிலையில் அவனுக்கு உரிய நிலத்தையும், அவன் உடன் பிறந்தோர் நிலத்தையும், அவன் மக்களின் நிலம் மற்றும் பிராமணர் நிலம் ஆகிய அனைத்தையும் விற்று பாண்டி குலாசனி மாராயர் தண்டல் நிலத்தோடு சேர்க்க அந்த நிலங்களை பொது ஏலத்திற்கு விட்டனர். ஆனால் அந்நிலங்களை எவரும் வாங்க முன்வராததால் சபையினரே அந்த நிலங்களை காசு கொடுத்து வாங்க வேண்டும் என மன்னர்

ஆணையிட்டார். எனவே சபையினர் 90 காசுகள் கொடுத்து அந்த நிலங்களை வாங்கி அவற்றை வேதியர்களுக்கு சட்டபோகமாக கொடுத்தனர். இதற்கு மஹா சபை உறுப்பினர்களும், மத்தியஸ்தனும் ஒப்பிட்டு கையொப்பம் இட்டனர்.12

இழப்பீடு வழங்குதல்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் பாபநாசம் வட்டம் புள்ளமங்கை ஊரில் உள்ள திருவாலந்துறை மகாதேவர் கோவிலில் காவல் பணி செய்த பொன்னி நாடாழ்வான் மற்றும் வாணராய போயனும் தங்களுக்குள் பகை கருதி அம்பெய்தி சண்டையிட்ட போது பொன்னி நாடாழ்வானின் மகன் குப்பை பெருமான் அம்பு பட்டு இறந்து விட்டான். ஆயினும் அதற்கு இழப்பீடாக வாணராய போயன் எதுவும் தராததால் சபையார் தலையிட்டு குப்பை பெருமாள் பெயரில் 72ஆடுகள் வழங்கி 3 அல்லது 4 திருநொந்தா விளக்கு எரிக்க ஆணையிட்டனர்.13

பிணம் கொண்டு செல்ல நிலம் தருதல்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் பாபநாசம் வட்டம் நல்லூரில் உள்ள கல்யாண சுந்தரேஸ்வரர் கோவிலில் மூன்றாம் ராஜராஜசோழனின் 30ம் ஆட்சி ஆண்டில் நல்லூரின் மங்கலவீதியில் இருந்து வடக்கு நோக்கி செல்லும் பாலாற்றின் பெரிய வழியில் இறந்தவர்களின் பிணங்களை எடுத்து செல்ல முடியாத அளவிற்கு குளம் தூர் அடைந்து நீர் நிரம்பியதால், மேல் திருமடைவளாகம் வழியாக செல்ல வேண்டிய நிலையில் மகாகேஸ்வரர்கள் எதிர்ப்பு சொன்னதால் ஊர் சபையினர் தலையிட்டு திருமடைவளாகத்திற்கு வேறு நிலத்தை மாற்றாக கொடுத்து பிரச்சனையை தீர்த்து வைத்தனர்.14

தானத்திலும் நிபந்தனை:தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் பாபநாசம் வட்டம் நல்லூரில் உள்ள கல்யாண சுந்தரேஸ்வரர் கோவிலில் இரண்டாம் ராஜதிராஜனின் 12ம் ஆட்சி ஆண்டில் நல்லூர் நாயனார் கோவிலில் அமர்நீதி நாயனார் புராணதேவரடியார் மாமதலையான நெற்றிக்கண் நங்கைக்கு நாடகம் அரங்கேற்றம் செய்ய நாடகபுறமாக நிலம் வழங்கப்பட்டது. ஆயினும் நங்கையால் ஆட இயலாதபோது வேறு நபரை அவ÷ர ஏற்பாடு செய்ய வேண்டும் என நிபந்தனையையும் பெருங்குறி சபையார் விதித்தனர்.15

சிவது ரோகியின் நிலம் பறிக்கப்படல்: தஞ்சாவூர் மாவட்டம் பாபநாசம் வட்டம்கோவில்தேவராயன்பேட்டை மத்தபுரீஸ்வரர் கோவிலில் உள்ள ஹோய்சாள மன்னன் வீரராமநாதனின் 12ம் ஆட்சியாண்டில் திருச்சேலூர் நாயனார் தேவதானமாகிய எதிரிழிசோழ மங்கலத்தில் அழகியநாயன் என்பவர் சிவத்துரோகி ஆனதால் அவருடைய காணி நிலத்தில் நான்கு வேலி நிலத்தை திருச்சூலம் ஸ்தாபனம் செய்து திருநாமத்துகாணியாக மாற்றினர்.16

மத்யஸ்தம் செய்தல்: திருவண்ணாமலை மாவட்டம் செய்யாறு வட்டம்திருவோத்தூர் ஊரில் வேதபுரீஸ்வரர் கோவிலில் இரண்டாம் குலோத்துங்கசோழனின் ஆறாம் ஆட்சியாண்டில் கொங்கன் செல்வமுத்தரையன் என்பவன் மிருக வேட்டைக்கு சென்ற போது அவன் எய்த அம்பு தவறுதலாக புலியன் என்பவன் மீது பட்டு இறந்துவிட்டதால் பன்னாட்டார் என்ற நிர்வாக அமைப்பினர் தலையிட்டு இரு குடும்பத்திற்கும் இடையே பகை ஏற்படாமல் செய்து, குற்றம் நீங்க திருவோத்தூர் இறைவனுக்கு ஒரு விளக்கு ஏற்ற பதினாறு பசுக்களை கொடுக்க தீர்ப்பளித்தனர்.17

÷நர்மையை நிரூபிக்க மழு பிடித்தல்:திருவண்ணாமலை மாவட்டம் செய்யாறு வட்டம் பிரம்மதேசத்தில் உள்ள சந்திர மௌலீஸ்வரர்கோவிலில் முதலாம் பராந்தக சோழனின் 16ம் ஆட்சியாண்டில் ஏரி வாரியத்தின் கணக்குகளை எழுதும் மத்யஸ்தனுக்கு (கணக்கன்) அஞ்சசஷ்டசத்து சபையினர் மதிப்பூதியம் நிர்ணயம் செய்தனர். அதன்படி தினமும் நான்கு நாழி நெல்லும், வருடத்திற்கு ஏழு கழஞ்சு பொன்னும், ஒரு ஜோடி ஆடைகளை வழங்குவது எனவும் அவ்வாறு கணக்குகளை சமர்பிக்கும் போது நேர்மையை நிரூபிக்க பழுக்க காய்ச்சிய கம்பியை பிடிக்க வேண்டும் எனவும் அப்போது காயங்கள் ஏற்படவில்லை என்றால் நேர்மை நிரூபிக்கபட்டதாக ஏற்று கொண்டு அதற்கு ஊக்கத்தொகை வழங்குவது என்றும், காயம்

ஏற்பட்டால் தவறு செய்ததாக கருதப்பட்டு பத்து கழஞ்சு பொன் தண்டமாக வசூலிக்கப்படும் எனவும் மேற்கொண்டு எந்த தண்டனையும் கிடையாது எனவும் சபையினர் முடிவு செய்தனர். தண்டனை கடுமையாக இருப்பினும் நேர்மைக்காக வகுக்கப்படும் விதிமுறைகள் மக்களால் ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளப்படுவது பாராட்டுக்கு உரியதே.18

மேலும் இதைப் போலவே கணக்கு பணி செய்பவர்களுக்கு கணவாரிய பெருமக்கள் ஆடை மற்றும் மதிப்பூதியத்தை நிர்ணயம் செய்ததை போலவே தவறு இழைப்பவர்களுக்கு 108காணம் தண்டம் விதிக்கப்படும் என்றும் விதி வகுத்துள்ளனர்.19

·டிவுரை:மானுட சமூகம் தோன்றிய நாளில் இருந்து சொல்லில் அடங்கா சமூக மாற்றங்களை கண்டு கொண்டு இருக்கின்றது. நல்ல ஒரு சமூகத்தை ஏற்படுத்த வேண்டும் எனில் தனி மனித ஒழுக்கம் என்பது வேண்டும். அதையும் சமூகமாக அல்லது கூட்டாக செய்தால்தான் தனி மனிதனுக்கு அந்த விதியின் மீதோ அல்லது சமூகத்தின் மீதோ மதிப்போ அல்லது பயமோ ஏற்படும். அந்த வகையில் நமது முன்னோர்களும், மன்னர்களும் நாட்டின் நலன் கருதி,ஊரையும் மக்களையும் பாதுகாக்க பல நிலை கொண்ட சபைகளை உருவாக்கி அதன் மூலம் சிறப்பான ஆட்சி நடைபெற விளைந்துள்ளனர். மக்கள் நெறி தவறும் போது சபையினரும், சபையினர் தவறும் போது மன்னனோ அல்லது அவரால் நியமிக்கப்பட்ட அதிகாரியோ, அதிகாரி நெறி தவறும் போது சபையினரோ அல்லது மன்னனோ நேரிடையாக தலையிட்டு சீர்படுத்தினர். இன்றைய ஜனநாயக காலத்தில் கூட காண முடியாத, பெற முடியாத உடனடியான தீர்வுகளும் பின்பற்றிய முறைகளும், அவற்றை எதிர்கால தலைமுறையினரும் தெரிந்து கொள்ள வேண்டும் என்ற சிறப்பான நோக்கத்தில் சமூகத்தின் உயரிய இடமான ஆலயங்களில் கல்வெட்டாக எழுதி வைத்த முறைகளும் இன்றும் நம்மை விட அவர்கள் சான்றோர்களாக வாழ்ந்தனர் என்பதையும், நாம் இழந்ததை உணர்த்தும் சாட்சிகளாக கல்வெட்டுகள் இன்றளவும் பறை சாற்றி நிற்கின்றன என்பதை நம்மால் மறுக்கமுடியாது.

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Fort St. George : A Colonial Chronicle

Dr. R. Shrien Bargana

Thomas Bowrey, an English mariner and merchant noted, Fort Saint George was a 'beneficial place to the Honorable English East India Company and with all the residence of their honorable agent and governor all of their affaires'. He spoke of how the Fort was instrumental in governing several territories, while creating the foundation for a flourishing trade in spices, silks and more. Francis Day and Andrew Cogan represented the British East India Company while buying this plot of land in 1639, along the current Marina Beach from the Nayak rulers in the region.

Fort St George architectural style helped it to resist several attacks in the 18th century. It has high walls, going up to six metres. Fort St George Madras was briefly under French possession between 1746 and 1749 but was given back to Britain as part of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.

A Citadel of Power and Commerce

Fort St. George truly emerged as a **citadel of power and commerce** during the British colonial era in South India. Established in 1640 by the British East India Company as a fortified trading post on the Coromandel Coast, the fort initially served to protect British merchants from rival European powers and local threats. Its strategic coastal location enabled secure maritime trade routes, attracting merchants, artisans, and workers from various parts of India, which led to the growth of a thriving settlement called "Black Town" around its walls. This settlement laid the foundation for the city of Madras (now Chennai). As trade flourished, the fort also became a **centre of political power**, gradually evolving into the administrative capital of the Madras Presidency by the late 17th century. It was heavily fortified with massive ramparts, bastions, and a moat, reflecting its growing military importance. During the Anglo-French wars in the 18th century, Fort St. George served as the British stronghold, resisting French attacks and consolidating British supremacy in the region. Inside its walls were not only warehouses and commercial offices, but also grand administrative buildings, barracks, and St. Mary's Church—the oldest Anglican church in India—symbolizing both commerce and colonial authority. From this fort, the British controlled vast territories, managed revenues, and formulated policies, making it the core of British governance in South India. Even after India's independence, the fort retained its political significance, housing the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly and Secretariat. Thus, Fort St. George stood for centuries as both a **symbol of imperial power** and a **thriving hub of trade**, shaping the economic, political, and urban history of the region.

A Contested Prize

Fort St. George was long regarded as **a contested prize** in the struggle for supremacy among European colonial powers in South India. Its strategic location on the Coromandel Coast made it a vital centre for controlling trade routes, collecting revenues, and projecting military strength. After its establishment by the British East India Company in 1640, the fort quickly rose in prominence, drawing the attention and envy of rival European powers, particularly the French. During the **Carnatic Wars (1746–1763)**, Fort St. George became a focal point of conflict: in 1746, the French forces under La Bourdonnais captured it during the First Carnatic War, forcing the British to retreat to Fort St. David at Cuddalore. However, the British, determined to regain their stronghold, recaptured it in 1749 under the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, marking a turning point in their fortunes. The repeated sieges and battles around Fort St. George highlighted its immense strategic value, as whoever controlled it held a key to political and commercial dominance in South India. Its recovery and fortification thereafter strengthened British resolve and signaled their growing imperial ambitions. Thus, Fort St. George stood not only as a fortress and trading

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centre but also as a **symbolic prize fiercely contested** in the colonial rivalries that shaped the history of the region.

A Seat of Colonial Authority

Fort St. George gradually evolved into **a seat of colonial authority**, becoming the epicentre of British administration in South India. After regaining the fort from the French in 1749, the British East India Company fortified and expanded it, transforming it from a mere trading post into the **administrative headquarters of the Madras Presidency**. Within its walls rose imposing buildings such as the Council Hall, Secretariat offices, military barracks, and St. Mary's Church, which collectively projected the image of British power and permanence. From this seat, the British formulated policies, collected revenues, managed military campaigns, and oversaw the governance of vast territories stretching across present-day Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and parts of Kerala and Odisha. The fort became a centre where British officials, merchants, and military officers lived and worked, and where critical decisions affecting millions of people were made. Its strong fortifications not only defended British interests but also symbolised their authority over the land and its people. Over time, Fort St. George became synonymous with colonial governance itself, representing the **political and administrative nerve centre** of British power in southern India until the end of colonial rule. Even today, it houses the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly and Secretariat, maintaining its legacy as a long-standing seat of political authority.

The Fort Today

The Fort Today stands not just as a relic of the colonial past but as a living institution woven into the administrative and cultural fabric of modern Tamil Nadu. Fort St. George currently houses the **Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly and the Secretariat**, making it one of the rare colonial-era structures still serving as the seat of government. The complex also includes the **Fort Museum**, which preserves a rich collection of colonial artefacts, coins, weapons, uniforms, paintings, and historical documents that illustrate the British era in India. **St. Mary's Church**, the oldest Anglican church in India, still conducts services and attracts visitors interested in its history and architecture. The fort area is under the protection of the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, which oversees its conservation and maintenance. Although much of the bustling colonial trade activity has faded, Fort St. George remains a place where history and governance meet—serving both as a **symbol of Chennai's colonial heritage** and a **functioning centre of democratic administration** in independent India. Its enduring presence amid the modern cityscape of Chennai reflects the layers of history that continue to shape the region today.

Fort St. George Museum

The Fort St. George Museum was organised and opened to the public from 31st January 1948. The museum began with a small collection of objects of the British Raj donated by the then Madras Presidency Government, the St. Mary's Church authorities, the disbanded army units and others. Over the years many objects were acquired by various means and there are now 3661 registered antiquities in the collection. Best among them (602) are on display in ten galleries.

The building housing the museum is one of the oldest surviving buildings built within the fort. The building was completed in 1795 and served as the location for Madras Bank. The museum building has a history of its own.

The antiquities are displayed in ten galleries spread over three floors. An imposing marble statue of Lord Cornwallis (1738-1805) greets the visitors. The statue, carved by Thomas Banks, was financed by funds raised from the public, depicts the scene of surrender of two sons of Tippu as hostages The lobby contains drawings showing the stages of constructions and renovations from 1640 onwards.

Arms like swords, daggers, rifles and pistols, mortars, petard, cannon shots, breast plates, helmets, baton, and fragments of shells fired at and in defence of Madras during the freak attacks during the World Wars, besides native weapons like bow and arrow.

The uniforms of various ranks of the British Army, ceremonial dress of Madras Governor's

Bodyguards and the Under Secretary of Madras Government, regimental colours of various units and cushions used in the official investiture ceremony and about 64 medals and medallions issued by the British Government for honouring its soldiers in various battles they fought in the Indian sub-continent are displayed in the Uniform and Medals Gallery.

Various porcelains used as official tableware by the East India Company and similar ware of the Arcot Nawabs are displayed in the Porcelain Gallery. In the Portrait Gallery, portraits, oil paintings on canvas are displayed including those of George III and his consort, Queen Victoria and Robert Clive, Sir Arthur Havelock. Another interesting, painting is the earliest depiction of Fort St. George in 1738.

In the Miscellany Gallery various church silverware from the St. Mary's Church, and Zion Church, Tranquebar are displayed. The silverware of the former include the one donated by Elihu Yale, by whom, the Yale University in U.S.A was founded. There is a large-scale model of the fort as it stood in 19th century and locks and iron chests of East India Company and a palanquin of Arcot Nawabs.

Objects on display in the Prints and Document Gallery include sketch prepared by the famous Thomas and his nephew William Daniell, Salt. H. Merke and others. Important among the document include few original letters written by Robert Clive and others. These prints, otherwise known as aquatints, essentially depicting Indian monuments and scenery, are laboriously prepared from an etched plate.

The Indo-French Gallery contains exhibits like fine, decorated porcelain, clocks, stamps and coins issued by the French in India, furniture, lampshades and clocks. The artefacts of Wodeyars, an important native ruling family, like portraits, paintings of Mysore School, coins, flag and appreciation letters are on display in the Wodeyar's Gallery. The prints, prepared by the Daniells and others, depicting various views of the fort, the buildings of old Madras, map of Madras are on display in the prints on Madras Gallery. These drawings throw light on the architectural history of the fort in particular and Madras and the vanished buildings in general.

Besides the above various coins issued by the 'presidential and unified mints of the British, Dutch, Portuguese and Danish are on display in the coin Gallery.

In the Reserve Collection there are a number antiquities among which mention may be made of the First Marriage Register of the St. Mary's Church recording the marriage of Robert Clive, the bible used by Strenysham Master, who was instrumental in the construction of the church.

Conclusion

The **legacy of Fort St. George** endures as a powerful reminder of colonial history and its lasting influence on modern India. As the first British fortress in the country, it marked the beginning of nearly three centuries of British presence and shaped the political, economic, and cultural trajectory of South India. The fort not only gave birth to the city of Madras (now Chennai) but also laid the foundation for the Madras Presidency, one of the key administrative divisions of British India. Its architecture—featuring thick ramparts, bastions, and early colonial buildings like St. Mary's Church and the Council Hall—reflects the blend of European styles introduced during the colonial period. The Fort Museum preserves rare documents, weapons, uniforms, and portraits that tell the story of British expansion and governance. Even after India's independence in 1947, Fort St. George retained its relevance, as it became the seat of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly and Secretariat, continuing its role as a centre of governance. Today, it stands as a **symbol of Chennai's colonial heritage**, representing both the achievements and the complexities of the colonial past. Its preservation as a protected monument by the Archaeological Survey of India ensures that future generations can learn about the pivotal role it played in shaping the region's history.

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Tamil Nadu's Historic Ports: Economic Inferences Through the Accounts of Foreign Travelers

M Lakshmi Priya[1] and D Ranganathan[2]

Introduction

For over 2,000 years, the Tamil coast along the Gulf of Mannar and the Coromandel played a key role in connecting the western and eastern parts of the Indian Ocean. Foreign visitors often described its ports as important centers for trading goods like textiles, pearls, spices, and horses. Accounts from authors such as the Greco-Roman writer of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, medieval travelers like Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta, and early modern observers like Duarte Barbosa, help us understand the economic activities of these ports over time. Foreign travelers and chroniclers provide invaluable insights into the economic life of these ports. The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, a Greco-Roman maritime handbook, records Tamil ports as thriving emporia, highlighting the region's export of textiles, pearls, gems, and spices, as well as its importation of gold, wine, and horses. Centuries later, medieval visitors such as Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta described bustling port towns along the Coromandel, noting their significance in regional and transoceanic trade. Polo marveled at the wealth and craftsmanship of Tamil textiles, while Ibn Battuta emphasized the circulation of horses, a prized commodity in South Indian polities. In the early modern period, observers like Duarte Barbosa reinforced this narrative, commenting on both the prosperity of Tamil ports and the organizational structures of their markets, warehouses, and merchant guilds.

By bringing together literary sources and archaeological data, it becomes possible to chart long-term patterns of commercial life in historic Tamil Nadu. These sources collectively illuminate the centrality of textiles and pearls in export economies, the strategic import of horses for South Indian military cultures, and the cosmopolitan character of Tamil ports where Arab, Persian, Chinese, and European traders coexisted. They also reveal the resilience and adaptability of Tamil maritime commerce, which endured despite shifting imperial hegemonies, from the Roman Empire to the Chola dynasty and later European colonial powers. This research brings together these outside perspectives and compares them with archaeological evidence to explore how trade was organized, what goods were exchanged, and the patterns of commercial life in historic Tamil Nadu.

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Arikamedu

The *Periplus* (mid-1st century CE), a mariner's handbook, locates on the Coromandel coast an 'emporion' called ***Poduke*** widely identified with Arikamedu, just south of present-day Puducherry.[1] Ptolemy's *Geography* (2nd century CE) likewise lists ***Podouke*** as an emporium on this shore, reinforcing the site's prominence in long-distance trade.[2]

Archaeology at Arikamedu supports the literary accounts, with finds such as amphorae for Mediterranean wine and olive oil, Arretine ware or terra sigillata, Roman lamps and glass, and large numbers of Indo-Pacific beads. Stratigraphic evidence places the site's peak activity between the late 1st century BCE and the 2nd century CE.[3] The *Periplus* use of the term ***emporion*** is significant, since in the Hellenistic world it referred to a market harbour with foreign merchants, storage, and customs facilities rather than just an anchorage. Taken together, the evidence suggests that Poduke functioned as a transshipment and finishing centre like receiving Mediterranean wine and glassware, and exporting fine cottons, pepper, and beads. The bead industry at Arikamedu also points to specialized craft quarters and labour systems that followed seasonal shipping cycles.

By the early Common Era, sections of the Tamil coast had developed from small landing points into organized market ports, with facilities for craft production, storage, and customs, and were able to host foreign merchant communities.

Kaveripattinam

Greco-Roman accounts mark the Kaveri delta as a key commercial zone. The *Periplus* offers only brief mention, but Ptolemy's mapping of the Khaberisi.e, Kaveri river system near an *emporium* points to a combined river and sea economy, where inland cotton and grain were carried to the coast.[4] Tamil traditions remember Puhar i.e, Kaveripattinam as a Chola port. Through foreign records, its economy resembles a classic river–sea interface like coastal shipping linked with river transport, monsoon seasons used for trade cycles, and a hinterland supplying textiles, rice, and pearls to the coast.

Foreign accounts, when compared with the delta landscape, suggest integrated trade networks which means river basins carried goods to coastal gateways where foreign merchants could access both bulk and high-value products.

Kayal and Korkai

Medieval travel accounts highlight the Gulf of Mannar as a center for two key commodities: pearls and horses. While classical writers had already linked the 'Fishery Coast' with pearls, the richest descriptions appear in the 13th to 14th centuries. Marco Polo's record of Maʿbar (the Tamil coast) notes active maritime trade and repeatedly mentions Nagapattinam as an important port.[5] Around the 1340s, Ibn Battuta, traveling under the Madurai Sultanate, describes the coastal trade environment and the movement of Arabian horses, an essential import for South Indian rulers where they exchanged for textiles and coin.[6] Scholars often identify Marco Polo's 'Cail/Cayal' with Kayal or Kayalpattinam near Tuticorin.

While Korkai, the earlier Pandyan capital, is tied to the pearl fisheries. Though exact sites remain debated, foreign accounts consistently stress two features of this coast: the seasonal arrival of Arabian horse ships and the revenues from pearl fisheries, both of which depended on strong state control like anchorage, customs, adjudication and organized merchant services like brokers, currency exchange, and provisioning.

Foreign travelers viewed the southern Tamil coast as a fast-moving market for importing horses and exporting pearls. This trade suggests strong state control through customs and monopolies, as well as support systems like convoys and adjudication to manage risks and keep commerce stable.

Nagapattinam and Porto Novo

By the early 16th century, European accounts show that the Coromandel coast was organized around cotton textiles, still operating from its long-established

harbors. Around 1518, Duarte Barbosa describes east-coast towns, including Negapatam (Nagapattinam), as export points for fine cloth sent to Malacca, the Moluccas, and beyond, with Gujarati and Muslim brokers active in the trade.[7] By the 17th century, **Porto Novo** i.e. Parangipettai and Nagapattinam were familiar to Dutch and Portuguese traders as centers for dyed and painted cloths, while trade in rice, salt, and areca continued. This continuity shows a long-term specialization: inland production of quality-graded, price-indexed textiles, which were collected at coastal ports through organized broker networks.

Foreign records and travel accounts describe a Coromandel "textile corridor," where coastal towns served as hubs connecting inland weavers and dyeing centers to global buyers. Foreign traders relied on local brokers and credit networks to make trade easier and reduce risks.

Core Aspects of Foreign Accounts

Over centuries, foreign travelers consistently highlight three institutional features: Monsoon-timed logistics: Texts assume distinct sailing seasons such as North-East and South-West Monsoon reflected in fairs and convoying practices. This aligns with Arikamedu's archaeology, which shows seasonal shipment patterns, such as wine arriving in narrow windows.[3] Brokerage and cosmopolitanism: Accounts of resident foreign merchants in Roman, Arab, and European sources imply the presence of bilingual brokers, money-changers, and legal systems for settling disputes involving outsiders. The term *emporion* emphasizes this commercial infrastructure.[1] Fiscal and coercive capacity: References to customs, safe-conducts, and state oversight of horse imports and pearl exports suggest that Tamil rulers directly monetized maritime trade. Their ability to protect anchorages and enforce taxes shaped foreign expectations and constrained trading practices.[5]

Conclusion

The evidence from both foreign accounts and archaeology underscores the Tamil coast's centrality in long-distance trade across the Indian Ocean. Ports such as Arikamedu, Kaveripattinam, Kayal, Korkai, Nagapattinam, and Porto Novo functioned as organized market-hubs, facilitating the exchange of textiles, pearls, and strategic imports while supporting complex logistics, brokerage networks, and fiscal oversight. Seasonal rhythms, monsoon navigation, and the coordination of riverine and maritime transport reveal a sophisticated, predictable commercial system. Foreign observers repeatedly emphasize the ports' busyness, diversity of goods, and institutional reliability, highlighting the maturity and adaptability of Tamil maritime trade. By bridging textual and material sources, this study demonstrates how Tamil polities sustained long-term economic specialization and integrated local, regional, and transoceanic networks over centuries, revealing a remarkable continuity of organizational and commercial practices despite shifting imperial and political lands.

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Socio- Economic Conditions of the Coimbatore (Kongu) Region in the Prehistoric (Iron-Age) Period

G.Pasupathi

Introduction

The Coimbatore or Kongu Nadu region, located in western Tamil Nadu, occupies a strategic midland position in southern India. Its socio-economic life during the prehistoric to early historic phase (Iron Age through the early Sangam period) was marked by a unique blend of agricultural subsistence, industrial craft production, and long-distance trade. Archaeological excavations—most prominently at Kodumanal—together with surveys across the Noyyal, Bhavani, and Amaravathi river valleys, reveal a highly organized economic landscape that was well integrated into regional as well as trans-maritime networks.

Agricultural Foundations and Settlement Patterns

Archaeological evidence shows that settlements emerged along Coimbatore's fertile river valleys between c. 1500 BCE and 500 BCE, corresponding to the Iron Age. The alluvial soils of the Noyyal, Bhavani, and Amaravathi rivers supported mixed farming systems that sustained both subsistence and specialized crops.

At Kodumanal, Mangudi, and Perur, archaeobotanical finds of charred seeds of rice, pearl millet, pulses, and cotton indicate diversified agriculture. Mixed cropping practices suggest an early awareness of soil management, while cotton cultivation points to economic specialization geared toward textile production. The presence of terracotta ring-wells and small reservoirs further indicates rudimentary water-management systems to mitigate seasonal drought.

Craft Production and Industrial Organization

Kodumanal emerged as one of South India's most significant prehistoric craft-production hubs. Excavations reveal evidence of metallurgy, bead-manufacturing, and textile industries supported by planned infrastructure.

Metallurgy: Blast furnace remains, vitrified crucibles, terracotta pipes, slags, and anvils reveal advanced iron and steel production. Scholars identify traces of high-carbon "wootz" steel—globally renowned in later centuries—indicating an early mastery of crucible steel technology around 300 BCE.

Textiles: Terracotta spindle whorls, pierced rods, and charred cotton fragments suggest spinning and weaving activities. Cotton textiles were likely produced for both local use and export.

Beads and Ornamentation: Tens of thousands of beads and bangles made from semi-precious stones (carnelian, beryl, sapphire, jasper, lapis lazuli, agate, quartz) as well as shell, terracotta, and glass were recovered. The presence of raw materials, semi-finished pieces, and polished ornaments confirms large-scale on-site manufacturing.

Purpose-built infrastructure, including water channels for stone-polishing and a well-like structure serving industrial/domestic needs, reflects systematic planning for craft specialization.

Burial Practices and Social Complexity

Megalithic burials discovered in the region provide insight into social hierarchy and ritual life. Cairn-circles, cist burials, and urn burials contained grave goods such as iron swords, arrowheads, pots with grains, and ornamental beads. The scale and richness of some burials suggest social stratification, with elite groups afforded elaborate funerary rituals.

Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions on potsherds, with names like Samban, Sumanan, and Visaki, point to literacy and perhaps clan-based occupational units. The burials thus reflect a stratified, multi-ethnic society composed of artisans, metallurgists, traders, and ritual specialist.

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Long-Distance Trade and External Connections

The Kongu region's location on the ancient east–west trade corridor linking Muziris on the Malabar coast with Kaveripoompattinam on the Coromandel coast positioned it as a key trade node. Kodumanal's craft products—beads, bangles, iron tools, steel, and cotton textiles—were transported along this route.

Foreign imports further confirm this connectivity: Roman silver coins, lapis lazuli from Afghanistan, and carnelian from Maharashtra have been unearthed. The wide distribution of Kodumanal beads in distant markets emphasizes its role in Indo-Roman and intra-peninsular exchange networks.

Conclusion

During the Iron-Age, the Coimbatore (Kongu) region evolved from small agrarian settlements into vibrant centers of industrial and commercial activity. Anchored by surplus agriculture, communities like Kodumanal specialized in metallurgy, textiles, and bead production. Their integration into regional and overseas trade routes, combined with evidence of social stratification, literacy, and cultural plurality, demonstrates the region's pivotal role in shaping South Indian prehistory. The Kongu landscape of this era was therefore not a peripheral agrarian zone but a dynamic hub of craft, commerce, and culture.

The Endowments made to the Temple Bhoothagreeswara Temple – Sirudhavur as Gleaned through the Epigraphs

Dr. S. Loganathan

Location

The village Sirudhavur incorporated with Chengleput District, previously it was added with Kanchipuram District. Geographically, it lies on 12.6829^0N and 80.1570^0E of latitude and Longitude.[1] The village lies 51 kms South of Chennai. Sirudhavur lake, which is a significant hotspot, the village lies on the northeast boundary of the lake, on the east lies Bay of Bengal.

Etymology

Historically speaking Sirudhavur is one of the Prehistoric site in Tamilnadu. The Sangam Literature mentions forty three types of places, of which "Siru" i.e. small also finds place in the list. The name has been derived as Sirudha+Ur, "Siru"[2] means small, "Ur"[3] means settlement. In the epigraphs it is referred to as "Sirudhavur" alias "Narasingamangalam". It is surmised that the Pallava king Narasimha would have endowed the land to the brahmanas, hence it came to be called as Narasingha mangalam (or) Narasinga Chaturvedimangalam. The village is embellished with two ancient temple one is assigned to Lord Siva and the other one to Lord Vishnu. In the epigraph, it is mentioned as Parasurama Vinnagaram. At present, two temple are maintained and protected by the Hindu Religious Endowment Board, they are Irayiram udaiyar dedicated to Lord Siva and Vaikuntapperumal temple. Apart from the above temples, the name Bhothagreesvara temple is also mentioned in the epigraphs.

History of Sirudhavur

History of Sirudhavur began with the Prehistoric culture. The Archaeological Survey of India, conducted excavation at Sirudhavur in 2008, and discovered a large number (300), megalithic burials and which reveals the megalithic culture. The burials occupied 35 acre land. They have discovered iron tools, Sarcophagus, and carnelian beads. It dates back 2000 BC which lasted till 200 B.C.[4]

Subsequent history begins with the Age of Sangam, but the earliest inscription is assigned to Parthivendravarman, a Pallava feudatory, who was a

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contemporary of Aditya II Karikala, the Chola prince, elder brother of Rajaraja I. The Chola rulers like Rajaraja I, Rajendra I, Kulottunga I, Kulottunga III, the Pandya ruler are also represented in the epigraph some of the epigraphs are assigned to 15th and 16th C.A.D.

Sources

The total number of epigraphs 24 are reported from Sirudhavur and the neighbourhood Mamallapuram village. This inscription are published in the A.R.E. 81 to 103 of 1933 – 34, only one inscription is published in South Indian Inscription Volume I, No.42. These epigraphs provide ample evidence on the endowments made to the temple of this village. They are classified as Gift of land, Gift of lamp, Gift of gold and the agreement signed between the Sabha and the Donar. A brief analysis has been made here below on these endowments.

Territorial Division and Administrative Units of Sirudhavur Village

Most of the inscription refers to the Sirudhavur Village as formed part of Narasingamangalam of Amur Kottam, but in the time of Sambhuvarayas, the territorial unit was called as Ayiravoli parru. The reason for change is not mentioned here.

Gift of Land

The earliest inscription assigned to Parthivendravarman dated in his 5th regnal year (961 A.D) It mentions the grant of Land as Irayili by the Assembly of Narasimhamangalam to Padasivan Singapulli alias Acharyan to provide music with five persons during the three sribali services to the temple of Tirumerralininraru Perumanadigal.[5]

An inscription of Rajaraja I (9th regnal year) refers to the gift of land for offerings during early and middy services to the God. The gift was made by Palaipani of Karumangalam in Kiliyur nadu, situated on the banks of the river Kaveri in Sonadu.[6] Similar endowment has been made by the same donor for providing additional services to the deity of Bhutisvaramudaiyar at Sirudavur.[7]

A solitary epigraph of Rajendradeva, which is devoid of regnal year, refers to gift of land, by Pudali Dandaiya Karmvittan, for offerings and burning a lamp to the image of Lord Krishna, who is mentioned as Vennaikkuttalvar, which was consecrated at the temple Parasuram vinnagar Alvar at the temple. He purchased the land and endowed to the temple. For the first time the name of the Kottam is mentioned here as Kalyanapuramgonda Sola Kottam, Amur Nadu of Jayakonda solamandalam.[8]

An epigraph engraved on the walls of the shore temple, reveals the fact the inscription assigned to Virarajendra, endowed 2000 kuli of land as Tiruvidaiyattam, to the temple of Tirukkadalmallai.[9] It is to be noted here that the land assigned to Vishnu temple is called as Tiruvidaiyattam.

Yet another record of Kulottunga II (1114 A.D) refers to the sub division of Amur Kottam, the land was sold to Araiyan Tiruvegambamudaiyan of Ariyalur in Kilay kurram, a sub division of Nittavinoda valanadu, and he presented the land to the deity at Sirudavur.[10]

A record of Maravarman Tribhuvana Chakravartin Virapandya issued in his 10th regnal year, states that the Sabha and Uravar agreed to pay tax dues on the land belonging to the temple of Parasurama Vinnagar, to provide for offering to the deity.[11]

For the Early morning services, land was endowed to the God Bhutisvaramudaiyar, by Kulottunga sola deva Tagadur Nadalvan. Sirudavur is mentioned as Narasigamangalam.[12]

Gift of Land As Tirunamattukkani

A Pandyan record of Maravarman Tribhuvana Vira Pandyadeva (10th Year) registers a grant of tax free land to the temple as Tirunamattukkani, by Paiyanur alias Rajakesari Chaturvedimangalam.[13]

Similar endowment has been made to the Vadugappillaiyar of the village,[14] by the Kaikkolar of Madevai, called Alagiya Sokkanar alias Kannanumovadap Pandyadevar. The land was purchased from Telugu Chola king Vijayaganda Gopaladeva.

A much damaged record refers to the gift or Agrahara to the temple. Here the Agrahara refers to the settlement of the brahmanas.[15]

Grant of Land for Feeding Maheswaras

Engraved on a broken pillar found in the village, which is devoid of the name of the ruler, but the regnal year is given as 14th. The inscription mentions the grant of taxes on the devadana lands at Sirudavur, which was used for feeding the Maheswaras at Nilagangarayan tirumodam in Kilaiyur in Perumbarrappuliyur.[16]

Remission of Tax

A record of Vijayagandagopala, a Telugu Chola ruler, made an agreement with the devakanmis of the temple to pay certain rate of kadamai, the land tax at Sirudavur, Amur and presented as devadana by Cholaman piramban Orri alias Telungaraya and his two brother, who were the Parigraha mudalis of the village. The king gave his consent for remission of tax.[17]

Worship and Repair of Temple

A record of Sakalaloka Chakravartin Rajanarayana, dated in his 3rd regnal year, mentions the remission of taxes on two velis of devadana land belonging to the god and the goddess Nachchiyar for worship and repair and other requirements of the temple. The territorial division is mentioned as Ayiravoli parru.[18]

Jadayavarman Tribhuvana Chakravartin Sundara Pandyadeva issued a record in his 10th regnal year, by which the king through the officer Mudali Pillai Irungovelar purchased land by the temple, authorities i.e. Nayayattar from Rajendra Chola Tagadurudaiyan for the requirements of the goddess Aranavalli Nachchiyar in the temple.[19]

Gift of Gold to Sivabrahmanas for Lamp

Rajaraja Chola I (995 A.D) records a gift of 12 sheep to supplement 78 sheep already presented by Aiyaran Tiruppori for burning a lamp in the temple Parasurama Vinnagar Alvar at Narasingamangalam in Amur kottam Devanarsingan in Arvalakurram on the southern bank of the river Kaveri in Sonadu.[20] Yet another epigraph of the same ruler (999 A.D) registers the gift of sheep, which was entrusted to the Sabha of the village, for burning a lamp along with lamp stand by palapani of Karimangalam.[21]

Kulottunga Choladeva in his 47th regnal year records that an agreement given by the Sivabrahmanas of the temple, to burn a lamp before the deity, for which the gold was endowed by Tiruvadigai accountant by name Puterichchelvan.[22]

Consecration of image and Construction of Beam

A record which is devoid of name of the ruler and regnal year states that the pillar and an image of Pillaiyar were gifted by Perunkandai Taichchulan. The inscription is assigned to 15th C.A.D.[23]

A similar type of record which is devoid of name and date, but mentions the name of the temple as Satti Vinnagaram and name of a person Pandimanikkamarasa.... son of Kavalampakkilar.[24] The epigraph is much damaged and complete information is not available.

Yet another record states that the beam (Podhigai) was the gift of Pichchandai son of Tennavadaraiyan.[25]

Conclusion

Sirudavur, a small village located near Mamallapuram, formed part of Amur kottam. Two temples embellish the village viz. The Tirumerralinathar and Bhuthisvaramudaiyar. 24 epigraphs were reported by the Archaeological Survey of India, of which 13 speaks about the Land endowment made to the temple for various purposes, such as offerings made during the early morning, midday, midnight services, music players and as Tirunamattukkani, Tiruvidaiyattam, for worship, repair of the temple, Construction of part of the temple, consecration of the image of Pillaiyar. Three epigraphs speaks about the endowment of sheep and burning lamp and lamp stand, for which agreement has been made by the Ur Sabha and Brahmadaya Sabha of the village. A solitary record refers to the endowment of Gold for burning the temple.

The donors hailed not only from Tondaimandalam but also from Sonadu, and the villages located on the banks of the river Kaveri.

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Nagaraja Temple: A declaration of Religious Syncretism or a Sectarian Transition

Kavitha. K[1], Dr. P. Leela Moni [2], and Dr. A. Vanaja [3]

Nagaraja Temple

The term "Nagercoil" is an Eponym as it was only dedicated to the Naga Raja Temple of Kottar. Later the term was profoundly used to indicate the area around the temple and then it is the most important name in the topography of Kanniyakumari district as it is its headquarters. Before 1800 B.C, the places under the name 'Nagercoil' were called 'Kottar' or 'Kottaru' (in Tamil). After 1800s, the majority of the area under Kottar was named Nagercoil and now, Kottar was a small statutory town in Nagercoil. (1)

Kottar was a most famous town and a trade centre in ancient Tamilagam even Ptolomy and Pliny the Elder have mentioned Kottar in their works associated with Indo-Roman Trade as "Kottiara metropolis" and "Kottara" respectively. (2) Even Thirungyana Sambanthar marks this town as 'Kottar' in his Thiruppathigams. (3)

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When Kulothunga Chola tried to capture the south, Kalingathupparani mentioned this area Kottaru as given below,

முள்ளாறும் கல்லாறும் தென்னார்ஓட
முன்னொருநாள் வாள்பயன் முனிந்த போரில்
வெள்ளாறும் கோட்டாறும் புகையால் மூட
வெந்தவனம் இந்தவனம் ஒக்கில் ஓக்கும்
(Jeyangkondar, Kalingathupparani:95)

While a person with less Tamil literary knowledge might easily misinterpret this poem, it metaphorically describes the war damages done by the enemies by setting fire at Kottar. These lines states that the Pandiyan army ran in the paths filled with thrones and stones and they crossed the river, reached Kottar and then Kottar was filled with smoke that rose form war. (4)

Folk lores based on this temple for Naga Raja (King of Snakes or Serpent King) were all almost a century old. At that period, this temple was surrounded by agricultural lands, Coconut trees, Peepal/Pipal trees, and Nerium Oleander plants (Arali / aka Naga Arali). This nature filled area act as the home for a numerous King Cobras around the temple, currently there is no forest and they were replaced with buildings around the temple; thus, no cobras either. (5)

The Folk Lore went on like a young maiden cut grass for her cattle, she accidentally chopped offone of the heads of a five-headed serpent/cobra, she realised the blood in her sickle soon after and found out that she mutilated a sacred creature, in panic she called out her villagers. The villagers want to amend the mistake and console that mystical creature of five heads, hence they construct a small temple dedicated to that Five-headed Serpent. (6)

Likewise, there are a lot of stories of several kings/rulers constructed this temple also in circulation. One of the prominent lores was A King of Kalakad wanted to reconstruct his kingdom, during the process of restoration of a remote forest, a stone was got broken and blood gushed out from it.While the workers amazed with the sight, there a seen a reflection of Cobra in the blood. At the same night, A Man-Cobra envisioned in the King's dream and warned him that his workers destroyed himself and if the King has to recover from his leprosy, he might commission a temple for Cobra King and worship him. As per that, the King of Kalakad constructed a Naga Temple in Kottar. (7)

There is another version of KalakadKing's folk lore associated with this temple. The Kottar area was once belonged to the Venad regime and the forest surrounding the temple was a dwelling place of King Cobra also called as SharphaKaavuin local tough. A girl from Kannimedu area, while passing that particular place had met with a cobra by chance and begun to worship it by offering milk to it. While seeing this, the villagers also had joined the Cobra-worship along with that girl, and in time growing they built a temple in that premises and consider the sand from those snake-hill/ ant-hill and herbs growing near by the temple as Prasad. They even in the zenith of belief apply the Prasad in forehead, body, and even consume it, by believing it might cure all their illnesses. This story spread wide and eventually placed into the vision of the King of Kalakad – King Poothala Veera Sreeveera Udhya Marthanda Varma, who ruled Venad from 1516 B.C.E to 1535 B.C.E. (8) After got-up the news, the King visited the temple followed the sacred practices for forty-one days, consumed the sacred herbs offered to the deity, and eventually recovered from his leprosy. It is said that, the herb used in the temple was Kodai Ilai aka Oda Valli, when a residue of Cobra such as its sacales, skin or feces get in contact with this herb, both of them compoundly act as a medicine to a lot of skin infections, and ultimately it has cured the Leprosy of the King. Thus, the King commissioned to reconstruct a massive temple dedicated to Cobra God. (9)

There is a surreal Jain myth surrounding this Temple's origin. The Uthara Purana of Jainism states that there is a pair of Cobras were killed by a Asur named Mahibala. However, they heard themanthrachanting of 23rd Jain Thirthankara Parshvanath and reborn as the King and Queen of Lower World/ Adho Loka (Hell). One day, the powerful waves/ vibrations created by the Dyana of Parshvanath spread in the sky and trembled the path of Samvarathe Kantharava. Thus, Samvara used his force to create a cloudburst to halt the Dyana of Parshvanath. To save the

Parshvanath from this extreme rainfall, the King of the Lower World Dannentra, the Snake-King, flattered his hood and stand behind him to protect the Thirthankara from rain. When the water level gotincreased, the Queen of Snakes, Padmavathi, spouse of Dannentra**,** making a Lotus appeared in his foot which helps him float in water, hence, save the Parshvanath without disturbing his Dyana/ Meditation. Though it is considering a myth, there are two statues in the Nagaraja Temple's entrance which is dedicated to those snake king and queen. Even, Moolavar / main deity of temple is the Nagaramman, who is none other than the Snake Queen Padmavathy herself. The sanctum next to Nagaramman/ Nagar sanctum is for Nagaraja (Snake King), and this deity is obviously Dannentra only. (10) Currently, there is a sanctum dedicated to Lord Shiva in between these two sanctums (11), and the Vaishnavites converted the Dannentra's sanctum into the sanctum of Anandha Krishna.

There is also a popular folk lore prevailed among Malayalees which is the amalgamation of the above stated incidents. A Namboothiri devotee of Lord Shiva received a Nagamanickam from Vasuki, the king of serpents, as a divine gift. The Namboothiri then began worshipping Nagaraja and Nagayakshi. (12) Later, while traveling through Kottar (present-day Nagercoil), he encountered a woman crying by a rock from which blood was flowing. Upon investigation, he recognized the rock as a five-headed Nagaraja idol. He conducted the necessary rituals and built a small shrine at the site. (13) This simple shrine was later expanded into the present-day temple, with additional sanctums for Lord Maha Vishnu and Shiva.

Kottar – A Jain Fort

Nagaraja Temple is situated in Kottar, and before the Bakthi Movement washed out Buddhism and Jainism in Tamil Country, there are innumerous Buddhist and Jain monks lived in Kottar with high heritage. It can be known by Sambanthar's Devaram but not in a positive way, because, as a Saivite, Sambanthar criticized Jains and Buddhist as far as he can in his verses. (18)Sambanthar censured these monks by saying they were lacking morality and the Lord Shiva never bestowed his grace up on such people, and he definitely used such impolite words to mention them.

உடையிலாது உழல்கின்ற குண்டரும்
ஊணருந்தவத்து ஆயசாக்கியர்
கொடையிலாமனத்தார்குறை ஆரும்
கோட்டாற்றில்
(Sambanthar, Thevaram-2, Thirukkottaaru:10) (19)
கருக்கொடுத்ததுவராடையர்காட்சி இல்லாததோர்
தடுக்கிடுக்கிச்சமணேதிரிவார்க்குத்தன்னருள்
கொடுக்கில்லாக்குழகன்அமரும்திருக்
கொட்டாற்றுள்
இடுக்கணின்றித் தொழுவார் அமரர்க்கு
இறையாவரே
(Sambanthar, Theveram-2, Kottaaru:10) (*20*)

In the first verse, Sambanthar mentions the Naked monks who belongs to the Digambara category and in the second verse, he marked the monks wear discolored robes, which indicates the Svetambara category of Jain monks. Overall, these verses from Thevaram portrays the presence of Jain monks in Kottar town during the 7th century C.E, and ThirungyanaSambanthar heavily criticized those monks lived by getting alms as a part of his broader effort to promote Saivism. (21)

Pancha-Parameshtiis the five steps of evolution of a Jain monk, from Monk to Thirthankara, a spiritual person should try his best to achieve all the five steps through his perfect belief; knowledge; and conduct. The steps are,

- Sadhu : A Sadhu is a monk or a nun who renounced their worldly life and practices the five great vows/ Mahavrathas such as non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-attainment. They always indulge in constant spiritual practices.
- Upadhyaya : They are usually a teacher or a preceptor who has thorough knowledge in Jain scriptures. They are responsible for teaching the monks, nuns, and the laymen.
- Acharya :Acharya is the head of the Jain ascetic order. They are considered as the spiritual leaders of Jainism. They are also considered as the living embodiment of the Jain principles.

- Siddha : Siddha is a soul that achieved liberation from the cycle of birth and death, but not attained Kevala Jnana. Having shed all Karmic bonds, they reside at the highest point of the universe called the Siddhashila.
- Arihant : Arihant is a soul that attained perfect knowledge/ Kevala Jnana, and have reached the path of liberation but have not yet given up their physical body. In Jainism, all the Thirthankaras are Arihants but not all the Arihants are Thirthankras, the Thirthankaras are supreme beings in Jainism and they are fold-makers, there are only twenty-four of them were presented till now, and in this current Jain cosmic wheel of time, no Thirthankara will be born or made, only Arihant is the supreme position a Jain monk can attain.(22) (23)

The first three level monks listed in Pancha-Parameshti were lived in Kottar Nagaraja Temple and they were distinguished in Architecture and Medicine. All the inscriptions related to Jains of Kottar speaks about the Teacher who make the student to do this / that specimen.(24)

Even these monks were not isolated and maintained their connections with the other monks resided in Kazhugu Malai, Thiruchaaranathu Malai, and Thirukkurandi. (25)These teachers are also called 'Padaarar' in KazhuMalai inscriptions.(26)(27)

The inscriptions that found on a stone near the Ayyanar Temple in Kazhugumalai, Kovilpatti Taluk, ThirunelveliDitrict holds the names of the Jain monk-students of Kottar are listed below,

- *திருக்கொட்டாற்று பாதமலத்தான் சன்மம்புட்ப்பணந்தி செய்வித்த திருமெனி (28)*
- *திருக்கோட்டாற்று உத்தணந்திக் குரவடிகள் மாணாக்கர்சாந்தி செனப் பெரியார் செய்வித்ததிரு மெனி (29)*
- *ஸ்ரீ திரு கொட்டாற்றுபாத முலத்தான் அரங்கன்மாறன செய்வித்ததிருமெனி (30)*
- *ஸ்ரீ திருகொட்டாற்று விமளசந்திரக் குரவடிகள் மாணாக்கர்சாந்தி செனஅடிகள் செய்விச்சபடிமம் (31)*
- *ஸ்ரீ புட்ப்பணந்திபடாரர் மாணாக்கர் பெறாணந்திபடாரர் செய்விச்சதிருமெனி(32)*

The above inscriptions mentions the names of the Jain Monk-Teachers such asUtthananthiKuravadigal, Vimazha Chandra Kuravadigal, PutpananthiPadaarar, also it mentions the Jain Monk-Students Saanthisena Periyaar, Saanthisena Adigal, Peraananthi Padaarar. Those Monks and their students went to Kazhugu Malai which is situated in Tirunelveli and carved some stone architectural work to assist the Jain monks residing there, in return the locals of Kazhugumalai carved their names and work in a stone near the present Ayyanar temple of Kazhugumalai, Kovilpatti.

In the same place, we can witness the presence of female Jain Monk-students from Thiruchaaranthumalai contribute the same level of excellence stone art work in Kazhugumalai, also retrieved from the same inscription. They are

- *ஸ்ரீ மிழலூர்க்குரத்தியார் மாணாக்கியார் திருச்சாரணத்த படைகள் செய்வித்ததிரு மெனி(33)*
- *ஸ்ரீ கொட்டுர் நாட்டு சிறு..... ல்தலிசடையன் கொற்றியைசார்த்தி திருச்சாரணத்துக் குரத்திகள் செய்வித்தபடிமம். (34)*
- *ஸ்ரீ கொட்டுர்நாட்டு பெரும்பற்றூர்கூத் தங்காமனை சாத்தி திருச்சாரணத்துக் குரத்திகள் செய்தபடிமம் (35)*

These inscriptions clearly represent the presence of Male as well as Female Jain monks in Kottar area. There are even Female Jain Monk-Teacher such as MizhaloorKurattiyarwas presented during that era.

Studying all these inscriptions dated 8th century C.E indicates, the Kumari region was once filled with highly educated and prestigious Jain Sadhus and Sadhvis who excelled in art, architecture, education, and medicine.(36)

Nagaraja Temple – A Jain Shrine

The Moolavar of Nagaraja Temple is none other than Nagaramman also known as Padmavathy – the Snake Queen of Jain tradition.(37)Moolavar, theNagar statue is five-headed serphantwith one head being chopped off state. Dr. Siva. Vivekanandan states that it

is a very tiny statue of about only one and half inch length, (38)the temple head priest P. K. Narayanan Namboothiri firmly denies it and says that "the statue of moolavar of Nagaraja Temple – the Nagaraja is almost 'Ten inches' in heigh, the previous writer might be misinterpreted the size of it, as the pottiwho doing regular poojas to that particular idol, I can vow that it is almost ten inches, not more not less". (39)The full scale statue of Nagaraja placed in the Ananda Krishna sanctum of this temple is originally, Dannentra, the Snake King, who is Yakshan (protector) of 23rd Thirthankara Parshvanath. And this statue was not carved but made, made with a special mixture called 'Kadu Sarkkarai',it's a mixture of Glue, Resin, Kulkulu, Brown Sugar, Red Dye, Red Sand, Ghee, and Oil. This mixture mixed with glue and resin became highly durable;however it should not get wet, Hence, the Three foot statue of Nagaraja is not being given any abhishekam.(40) This Nagaraja statue was stays naked with a five-headed serpent above his head, posing Abhaya mutra, with the companion yakshis of Ambhika and Padmavathy in the right and left respectively. Currently, deities Ambhika and Padmavathy were considered as the Bhama and Rukmani, the partners of the deity Ananda Krishna. (41)

There are the statues of Jain Tirthankaras were presented in the pillars of Artha Mandabhas of this temple. Detailed statues of Neminatha, Parshvanatha, Mahavira, Ambhika, and Padmavathy were carved in the Artha Mandabha. There are two statues of Parshvanatha in this temple. On the ceiling of Nagaramman sanctum, there is a statues of Dannenthra with his partners Ambhika and Padmvathay.(42)There are also the statues of animals, birds, not so ferocious calm Yazhis, dancers and musicians were carved in the pillars of Nagaraja Temple. (43)

Until 16th century C.E, the Temple was a popular Jain shrine, after that due to political changes, the Hindu worshipping practices were adapted in that temple. Most of the inscription of this temple belong to the 16th century C.E. Around C.E. 1521, the Venad ruler Boothala Veera Sree Veera Uthaya Maarthaanda Varma renovated the old temple and donated a lot of lands in the name of 'Palli Santham'.(44)However, the Hindu worship was began to amalgamated into the Jain shrine during the same period of Udhaya Maarthanda Varma. More Over, Palli Satham is none other than the land donations given to Jain or Buddhist study centers and educational institutions. (45)

Ten out of twelve inscriptions in Nagaraja temple are related to Jainism. In these inscriptions, the contributors gave donations to the temple for its religious practices such as doing poojas, offering prasadhas, and conducting festivals. (46)

Demise

The first step to the demise of Jainism in Kottar was started with the arrival of ThirugnanaSambhanthar. He criticized the Jains to its core and with the help of the Pandya king Koon Pandya who converted from Jainism to Saivism,(47)he petrified them, so that they flee the region sooner or later. Some died, some dwell in caves, and some left to North. It is also said that, Koon Pandya also known as Sundara Pandya massacred 8000 Jains monkswere killed by impalement in Samanatham village of Madurai.(48) However, this is still considered a legend spread out by the Saivites to prove their dominance. (49)

In time, the population of Jains in Kottar was demise to this extinct. However, there were till lately two Jaina houses situated to the south of the Nagaraja Temple belonging to the descendants of GunaviraPanditha and KamalavahanaPanditha. They might be the remnants of large colony of Jains once existed in Kottar. Their desandants are still the official priests of the temple.(50)

In conclusion, The Nagaraja Temple is a fascinating testament to the shifting religious landscape of southern India. What is now a celebrated Hindu temple dedicated to the serpent god has deep roots in Jainism. Its history, from being a Jain shrine housing deities like Dannentra and Padmavathy, to its eventual transformation under Hindu influence, illustrates the dynamic nature of religious traditions. The survival of Jain-related inscriptions and architectural elements within the temple serves as a powerful reminder of a time when Kottar was a vibrant center of Jain art, learning, and asceticism. The temple's story, therefore,

is not just one of worship, but also a chronicle of cultural and religious transition.

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Perur Pateeshwarar Temple: A Historical Monument

Dr. S. Sangeetha Suresh[1] & Dr.S. Seethalakshmi[2]

In the pre historic period the Puranas had been the only evidence of the existence of sacred places where famous temples worshipped by sages and devoted kings. As for the sacred temple at Perur, the sage Sri Vyasa once proclaimed that the Vedas extolled only the lord Vishnu as the ultimate.

This had happened in Kasi Viswanath temple. As Sri Vyasa's words were not the truth, lord Vishnu directed the sage to Perur and to worship Lord Siva there and attain enlightenment. Accordingly, the sage Vyasa after taking a dip at the sacred river Kanchimandadhi (now river Noyal) worshipped Lord Patteeswarar. [1]

Kurukshetram of Tamilnadu

Likewise sage Vishwamitra during his penance in kasi witnessed in his mind's eye the cosmic dance of Lord Siva in the southern sacred place of Perur and after learning that people living at Perur attain liberation from the cycle of births and deaths, came to Perur and did penance. Perur had also been called "Kurukshetra" were giving food to the poor would yield the same benefit as feeding a thousand people at Kasi. In another Instance lord Yama, the God of death worshipped Sri Patteeswarar at Perur, the place of liberation of souls and bestowed with the enlightenment that the people worshipping with all love for lord Siva Perur, would be protected from the fear of Yama. Even today there is a temple for Lord Yama at Vellalore, 10kms east of Perur. Like Siva temple at Sri Vanchiyam in Thanjavur district, the temple at Perur was also worshipped by lord Yama for his own existence. Perur temple and mountains surroundings is also regarded as Dakshina Kailash from the puranic times of sage Narada who had also worshipped at Perur. According to Sthalapurana of Perur the following were the names of the Deity, palace, river and the Sthalaviruksham at Perur. [2]

Palm Tree

However, the PALM TREE at the back of swami Sannaidhi is worshipped as the sithala viruksham today according to a legend the divine cow kamadhenu worshipped lord siva in the form of a Swayambulingam is a cowshed (Goshtam in Sanskrit). By anointing the lord with the milk every day. Kamadhenu's calf patti accidentally disturbed the sand covering the lingam. Even today we can see the more on the lingam of the main deity, Greeted by the chorms of Kamadhenu and the feed of the calf.

As we enter the temple, we proceed to worship Lord Ganesha on the right-hand side mandapam of the main entrance of loard Patteeswarar, and also the nandi

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	Deity	Place	River	Tree
Sthayugam	Vanmeeganathar	Adhipuri	Varmeegan	Tamarind
Herthayugam	Amirtheswarar	Thavasidhipuram	Piravaneri	Punnai
Dhuvparayugam	Arasambalavanar	Melachithambaram	Pippilam	Panchavarmam
kaliyugam	Sri Patteeswarar	Perur	Kanchi	Arasavanam

inside a small shrine. About 100 feet away from the Nandi there is inner sanctorium of Lord Patteeswarar, with Kamadhenu behind. On the inner praharam there is Sri Dakshinamurthi, 63 Nayanmars, Saptharishis lingams, Sahasralingam (1000 small lingams in one big lingam). Sri Samaniyar with Sri Velli and Deivayanai. On the north eastern corner there is Gnana Bhairavar who is said to bestow Moksha. [3]

Lord Nataraja

Lord Nataraja with his consort Sivakamasundarai, is a feast to the eyes. Sri Sundaramurthi Nayanar was blessed with the show of cosmic dance, as usually worshipped in Chitambaram, on the Panguni Uthiram day. This Kanakashabhai with the front mandapam was limit by Alagadri Naicker, brother of Thirumalai Naicker, the king of Madurai, between 1625 A.D. on both the sides of Lord Nataraja sanatorium there are 8 wonderful sculptures described in the next chapter of this book. The eight stone chains suspended from the roof of this Mandapam is each a single stone marvel. The kanakasabhai and the mandapam in front of it during 36 monolithic pillars (representing philosophical principles of saiva siddhanta) were sacred out, of stones brought from nearby Maruthamalai, consuming a period of 28 years by sculpture named kambanachari. On the consecration day of the Kanakasabhai one young (also believed to be the son of kambanachar) in the crowd that gathered came before the threw out a challenge that the sculpture of horse-riding warrior on the pillar left of Kanakasabai is not strong but defective. As per his suggestion, sandal paste was smeared on the sculpture in question. After a moment, one part of the sculpture continued to remain wet. This part, as per the advice of the young man was hit with a breaking the part very easily and from the hollow portion a toad jumped out of the sculpture. Even today one can see the broken sculpture. Thus goes the episode which depicted the greatness of the even young sculpture and their ingenuity in work and their boldness to point out defects in art forms.

This inner sanctum sanctorum of Lord Sri Patteeswarar is believed to have been built by the emperor Karikalachola about 200 years ago. With the central theme, that the lord Sri Patteeswarar with his consort Sri Pachinayagi (Maragadambika in Sanskrit) bestows upon devotes liberation from the cycle of birth and death, perur was known by different names such as Gananapuram, Brahmapuram, Pasumpathipuram, Rajathesabhai, Kalyanapuram, Dhenapuram, Patteeswarar etc., The deity is a Swamyambu, sung by Sri Sundaramurthi Swamigal, one of the 63 Nayanars who was blessed here with a show of cosmic dance of Lord Nataraja, before he protected to mount Kailash along with another Nayanar, Sri Cheraman Perumal. The discretion by various factors, such as frequent invasion of kongunadu ruled by kongu cholas, from 10th century A.D., and by possible action of termites on the palm leaf manuscripts retrieved in Chidambaram. However, the few Thevarams of Sri Sundaramurthi Nayanar and kshetrakovai of Sri Thirunavukkaraas Nayanar, composed by Sri Kanchiappa Munivar in 18th century, perur Sthalapuram, perur puranam, and other scores of books written by scholars and pundits in late times, stand evidence of the immortal fame of Perur and its Temple. It is further believed body that “Gorakka Siddhar” one of the 18 siddha purushas attainted Samadhi at Perur temple.

Sri Maragadambikai.

The goddess in her standing position with Nilotpal flower in her right hand, on the lotus pedestal is a sculpture marvel.[4]

Siva Durga

On the right of the sanctorum there is the Shrine of Siva Durga (Anugraha Durga) facing the Kunchidapada (the lifted feet). Because of this Siva Durga is worshipped as a powerful deity here.

Sri Varadaraja Perumal

The shrine is situated to the left of the sanctum of Sri Pachainayagi. The existence of the load Vishnu in Siva temple is also rarity. The where about of a separate temple for lord Vishnu built be Pandyaking in 8th century A.D., is not known to this day.

Sri Dhandapani

The shrine of Lord Dhandapani on the west outer Praharam was built by Vijayanagara king and was sung in praise in Thirupugauzh by Sri Arunagirinathar

Sri Anjaneyer

On the northern Praharam, there lies the shrine for Sri Anjaneyar built by Zamindar of Uthukuli. The specially of the deity is it made exquisitely carved wood.

Piravapuli

To the south east of the temple of Sri Patteeswarar, who is said to bestow liberation from gate of Births and Deaths, lies the Piravapuli, the Tamarind tree, the seed of which will never perminate when sowed. Likewise, the dung (exctra) of animals like cow will never decay with worms. [5]

I Ravappanai

Behind Sri Pattivinayagar temple on the northern side of South Kailas their lives the Iravappanai, the deathless palm tree, the age of which is believed to be millennium (100 years). Also, to the northest of Sri Pattivinayagar temple, a smaller Siva Temple of Sri Kalaveswarar and Sri Ahikilandeswari, it is to be worshipped as the sage kalava did penance here and vectored over time. Here the gigantic lingam of Lord Kalaveswara shrine in a dark red colour which cannot be possibly seen in any temple.

Monolithic Structures Of The Temple

The literacy works viz Periapuranam , Perur Puranam and Munmmani Kovai sing glory of the temple. The pillar adorned by the lion in seated posture and the Mandapam leading to the abode of Lord Nataraja and his consort were built during 6th century A.D. by the Pallava king Narasinga Potharaya II also called Rajasimha Varman. The fourteen structures carved out the single stones. Each and every sculpture. Is described separately in this book. According to "Velvikudi" inscription a big temple had been built for Lord Vishnu in Perur by a Pandya King, Nedunchziyiyan between 740 A.D and 770 A.D. The where about of this temple in Perur is not known however, the Visnhu sanctorum occupied a place within the Amble shrine.[6]

Teppkulam

In front of the temple there is a Teppakkulam. This Teppakulam is a fine piece of symmetrical steps with 16 angels and 8 corners. The Teppakulam Fetching water is a shortage which passes through the fields. But not this passage and the area are dry, because now a day's water is irrigated with the help of motor facility.

The Teppakulam was reacted during the period of 15th century by Vijayanagar Empire. This constructed by one Madhayan the son of Sankarayan.

The information is carved in the Sixth and sixteenth step. Below the Teppakulam, this Madhayan has built a Shiva Temple called Madahiswaram. Now his temple has already been destroyed and it is being erected now.

Rare Sulptures

The Kanaka sabhai was built during the period between 1625 A.D and by King Alagiri Nayak of Madurai. It has 36 pillars representing 36 principles of Saiva Siddhanta. There are 15 steps at 3 elevated stages with 5 steps each depicting the panchakshara, the five letters of the sacred Manthra "Om Nama Sivaya". The sanctum sanctorum of lord Sri Nataraja has four pillars and a window – the pillars representing Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana Vedas, the windows representing the human systems and also the planets. The four pillars are marvekurly inclined cements so as to pay obeisance to the Lord and his consort. The Mahamandapam contains 32 pillars each an architectural work with very minute carvings. In the middle of mahamandapa. There

are ten pillars, five in each row, made of single stone. Out of the rocks, exquisite sculptures with minute carvings were made, embedded in the pillars. The sculptures are each described below. [7]

Nartanaganapathi

The single stone sculpture shows Lord Ganapathy with his right foot on the ear of his vehicle (vahana), the mouse whose nails are visible individually on the stone.

Aarumuga Subramanyar

His magnificent pose with a pendant on the chest, the structure of the peacock's feather and the fingers on the Lord's feet are an architectural marvel. You can observe that one of the six faces of the Lord is embedded inside the pillar.

Agni Veerabhadra Swamy

The legend records the advent of 16 Veerabhadras to punish Daksha for his insulting Lord Siva. Here Veerabhadra shown with his flashing eyes, his tempered whiskers, the scorpion in his matted hair constitute a magnificent edifice.

Alangattu Kaliamman

The ashamed countenance of Sri Thillai Kali who was vanquished in the cosmic dance by Lord Siva, here are seen from the right side are awesome and magnificent.

Bikshandana Moorthy

The Lord appeared as nude mendicants to curd the arrogance of the sages of Darukavana Goudaodara, the deer and the snakes emanating from the sacrifice surrounded unto Lord Siva. The minuteness of work with the chipset and the dedication of the sculpture have to be wounded.

Yanaiyuri Portha Moorthi

Killing Gajasura, the Lord covered himself with the asura's skin. The muscle strength on the folds of the Lord's leg is marvelous. [8]

Oordhya Thandava Murthy

There are 108 dancing postures of Lord Siva which are preserved by Archaeological department above the sanctum sanctorum of the big temple at Thanjavur of these postures the Oortha Thandava pose is the best. The raising of the right foot to pick the flower from the own and giving it by the left hand again to the Gown indicates an intrinsic workmanship. The five heated Brahma watching the dance, Lord Vishnu's best with his hands and Karaikkal Ammaiyar's devotion shows splendid master piece. [9]

Agora Veerabhadar

Imposing Agora Veerabhadra (after destroying Daksha's Yagna) with sword on the right and other weapons immaculately carved are a feast to the eyes.

Other Temples and Festivals

There are temples linked to the Sri Patteeswarar temple in its vicinity. The Patti Vinayagar temple is a unique temple where Lord Vinayaga is seated on a pond of poison to protect people from evils and ill – health. The festivals of Sri Patteeswarar are conducted only after obtaining a formal permission from Lord Vinayaga who is said to be very powerful benefactor.

Other temple includes Vada Kailayam, the Kailayam, kalavesaram dedicated to Lord Kalaswarar (Arasammbalavanar in Tamil) and Sri Akilandeswari, Azhagiya chitrambalam built by Thillai Murvayiravar the behest of Sri Sundaramurthy Swamigal, Madheswaram on the leads of the tank in the east, of the main temple, and "Adhimoorkamman" temple to the west of the temple.

There are festivals every month of the year dedicated to the Nayanmars, besides Abishekams and special Pujas to Lord Natraraja, Aaruthradarshan, Brahmotsavam are the special festivals. There are several endowments for the festive occasions including one instructed by our president Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Muslims like Tipu Sultan and Hyder Ali also patronage temple.[10]

Archaeological Evidence and Epigraphical Inscription

Perur and its surrounds, were part Arai nadu ruled by kongu kings, during periods up to 10th century A.D. prior to this, part of Tamilnadu had made links with Roman Empire, as by the discovery of Roman coins dating back to 44 BC. To 54 A.D. discovered during archeological survey on the banks of the river Noyyal.

This place was ruled by Chola king's 10th century A.D. Pandya kings in 12th century and later by Hoysala Kings, Vijayanagar kings Mysore Kings, Hyder Ali Khan and Tipu Sultan till 1792 A.D. The Muslim rules patronized the temple of Lord Patteeswarar by earmarking substantial fund for the upkeep of the temple. In the year 1799 the British rulers took over from the Muslim chief taints, the administration of the Perur temple.

Karikala Chola built the Garba graham of Lord Patteeswarar 2000 years ago. In his name late epigraphical inscriptions describing mostly donations to the temple for conducing Pooja and festivals. In the name of Vikrama Chola there are 68 such inscription and in the name of them Rajendra Chola there are 141 inscriptions.

Apart from the Religions, historical and cultural details given above, it is a matter of immense pride that Muslims like Tipu sultan and Christians in the British rule also patronized this temple. Denoting communal harmony.

Fairs And Festival

Following are some of the important festivals celebrated in Perur

- January : Aruthra Dharisanam
- March and April : Annual car Festival
- Tamil New Year's Day
- Aadi Pathinettu
- Aadi And Thai Ammavasai
- Kiruthigai
- Margazhi Thirvathirai etc

There is large concourse of pilgrims i.e. more than a lake visit during annual car festival besides a regular stream all-round the year. Pilgrims from all over the state, especially Kerala, visit this place regularly.

'Panguni Uthiram' is the main festival celebrated for 10 days. Each day lord Shiva, sakthi, Ganesh and Murugan shower their blessings on the 5th day Rishabha Vahanam festival place.

On the 7th day Shiva and Paravathi are taken to a decorated big chariot and ceremonial possession is watched with religious enthusiasm.

On the 10th day lord Shiva danced as Nataraja for Brahama, Vishnu, and give Mukthi to the human being who is worshipping the dance.

These are main festivals celebrated by this temple as also those celebrated during the full-on day. Pradosham, 6 times Pooja, Nattru Utasavam, Thai Pusam etc., are these actions attracting very big crowds of people. Let the grace of Lord 'Sri Patteeswarar and Sri Moogadambikai be showered on all devotes who through to this temple. [11]

Conclusion

An ordinary devotes does not have as much behave and hence, it is imperative that peoplehave Darshan in a spiritually correct manner. Project contains an overview of the basic belief's religion information about the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, Brahma, Shiva Religion has met the challenge of their religions, primarily, by absorbing them at their practices and belief into mainstream of Hindu religions expression.

This is the most important and valuable specially of Hinduism that it has not closed itself inside any contours, but is the realistic representation of the limitedness's of knowledge and experience.

The arts reflect the society that creates them. Nowhere is this truer than in the case of the ancient Greeks. Through their temples, sculptures, and pottery, the Greeks incorporated a fundamental principle of their culture after. To the Greeks, after meant excellence and reaching one's full potential.

Ancient Greek art emphasized the importance and accomplishments of human begin. Even though much of Greek art was meant to honor the gods, those very gods were created in the image of humans.

Architecture is the art that provide us the physical environment we live in. it is a deep expression of human civilization in a particular era and it will endure and outlive us in forms of moments the future generations will study and strive to understand. All architects

represent a great force in our society because architecture is as well an expression of the strengths of the society as well as their technological progress. Architecture is a form of visual art that creates permanent works.

Our nation is worldly known as "the country of heritage sites". We have so many national heritages in our country which have been the source of attraction of many foreigners these days. Our unique art, craft and architecture are famous all over the globe. Ancient temples, stapes, monuments, buildings, rest houses, taps, and gardens are the main assets of national heritage sites.

- We should make the surroundings of our temple, sputa, and monasteries, neat and clean.
- Disposing of household garbage and scraps near to heritage area should be strictly prohibited.
- We should plant trees around such place and maintain greenery all over.

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The Executives of the Cholas as Gleaned From Epigraphs at Tiruvallam

M. Anandhan[1] and Dr.B.Rahamedsha[2]

Introduction

Temples were the pivots of all human activities in ancient and mediaeval Tamilaham. Temples occupied a very important place in the social, economic, religious and cultural life of the Tamils. Like KINGS, chieftains, the Udankuttatars, the ministers which include Perundram, were corresponded to the contemporary cabinet ministers of India and Sirudaram,corresponded to the contemporary ministers of state were also made liberal contributions and endowments for the development of the temples. The Cholas, the ardent Saivites followed the art of erecting structural temples from eleventh century onwards. The members of the royal families including Perundram administrative officials also played a prominent role in temple constructions, renovations, enlargement, patronisation and development of the temple. Enormous gifts were offered to irrespective of the temples from Perundram of the administrative authority

Endowments of Villages

Gift of Villages, lands were common gifts of ruler and higher officials particularly by the Perundram officials. These lands donated to the temples were either exempted from tax or made tax free by these officials. Epigraphs show the administrative officials particularly Perundram officials were endowed for the development

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of the temple through their liberal gifts and administrative supports. For illustration a Tamil, Pallava Inscription1 found on the north wall of the mahamandapa in the Bilvanatheshwara temple at Thiruvallam of Pallava, Vijaya Nandivikramavarman is who none other than Nandivarman III Pallava in his seventeenth regnal year A.D. 863., states that request of MavaliVanarayan alias Vikramadita Vanarayan, who may be identified with the Bana chief, Bana Vidyadhara (c A.D. 850-95)., a gift of the village of Videlvidugu Vikramaditta chaturvedimangalam, 2 which was formed by clubbing together Amarunrimangalam, a devadana3 of the Paramesvara temple at Tikkalivallam the villages Aimbuni and Vilattur, was granted to the above temple, by the order of Kadupatti Tamil Apperarayan. Probably same as Videlvidugu Kadupatti AP-Praraiyanalso mentioned in the Bahur plates of Nripatungavarman4. The sabha of the granted village was obliged to pay the 2,000 kadi of paddy and 20 kalanju5 of gold, which had been paid by the village of Amarungimangalam formerly to God Paramesvara of Tikkalivallam. The paddy and gold were to be used for sacred food offerings, feeding the Sivabrahmanas beating thedrumers, supplying flowers for the god, the flower suppliers and singing the Tiruppadiyam6, the singers., The inscription also furnishes the earliest mention of Tiruppadiam, the singers, burning of perpetual lamps, the employers, anointing the idol, the employers, burning incense, the employers, making repairs, the employers, etc., in the temple. From this it is clear that the three villages and its revenue generation were given as salary to the temple employers namely the Sivabrahmanas, 7 the drummers, the flower suppliers, the singers, the employers connected with ritualistic daily worship of the deitymain of this temple. Further the temple has large number of ritualistic employers as well as administrative staff. All the three villages mentioned above and Tikkalivallam were situated in Miyagunadu, of Paduvurkkottam.8 Hence, temples proved to be the center of all sections of the society and employment platform. These activities namely landlord, employer and consumer of goods and services as bank,educational center, feeding center, museum, hospital and theatre through the endowments of perundram9 the higher administrative and executive officialsof the state. In short, as a nucleus, the endowments of the temple by Perundram made to gathered round by the public themselves all that was best in the arts of civilized existence, and regulated them with humanness borne of the spirit of Dharma.

Gift of Lands

Thus the Perundram was the hub of the contemporary administrative annuals of the state In addition to village gifts, the gift of Land was common gifts of higher officials particularly by the Perundram10 officials. The lands donated to the temples were either exempted from tax or made tax free by these officials of hierarchy. The epigraphs show that the administrative officials were improved the development of the temple through their liberal endowments and administration. For illustration, an Tamil. Chola Inscription,11 found on the north wall of the shrine, Rajakesarivarman, who destroyed the ships at Kandalur Salai is none other than Rajaraja I Chola in his tenth regnal year A.D. 995. Records a gift of land by Paraman Kunjaramallan alias Rajasikhamani Pallavaraiyan, the headman of Kurukadi after purchasing it from the residents of Vanapuram, modern Banavaram. The gift was to provide for the maintenance of the conductors and servants of the sribali12 in the temple of Tiruttikkalialvar at Tikkalivallam in Miyagunadu, of Paduvurkottam. Another Tamil, Chola Inscription, 13 found on the south wall of the central shrine in the same temple of RajendraCholadeva is none other than Rajendra I Chola, in his twenty sixth regal year A.D.1038, refers to the gift of gold for the sacred string, the rali14 and the ear ornaments, the mudravatarum15 by the officer, Mandaikilar Marataman Nilaiyar alias Nittavinoda Muvendavelar to the image of the consort of Panmahesvara Vitankar set up or installed by him, and to the gift of land to the image of Pasupatamurti for sribali16 and for offerings. The record mentions the kudinjaikkal17 equal in fineness to the madurantakanadevan madai18 The inscription refers the irrigation of the contemporary period19 Another Tamil, much damaged Chola Inscription20, found in the same place. Parakesarivarman alias Rajendra Chola deva is

none other than Rajendra II Chola, in his tenth regnal year A.D. 1062., begins with the historical introduction Tirumaruviya, etc., records that a gift of land and certain special rights were given to a Sivabrahmana Gautaman Ramadeva Bhattan and his family by the Tiruvallam assembly for conducting the worship of the images of Cholakerala Vitankar alias Tribhuvana Sundara, his consort and the Pillaiyar set up or installed in the temple of Mahadeva of Tiruvallam by the assembly of Tiruvalla in Karaivali, of Perumbanappadi in Jayangonda cholamandalam.21 Another Tamil, Chola Inscription22, found on the north wall of the central shrine in the same temple is none other than Rajendra II Chola, in his unknown regal year A.D., 1052. registers a gift of land by purchase by the officer Alatturudaiyar Divakaraninran Nambiyar alias Vanavan Muvendavelar. Since the officer Divakaran Nambiyar alias VagavanMuvendavejar of Alattor is also found mentioned in another record above dated in the 4th year of Rajendra II Chola, this record may be assigned to the same King for conducting a festival in Margali and another in PanguniUttiram and also for maintaining a feeding house for the devotees in the temple of TiruvallamUdaiyar.23 Another Tamil, damaged Chola Inscription24, found on the east wall of the mandapa, right of entrance, in front of the central shrine in the same temple. KulottungaCholadeva, who abolished the tolls is none other than Kulottunga I Chola, in his fortieth renal year A.D., 1110., Seems to record a gift of land by previous purchase from the great assembly of Tiruvallam by Rajasekhara Mavendavelan for feeding worshippers, the andargal. 25 Ritualistic Services and Temple Servants Perundram, 26the important administrative officials also played a vital role to look after the management of the temple, conducting religious ritualistic services, maintaining temple servants and managing temple property and these were common phenomenon existed in the contemporary period. Then there were any serious problems, the King along with Perundram27 the advisory body, which consist of high officials interfered and settled the issues amicably. Thus, the Perundram28 officials played a vital role not only in state administration but also in temple administration.

Maintenance of Law and Order

The King was more concerned about the welfare of his subjects. With the emergence of temple cities, the temples became a centre for brisk human activity. Hence, the administration of the temple was on the pattern of political administrative institutions during the medieval period held responsible to keep law and order through the earnest assistance of the Perundram29 officials. Thus this paper also portrays light on Perundram30 of Udankuttatars31 , the minister's role on the earnest service for development of the temples Regarding Political Administration, the central administration was in the hands of the ruler and he ruled over an extensive empire. As the head of the state, the King enjoyed enormous powers, but he was a benevolent despot the people considered him the representative of God on the earth. Thus, the Cholas rulers administered their extensive kingdoms with the assistance of his ministers. The ministry was an advisory body with hierarchical officials. In this connection the officials Perundram32 played a vital role in the administration of the state and the smallest unit of temple administration as well. This earnest assistance of the Perundram33 supported the rulers and thus, the council of ministers and other high officials maintained a good administration. So, the ministers were called Udankuttatars,34 the advisory body, which consisted of Perundram35 and Sirudaram36officials.

Autonomy to the Temple

As the Kings were patrons of temple culture, their control of temple affairs was assisted by Perundram officials more custodial rather than managerial. It was held that their policy was one of non-interference in the internal affairs of the temples.38It indicates that they granted more autonomy to temple administration. They interfered only, when their attention was drawn to certain problems, which needed royal intervention through the earnest administrative support rendered by Perundram officials.

The State acted as the Temple Custodian rather than as Manager

That was why, it is surmised that the powers and functions of the state were custodial rather than

regulative, magi co-ritualistic rather than managerial.39 Non-interference in the internal affairs means that the state acted as the custodian rather than as manager. In other words, the rulers appear to have enjoyed certain supervisory control over the temple affairs, that too in some peculiar situations.

Abiding the local Customs, Conventions and Traditions

Even then, the King was held responsible for whatever that happened in the realm,40 without royal support, temples could not flourish on their own limited resources. Therefore, the Kings with the assistance ofPerundram officials were expected to have their supervisory control over the affairs of the temples for their smooth functioning and increasing the revenue sources in order to meet out the essential need, source of income to this temple. Royal patronage tended to increase in tune with the expansion of temples and developed the income sources through their multifarious activities and functions. Even if the Perundram officials had extended their influence over temples, it was by way of their hereditary right to protect the land and the peoples by abiding the local customs, conventions and traditions. For illustration a Tamil, Inscription of Chola, found on the west and south walls of the central shrine in the Tiruvallam, Bilvanatheswara temple of Rajakesarivarman alias Rajarajadeva is none other than Rajaraja I Chola, in his twenty second regnal year A.D. 1007 refers to an increase of the panchavara, the relief measures of paddy by the assembly of Mandiram alias Jaymeru Srikaranamangalam, as a devadana, the gift of land to the temple servants of Tuynadu and agreed to pay to the devakanmis, the servants of the temple at Tiruttikkalivallam in Miyaṟunadu, of Paduvurkottam. The record also mentions one Irayiravan Pallavan alias Mummudichola Posar, on this officer, who was the Trustee of the Tiruvallam temple had managed to increase the existing income of paddy, by careful audit, through additional income of paddy as measured by ennalikkal, 41 the surveyors equal to the Choliyam, 42the assessment official and which was collected from the committee in charge of the devadana lands of Maniram, the lord of Araisur and officer belonging to the Perundram, the important administrative officers of the Cholas existed during the reign of Rajarajadeva, help to increase the panchavara43, the revenue of the temple to meet out the requirements of the devakanmis44, the temple other officials. From this it is clear that through the Perundram officials and their careful administration the temple empowers to increase the regular income through the audit by the surveyor and assessment officials. Thus, through their efficient administration the temple increased the revenue income source to meet the challenges of the contemporary times.45

Revenue Generation through various Taxes

This is evident from the Perundram officials extensive land endowments, the generous tax concessions and other charitable activities that they had initiated. With the multiplicity of temple functionaries and the increase in their economic activities, with vast landed property and endowments For instance, a Tamil, Inscription of Chola, found on the north wall the of Nakulesvara shrine in the Bilvanatheswara temple Parakesarivarman alias Sri RajendraCholadeva is none other than Rajendra I Chola, in his fourth regnal year A.D. 1016. records a sale of 2,000 kuli46 of land made tax free by the maha sabha47 of Tiyakkalivallam in Miyapunadu, of Paduvirkottam in Jayangonda cholamandalam in return for 50 kasu, the gold coins received from Irayiravan Pallavaraiyag, a Perundram, the administrative officer of the King, to God Rajarajitvaramudaiyar Chandesvaradevar is none other than Lord Chandikeshwar, whose image was installed by the same Perundram officer in the pragara of the temple premise. Thus, the image of Lord Chandesvara was installed in the temple premise by the Perundram official denotes the development of the temple through the expansion of the small shrine temple premise was a common phenomenon existed during the time of Rajendra I Chola and it also regarded as dharma of the contemporary age. Besides several taxes were exempted from the temple lands by the afforced official to increase revenue source of the temple. Among the taxes exempted were nirkkiyvilai, the uncultivated barren tax, ugappar pon, 48 the land tax through random assessment and urpodukudimai, the village public tax. From this it is clear that the three taxes namely nirkkiy

vilai,49 ugapparpon and urpadukudimai,50were existed during the time of Rajendra I Chola. With the multiplicity of temple functionaries and the increase in their economic activities, with vast landed property and endowments called devadanas and the grand of remuneration to the servants, there were occasions, when disputes arose in temples.51 These disputes were referred to the King as he was the supreme authority of the state and he amicably settled the disputes with the earnest assistance of Perundram officials. The concluding part states that the Kings extended their supervisory control over temples through their ministers, including Perundram and Sirudram officials52 royal officials, village assemblies and temple staff to watch the activities of these autonomous institutions, the rulers made frequent tours.53 During the royal tours, the rulers paid visits to the temples, held enquiries about their problems, if any and tried to solve them immediately. In policy making, they consulted their officials including Perundram and Sirundram officials and took decisions. 54These shows that the Kings of medieval Tamil Country had not only custodial powers, but also supervisory powers in matters relating to temple administration. Thus, this Paper is made here about the development of the temple need for, the nature and the impact of royal control with earnest support of Perundram officials of Chola Kings on temple

Conclusion

The above study makes it clear that Bilvanatheswara temple, Tiruvallam, plays a significant role in the political and cultural life of the Tamils in general and the people of that town in particular. Tiruvall is one of the prominent town of Vellore District. This town is encircled with a vast stretch of paddy fields and other agricultural lands. This land of religious significance offered settlements to people of diverse communities and religious affiliation. However, this town is mostly free from communal unrest.

Tiruvallam due to its fertility and strategic location, became a vicissitudes of fortune among various dynasties in the end of the medieval period. As such, we come to know from records that this area came under the Pallavas and the Cholas. However, the Banas respective rulers envied one with the other and attempted to introduce various welfare measures including religious patronage. Consequently, all the rulers of different dynasties endowed profusely to maintain the divinity of the Bilvanatheswara temple, which in course left an everlasting legacy in the minds of the Saiva devotees of all ages to come.

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Empire and Experiment-Historiography of Colonial Science and Technology in Tamil Nadu

Prof. T. Asokan

Honourable General President of the Thirty-Second Annual Session of the Tamil Nadu History Congress, distinguished General Secretary, esteemed Office Bearers, respected professors, and dear friends. It gives me immense pleasure to extend my warm greetings to you all at this gathering, held under the auspices of the Department of History and Tourism, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore. At the very outset, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Tamil Nadu History Congress for selecting me as the Sectional President of the Historiography Session. I regard this responsibility as a great honour and privilege bestowed upon me. On this occasion, I would like to share my reflections on Colonial Science and Technology in Tamil Nadu.

Introduction

The craft of history has branched into a multitude of specialised fields, each offering a distinctive perspective to interpret the human past. Traditional narratives, often focused on the state and power, gave priority to political history, recording the rise and fall of empires and the acts of great men. Parallel to the political narratives, military history examined the strategies and conflicts, shaping regional and national identities. However, the historical narrative witnessed a significant paradigm shift focusing on the lives of the common people, with the emergence of social history. Moreover, it was followed by the system of faith, which brought forth cultural history. Likewise, the economic history emphasised the trade structure, manufacture, and wealth distribution, uncovering the methods of exploitation and alteration of the countries.1

Nevertheless, in this juncture, the history of science and technology occupied a peripheral space within the historical mainstream.2 It was often treated as a specialised sub-discipline, concerned with the narratives of great scientific and technological innovations, primarily situated in the West. The most fundamental scientific question in the discipline of science and technology would be "how did this discovery happen?" Nonetheless, when analysing science and technology, the ultimate question would be "what role did this scientific discovery or technology play in influencing societies, economies, and

the relationship between the countries?" Furthermore, with the emergence of postmodernism and postcolonial perspectives, the analysis of science and technology began to change. For instance, scholars like Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer. in their work Leviathan and the Air-Pump (1985). argued that scientific facts are not simply discovered but constructed through social processes, cooperation, and conflict.3 Consequently, this perspective opened the door to examining science as a social and cultural activity.

Hence, focusing on the colonial era in the Indian subcontinent, the political history of the British East Indian Company, and their economic exploitation through drain of wealth and deindustrialisation, administrative changes, and education policies have been extensively documented.4

Contrarily, the importance of science and technology as a principal instrument of colonial power received less systematic attention when compared with the previous areas. Colonial science has often been regarded as a dependent form of science, where curiosity-oriented research in pure science was largely superseded by a more result-oriented focus on applied

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science.5 Some scholars, such as Dharampal, Deepak Kumar, David Arnold, Irfan Habib, G. Kuppuram, and O.P. Jaggi, have made significant contributions; nevertheless, the field demands deeper exploration. For instance, a search on the Shodhganga repository indicates that there are only eight theses related to Science and Technology in Colonial Tamil Nadu, which further proves the imbalance. Hence, this paper seeks to address this specific historiographical gap. Moreover, this article argues that colonial science in India, in general, and Tamil Nadu in particular, was not simply imitative but established a disputed environment where imperial power and indigenous agency intermingled to shape the foundations of modern Indian science. In addition, this investigation not only narrates colonial science and technology but also explores the debates that shaped the understanding of this field, and analyses how modern India was shaped through science and technology, besides battles and treaties.

European Background: Renaissance, Trade, and the Scientific Revolution

Principally, prior to evaluating the character of science and technology in colonial India, it is vital to comprehend the background, which started in Europe with the "Scientific Revolution." Moreover, this revolution framed Europe as the predecessor of rational thought and categorised other civilisations, including India, as passive beneficiaries. This Eurocentric worldview justified the colonial character by framing it not as colonial exploitation, rather as the civilising mission. Specifically, this European transformation was greatly shaped by a crucial event in history, i.e., the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453 AD.6 This fall operated as a catalyst that altered Europe's economic, political, and cultural paths. For instance, economically, it detached conventional overland trade routes to the markets of the East. As a result, it created an urgent need for the European powers, like Portugal and Spain, to find new maritime pathways. Consequently, this desperate quest for access to spices directly fueled the Age of Discovery, encouraging state investment in shipbuilding, navigational technology, and cartography.7

Specifically, European voyages in the late 15th century opened direct sea routes to Asia and the Americas, reorganised the global trade patterns and shifted the economic focus from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic world. Besides geographical, this transformation fundamentally altered the structure of European economies. The arrival of valuable metals from the Americas restructured both markets and social relations. Consequently, the old feudal order that was deep-rooted in agriculture and restricted exchange converted to a monetised economy where land, labour, and credit occupied the major determining factors. Furthermore, the development of Maritime trade networks interconnected Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas into the modern world-system, which was a capitalist economy driven by global interdependence. Simultaneously, this expansion of trade networks automatically created the demand for navigational technologies, precise cartography, and the development of ship designs, altogether stimulating scientific inquiry. As a result, the economic motivations of the European countries were deeply Intertwined with the progress of scientific and technical knowledge.

Parallel to the progress of long-distance trade was the development of modem banking and financial Institutions. Italian city-states such as Florence, Venice, and Genoa pioneered banking practices, which renovated the economic landscape of the European continent. For Instance, the Medici family of Florence developed sophisticated Instruments like bills of exchange and Introduced double-entry bookkeeping that allowed merchants to conduct business across vast distances with limited risk.8

Then, by the 16th century, the financial epicentre had moved to cities like Antwerp and Amsterdam, where early stock exchanges facilitated investment in transoceanic projects. In addition, these establishments, besides funding the capital for maritime explorations, also supported military campaigns and scientific patronage. Specifically, wealth earned through business ventures and banking sponsored universities, libraries, and laboratories, assisting the dissemination of knowledge to society. As a result, capitalism and

scientific progress were not separate phenomena but mutually reinforcing processes.

Subsequently, this transformation was strengthened by numerous technological and scientific breakthroughs. For instance, Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the printing press in 1450 revolutionised the transmission of knowledge.9 Maps, pamphlets, and printed books simplified the rapid dissemination of information and vanished the dominance of knowledge by upper-class elites. Hence, the printing press became a pivotal agent of cultural change, promoting the regulation of texts and creating a common intellectual community across Europe.

Likewise, when concentrated on the Innovation related to navigation and exploration, the magnetic compass, astrolabe, and cross-staff, combined with advancements In shipbuilding techniques, encouraged European sailors to cross oceans with exceptional self-reliance. Moreover, these practical achievements also stimulated theoretical developments. For instance, accurate mapping automatically required the need for Improved mathematical 4'techniques. Similarly, longer voyages necessitated a better understanding of astronomy for celestial navigation. In short, technology-motivated scientific inquiry, and vice versa. For case in point, the Copernican Revolution, initiated by Nicolaus Copernicus's De mvolutionibusorbiumcoelestium (1543), characterised this interdependence. His heliocentric theory progressively challenged and weakened the geocentric worldview supported by the Church.10 Here, this progress should not be considered as an isolated intellectual event; rather, it should be considered as a part of a broader cultural movement where empirical observation and mathematical reasoning gained superiority over the religious code of belief.

Scientific Institutions and Intellectual Shifts in Europe

Moreover, the order of Medieval Europe, dominated by the Church, faced escalating encounters. The Renaissance humanism of the 15th century supported critical inquiry, and the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century broke the religious unity of Christendom, and provoked a culture of questioning rather than merely accepting in the name of religion.11 As a result, the modern concept of nationalism began to emerge, and the development in science and technology linked to this budding national identity transformed the identity into prestige. In addition, this nationalistic authority led to the establishment of state-sponsored scientific institutions, such as the Royal Society in London in 1660 and the Academie des Sciences in Paris in 1666.12 Specifically, they concentrated on refining navigation, manufacturing, agriculture, and medicine for the benefit of the state. Subsequently, by the 17th and 18th centuries, modern science evolved into an important instrument of the nation-state, incorporated with the paradigm of Europeanism and competitive nationalism. This change in the scientific methodologies transformed the scientists and explorers into agents of the colonial empire. Because, in the ideological framework for colonial science, the systematic knowledge of a territory was the requirement for economic exploitation of the country and also to control politically, which was firmly established long before its application on the Indian subcontinent.

Since Europe emerged from the intellectual restrictions of the medieval period, the incorporation of humanist principles into scientific inquiry changed both the purpose and the practice of knowledge-making. Moreover, this shift was characterised by an emphasis on critical reasoning and empirical observation, followed by practical application. Consequently, the changes initiated in 15th- and 16th-century Europe echoed across disciplines, such as medicine, astronomy, and natural history. Particularly, the movement of the Renaissance supported the dignity of man, objectivity, and the pursuit of knowledge for human progress. Moreover, Renaissance literature, through works of thinkers such as Erasmus, Thomas More, and Montaigne, encouraged the cultivation of moral and intellectual values, critical thinking, and the questioning of established authorities.13 In this intellectual circumstance, science gradually occupied the space, assuming a secular purpose for understanding and improving human existence.

As a result, the early modern period observed a shift toward experimentation. For instance, Francis Bacon's NovumOrganum (1620) provided a methodological strategy and stimulated the need for systematic observation as the foundation for knowledge.14 Moreover, his approach correlated with the purposes of developing nation-states, supporting technological progress. Particularly, Galileo Galilei exemplified the experimental essence of this age. Even though the telescope was invented by the Dutch spectacle-maker Hans Lippershey in 1608, Galileo used it for astronomical observations of celestial bodies, and confronted the Ptolemaic cosmology and provided empirical support for the Copernican system." More importantly, Galileo's systematic experiments with motion laid the basics of modern mechanics, showing that mathematical reasoning integrated with organised observation could yield universal laws.

Medicine, Natural History, and the Expansion of Colonial Knowledge

Next, in the field of the medical sciences also, the Renaissance transitioned from textual to empirical practice. For instance, Andreas Vesalius's De humanicorporisfabrica (On the Fabric of the Human Body) In 1543 made a turning point in anatomical knowledge. By following the methodology of conducting dissections, Vesalius exposed inaccuracies in Galenic anatomy that dominated European medicine for many decades. In addition, his work was revolutionary not only because of its empirical content but also for its methodology, i.e., direct analysis of the human body.16ln addition, this approach was further progressed by William Harvey's discovery of the circulation of blood, published in De motucordis (An Anatomical Exercise on the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Animals) in 1628. Based on quantitative measurement, Harvey's findings demonstrated the juxtaposition of empirical observation with mathematical reasoning. 17As a result, these medical developments had profound social significances, such as restructured medical education, improved surgical practice, and progressively developed public health. Following this, such parallel transformations also occurred in botany, combined with the expanding colonial horizons of Europe. Moreover, the systematic cataloguing of plants and the study of their medicinal properties were not merely academic pursuits; rather, they were integral to the economic and political ambition of the colonial empire. As historian LondaSchiebinger, in her work Plants and Empire-Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World (2004), presented that the expedition for exotic plants and medicinal knowledge in the colonies became a significant feature of European scientific enterprise in the later years.18

Colonial Science in India: The East India Company and Early Institutions

The intellectual revolution and scientific innovations of early modern Europe did not remain confined to the continent. They travelled along maritime routes— alongside spices, silver, and textiles—and became entangled with global commerce and imperial authority. In the Indian subcontinent, the English East India Company, chartered in 1600, emerged as a key conduit for the transmission of Western scientific practices. Initially founded for trade, the Company soon recognised the strategic «value of scientific knowledge: cartography for territorial control, astronomy for navigation, and medicine for sustaining European personnel in unfamiliar climates.

Institutions such as the Calcutta Botanical Garden (established in the late 18th century) and medical colleges modelled on European curricula exemplify the transplantation of scientific infrastructure onto colonial Indian soil.19 Concomitantly, it should be remembered that these initiatives acted as instruments for economic extraction and political domination.

Contrarily, they also simplified complex processes of intellectual exchange, as Indian practitioners engaged with, adapted, and sometimes repelled European scientific norms. However, unlike the early modern European environment, where science habitually pursued intellectual curiosity, colonial science was predominantly utilitarian in nature. Specifically, it functioned as a tool of governance, facilitating the extraction of resources and the assertion of political

authority. Moreover, the institutionalisation of science— through surveys, botanical gardens, observatories, and educational reforms— established the backbone of this enterprise. Connecting this, the subsequent section will focus on the mapping, management of natural resources, medicine and education, which publicised the scientific norms of the Western countries in the Indian subcontinent.

Mapping, Surveys, and the Control of Space

Primarily, mapping was not merely a cartographic exercise; rather, it was a declaration of autonomy. From the late eighteenth century, the British administration focused on scientific surveys envisioned to make India into a governable space, and the most ambitious project was the Great Trigonometrical Survey (GTS), launched in 1802 and completed in 1871. Significantly, this survey followed advanced mathematical techniques and used heavyweight theodolites to measure baselines and triangulate regions.20 Simultaneously, it must be recalled that this trigonometrical survey was the novation of Colonel William Lambton, whose meticulous measurements laid the groundwork for the initiative. However, after Lambton died in 1823, leadership passed to Sir George Everest, under whose supervision the survey accomplished technical sophistication. Furthermore, the naming of the world's highest peak as Mount Everest in his honour exhibited his contribution in this field.21 Specifically, these surveys were not merely scientific exercises, but they served the administrative objectives such as fixing revenue boundaries, planning for railways, and military movement. Similarly, parallel to the Trigonometrical survey, revenue surveys and mapping projects infiltrated the village level, which regulated land measurements, evaluated productivity, and facilitated taxation. In short, these triangulation lines turned out to be the skeleton upon which the colonial rule established its governance.

Parallel to the development of mapping, the cataloguing of nature was also developed in the Colonial era. For instance, in 1787, the Calcutta Botanical Garden was founded under the support of the East India Company, which functioned both as a site of scientific research and a mechanism of monetary policy. Moreover, the initial instruction of the garden was the methodical investigation of indigenous and exotic plants for commercial exploitation. The movement of tea from China represented how botanical science assisted the policy of the imperial governments. Moreover, it should be noted that these efforts were not only botanical interests, but rather they were planned involvements, which reformed the agrarian structure and global economy. In relation to this logic, in 1851, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) was established in Calcutta (now Kolkata).22 Mostly tasked with finding coal deposits, iron ore, and other minerals, the GSI provided valuable inputs for the railway system and nascent industries. As a result, these surveys converted the natural resource into an instrument of profit and progress.

Furthermore, in the space of colonial knowledge, language and archaeology occupied a significant spot. William Jones, through the Asiatic Society of Bengal, founded in 1784, initiated the study of Sanskrit and comparative philology, focusing on India's past within the European categorisation of history.23Similarly, James Prinsep's decipherment of the Brahmi script in the 1830s unlocked new understandings of Ashokan inscriptions using material evidence. Above all, the establishment of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1861 institutionalised the scientific study of monuments, inscriptions, and antiquities. Like surveys and railways, colonial archaeology was deeply tied to governance; at the same time, these initiatives encouraged Indian intellectuals to retrieve their past legacy.

Medicine, Health, and the Colonial Body

If surveys regulated the landscape, medicine, on the other hand, western medicine sought to regulate medical practices followed in the nation. For instance, the introduction of Western medical education through institutions such as the Calcutta Medical College, established in 1835, shifted the direction of the health policy of the Colonial era. Established under the Anglicist educational schema, the college taught Indian students in European clinical methods, shifting

indigenous systems like Ayurveda and Unani.24 More importantly, this progress created a literate class with medical knowledge, facilitating the colonial objectives. Later, these medical interventions extended beyond the boundaries of the institutes to the public, such as vaccination campaigns against smallpox, sanitary reforms, and control measures while dealing with epidemic diseases. David Arnold, in his work, Colonizing the Body, argued that these processes were not applications of scientific knowledge, but rather acted as instruments for bio-political control, strengthening hierarchies and legalising the authority of the colonial state.25 Accordingly, in the development of colonial science in the Indian subcontinent, astronomy occupied a dominant spot in navigation, survey, and timekeeping. The establishment of Madras Observatory, in 1792 at St. George's Fort and later moved to St. Thomas Mount, Chennai, demonstrates this utilitarian direction.26 Particularly, the observatory sponsored the process of refining data for the survey and retaining precise time signals for naval movement, which later linked India to metropolitan centres of calculation in Greenwich and Paris

Infrastructure, Technology, and Empire

In addition to surveys, botanical gardens, and educational institutes, the British colonial empire depended on infrastructural technologies, which restructured the landscape of the Indian subcontinent and also changed the forms of administration. These technologies included railways, telegraph and postal networks, irrigation and canal systems, and military systems, which were not neutral mechanisms of progress, however judiciously installed the methods of imperialism. The prime objectives were the extraction of natural resources, maintaining the internal order and safeguarding the paramountry of the imperial government. Nonetheless, it should be remembered that they also created social, cultural, and economic consequences.

For instance, the railways, usually noted in the colonial discussion as the symbol of modernism. The first railway line installed between Bombay and Thane, in 1853, was renowned as a progress, but it clearly prioritised the interests of the colonial government, which cherished ports than the people.27 The succeeding extension of railway lines from Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras guaranteed that raw materials from the native lands were transported to coastal areas to facilitate the export to Britain. Moreover, by 1901, this network had overextended to 25,000 miles. Nevertheless, the ultimate purpose was connecting the Indian resources to the imperial markets rather than focusing on the progress of the nation. Consequently, the railway assisted the mobility of the military troops, which enabled the colonial administrators to control the resistance against them quickly. However, from another perspective, scholars validated that railways reduced transportation costs, assimilated agricultural markets, and also stabilised prices during the time of scarcities, which significantly hampered the effects of famine. Meanwhile, it should be remembered that the same railway tracks that carried grains also carried the raw materials from the village to the foreign empire for profits, which once again proved the dual nature of the growth of railways. If railways simplified transportation, telegraphs enhanced communication. In the first part of the 19m century, the work of William O'Shaughnessy advanced into a network connecting Calcutta to Bombay, Agra, Madras, and also to London with the submarine cables.28 By the 1870s, messages that took weeks to reach in the earlier time became possible to transmit in minutes, which aided the colonial state in observing disorders, synchronising the movements of the military for effective control.

Most importantly, the rebellion of 1857 proved the technological supremacy of the colonial government. British officers communicated urgent messages, which effectively assisted them in suppressing the insurgency. The telegraph, therefore, exemplified the technology of surveillance, designed to compress distance and consolidate authority. Likewise, the postal service simplified not only administrative communication but also commercial exchange. However, during the twentieth century, Indian freedom fighters used the same technologies for coordinating protests, boycotts, and also for meeting across regions. Hence, it can be determined that the medium used by

the colonial administrators to strengthen their rule in the Indian subcontinent also paved the way for anti-colonial awareness of the people.

Then, in connection with agriculture, the colonial state capitalized selectively in irrigation and canal projects, with revenue being the objective. When compared with the investments spent on railways, expenditure on canals was less. Concomitantly, the undertaken projects, including the Ganga Canal, theSirhind Canal, and the Punjab, provided good results. Moreover, these schemes stretched cultivation into arid regions and produced new agrarian boundaries. For instance, in Punjab, canal colonies emerged, which led the peasants from the villages to new irrigated lands.29 Though it was considered aprogress, the fundamental motive behind this phenomenon was revenue generation. Moreover, the colonial hydrology prioritised fiscal returns over the welfare of the peasants. As a result, the canal symbolised the reach of colonial power into the rural economy, i.e., spreading cultivation and also establishing new weaknesses.

In addition, the military infrastructure of the colonial empire highlighted how science and technology were used to meet the demands of the authority.Arsenals such as Dum Dum near Calcutta benefited the motive of the colonial administrators. For instance, the "dum-dum bullet," explicitly intended to cause extreme tissue damage, developed in the 1890s, assisted the gruesome attack of the military.30 Here, the colonial violence wa9 technologized underneath the appearance of scientific rationality. Apart from that, the organisation of arms reflected racial orders. For instance, after the 1857 rebellion, Indian military units were mostly dispersed, which left the control of heavy guns only in British hands.

As a result, railways, telegraphs, canals, and arsenals formed a technological collective that supported the structure of the empire. They changed landscapes, communications, and cultivation, with the prime motive to extract and control for profits. Meanwhile, native Indians guided by the intellectuals used the same technology for achieving the national ambition, which revealed the weakness in these phenomena.

Resistance, Appropriation, and Indian Agency

At the same time, although railways, telegraphs, and western medicine, addressed in colonial dissertations as the instruments of modernism, there also emerged resistance. For instance, the introduction of railways created curiosity and suspicion among the Indian population. Over time, they were adapted to the system of railways, which helped the large movement of workers, pilgrims, and traders. Nationalists also used railways to facilitate political meetings and the speedy circulation of newspapers. Therefore, the technology that emerged to control the natives and gain profit was restructured as an instrument for Political awakening. Like railways, telegraph initially produced various responses. The unseen transmission of words through wires appeared strange and magical, and stories even circulated among the people that spirits carried messages. Some peasants dreaded that wires crossing the fields might disturb •ocal spirits. Especially, during the 1857 revolt, telegraph wires were cut to restrict communication to delay imperial response. Nevertheless, like the railways, thatalagraph was also ambeddad in tha social and political life of the Indians.

In that scenario, Western medicine also provoked certain restrictions in the beginning. For instance, vaccination against smallpox, in the early nineteenth century, faced resistance. The practice of injecting foreign substances into the human body seemed unnatural and impure, conflicting with local understandings of health. During the time of epidemics, quarantines, hospitalizations, and inspections developed hostility. For instance, British medical officers during the 1897 bubonic plague epidemic in Bombay are a telling case: British medical officers executed house-to-house inspections during the 1897 bubonic plague epidemic in Bombay. However, the medical officers faced opposition because of violating the gender and caste norms.

Contrarily, social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and later MahendralalSircar promoted Western medicine and scientific learning as essential for the

progress of the nation. Later, indigenous practitioners like Ayurvedic and Unani doctors amalgamated vaccination into their practice, which created hybrid forms of medicinal modernity. Slowly and steadily, Western medicine occupied an important spot in society. As David Arnold argued, Indians were not passive beneficiaries of colonial science and technology; rather, they reshaped them according to their needs.

Education, Nationalism, and Indigenous Science

Furthermore, when analysing the development of science and technology in colonial India, it is important to discuss English education, because it occupied a major role in the dissemination of scientific knowledge to the public concurrently, the institutionalisation of science in colonial India was inseparable from the Anglicist schema. Primarily, the engagement of Indians with Westernscience began in the late eighteenth century, enabled by the movement of European texts and the establishment of English education. Social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy supported this policy and even advocated the need for scientific education for the progress of society. In his 1823 letter to LordAmherst, Roy critiqued the colonial government's emphasis on classical oriental learning, arguing instead for mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, and anatomy as the groundwork of modern education.31This stance of his correlated with the Anglicist agenda, even though Ram Mohan Roy proposed science as an emancipatory force rather than an instrument of supremacy.

Specifically, the Charter Act of 1813 allocated funds for education, but it was Thomas Babington Macaulay's Minute on Education (1835) which transformed policy toward the instruction of English-language and Western curricula in the educational system. Particularly, Macaulay's infamous claim that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia" summarises his ideology supporting this policy.32 Later, Universities established at Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras in 1857 embedded this methodology, and their curricula aligned towards Western science, producing clerks, surveyors, and engineers for the colonial state. Although these processes enabled the dissemination of scientific knowledge, they also provoked cultural complexity, as Indian scholars challenged and reinterpreted Western science towards their nationalist aspirations. While the colonial state wanted to connect science to control, Indian intellectuals used scientific knowledge within the context of nationality.

Swadeshi Science and Indian Scientific Nationalism

Consequently, in the late nineteenth century, Indian academics initiated the construction of an environment for scientific research away from state control. The most noteworthy initiative was the establishment of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS) by MahendralalSircar in Calcutta in 1876.33 Regarded as a national institution for the cultivation of science in all its departments with a vision for its development by original research, the IACS signified an innovative chapter in the progress of Indian science. Specifically, jt restricted the gap in society by making it available to all classes of the people and reduced the need to survive based on the patronage of the colonial 9°vernment. Correspondingly, improvements were also made in technical andmedical education, with the establishment of engineering colleges and universities in the presidencies. Although these institutes functioned within colonial authority, they raised free-will Indian scholars and scientists with nationalist ideals, challenging the Eurocentric control on scientific knowledge. Focusing on the spirit of nationalism, the Swadeshi movement (1905-1911), which was primarily a political response to the partition of Bengal (1905)followed a scientific dimension as nationalists called for Swadeshi science, i.e., the growth of scientific knowledge associated with native needs.34 Particularly. This movement framed science as both a symbol and a tool of self-rule, i.e..Swaraj, contradicting the colonial position, which supported that modernity was a gift from the West. Furthermore, organisations like the Indian Science Congress, founded in 1914, provided environments for discussing the rote of science in national development.

Correspondingly, this period witnessed the emergence of two interconnected agendas. The first one

was scientific nationalism, which argued that modem science was the need of the hour for nation-building, and the second one was cultural revivalism, which wanted to merge scientific rationality with India's philosophical traditions. For instance, Prafulla Chandra Ray (1861-1944) was the founder of the Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works, who combined research in inorganic chemistry with a pro-independence commitment to industrial self-reliance. His notable work, A History of Hindu Chemistry, emphasised the stability of India's scientific traditions, contradicting colonial descriptions of stagnation in the civilisation.xHe exemplified this amalgamation, advocating chemical research at the same time supporting India's ancient heritage of scientific thought. Likewise, Jagadish Chandra Bose (1858-1937) was a forerunner in plant physiology and wireless telegraphy, who challenged Western perception about the capabilities of Indians. He proved that rigorous experimental research could be conducted outside cosmopolitan centres. Moreover, Bose even refused to patent his discoveries, framing science as a universal human effort rather than a commercial initiative * Likewise, astrophysicist MeghnadSaha (1893-1956) established the thermal ionisation theory, and his career demonstrates the emergence of Indian scientists within a colonial framework.37

These intellectuals proved that colonial science was neither hegemonic nor passively received but reconfigured according to the local environments. Moreover, revisionist historiography, influenced by the postcolonial phase, highlighted negotiation and development of indigenous growth. Dhruv Raina and Irfan Habib claimed that Indian scientists tamed Western science according to the regional traditions and nationalist principles.38 Moreover, this perspective countered the supremacy of scientific modernity in colonial India.

Raman and Ramanujan: Science, Memory, and Nationhood

Furthermore, the institutionalisation of science under Colonial government, as deliberated earlier, infiltrated Indian society, which became indigenised by Indian scholars and scientists. Within this historical narrative, two names take over popular imagination: Sir ChandrasekharaVenkata Raman (1888-1970)39 and SrinivasaRamanujan (1887-1920).40 Hence, without discussing them in this analysis, the holistic approach remains unfilled. Primarily, both these intellectuals were contemporaries, emerged during the late colonial period, and both achieved global acclaim, when the colonial phase framed the colonised as incompetent of innovative thought. Nevertheless, their legacies proved distinctive results not only for the indigenous community but also for the global worfd. Specifically, this section examines the reasons behind why Raman is preserved as a national symbol and why Ramanujan, despite his astonishing mathematical brilliance, occupies an ambivalent space in India's public memory.

In the decades leading up to independence, science developed an important instrument of nationalism to oppose the colonial claims of Indian inferiority. The Swadeshi movement, as delineated previously, considered science as a tool for swaraj, i.e., self-reliance. In this background, figures like Raman and Ramanujan served as influential counter-narratives to the colonial innovations. Each validated that an Indian could not only master Western procedures but also expand them to the maximum level of novelty. Moreover, their respective fields, i.e., experimental physics and pure mathematics, presented different potentials for the development of science and technology under nationalism. For instance, the discovery of the Raman Effect by Raman in 1928, followed by his 1930 Nobel Prize in Physics, was extensively celebrated in Indian newspapers and scientific circles.41 When India was under the control of the British government, fighting for its independence, this indigenous achievement by Raman proved to the world that quality research could be conducted on Indian soil, with the help of modest equipment and native talent. From a political perspective, it can be seen that Indians were not subordinate to the foreigners. Furthermore, this vibrated with a larger nationalist desire to establish scientific institutions as the groundwork of a modem nation-state. Specifically, Raman himself exemplified this vision with the establishment of the Indian Academy of Sciences (1934) and later the Raman Research Institute (1948).

Ramanujan's story, while similarly remarkable, outspread along a diverse path. Primarily, a self-taught genius from Kumbakonam located in the Madras presidency, he entered global mathematics through an intercontinental network supported by G. H. Hardy at Cambridge in 1914.42 His election to the Royal Society in 1918 and Fellowship at Trinity College placed him in the elite circle of metropolitan science, challenging colonial typecasts. Nonetheless, his most significant work, including the modular forms, partition identities, and mocktheta functions, stayed abstract. Contrasting Raman's laboratory-based experimentation that could be discussed in classrooms, Ramanujan's complex mathematics restricted that easy conception or understanding. This dissimilarity was later characterised into commemorative courses.

Public celebration in science focuses not only on achievement but also on the ability to translate complex work into consumable form for the masses. From this perspective, Raman's discovery facilitated this translation. As indicated earlier, the Raman Effect could be confirmed in any school laboratory with similar optical arrangements. Moreover, its uses in spectroscopy and chemistry were comprehensible, serving as instruments of innovation. Recognising this educational advantage, the government of India celebrated National Science Day in 1986, observing 28 February, i.e., the date of Raman's discovery and not his date of birth.43 Specifically, this annual celebration across schools, universities, and research institutes transformed Raman into an emblem of indigenous scientific achievement, strengthening nationalist principles.

In connection with Ramanujan's invention in the field of mathematics, the commemoration followed a diverse timeline. For decades after his demise in 1920 at the age of 32, his works persevered mostly within professional mathematical circles and biographical work, such as Hardy's classic memoir, Ramanujan: Twelve Lectures on Subjects Suggested by His Life and Work.44 However, his posthumous glorification was beyond nations, and only in 2011, the Indian government declared 22 December, i.e., the birth anniversary of Ramanujam, as National Mathematics Day. Furthermore, to commemorate his 125* anniversary, the nation celebrated the National Mathematics Year in 2012. Even though these initiatives indicated recognition, they also exhibited certain differences. Specifically, the irregularity in public memory echoes a structural distinction. For instance, the Indian Academy of Sciences and Raman Research Institute continue as living memorials, where Raman's name is incorporated in the conferences, publications, research grants, and also day-to-day schedules.45 On the other hand, the existence of Ramanujan in India is mediated through museums (e.g., the Ramanujan Museum and Math Education Centre in Chennai), educational parks, and also through research papers in journals and international prizes.46

This deviation exhibited a specific historiographical point, i.e., the nationalist project privileged noticeable, utilitarian science such as physics, chemistry, and engineering over abstract mathematics, which, despite its intellectual status, lacked instant developmental effectiveness. For instance, Raman's optics correlated with the Nehruvian vision of science and technology.47 Contrarily, Ramanujan's number theory, even though celebrated, could not be domesticated in the planned progress for the development of the nation.

Ironically, Ramanujan may be celebrated more in global academia than Raman. Because his productivity spanned across fields and occupied a significant spot in the advanced global curricula. Films, biographies, and literary honours enlarge him as the "mystic genius," a narrative that reverberates with Western idealisation of the prodigy.48 concurrently, though Raman was globally valued for his Nobel-winning discovery, predominantly, he was anchored in the nationalist historiography of India rather than the international researchprogrammes. Hence, it exhibited that the politics of commemorative functions on two different phenomena, in which Raman was celebrated as a national institution-builder, whereas Ramanujanoccupied the spot as a global mathematician. Moreover, even though both intellectuals illustrate adopting Western methods while affirming Indian intellectual sovereignty,

their remembrance in the current scenario discloses the differences.

Conclusion

The history of colonial science and technology in India reveals its dual character. On one hand, it served as a mechanism for mapping territories, regulating bodies, extracting resources, and consolidating imperial power through surveys, medicine, railways, and communication networks. On the other, it became a site of resistance, adaptation, and reinterpretation. Indian reformers, scholars, and scientists engaged with Western knowledge not passively, but actively-reshaping it to suit indigenous needs and nationalist ambitions.

The emergence of institutions like the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, the Swadeshi call for indigenous science, and the pioneering work of intellectual, such as Bose, Ray, Raman, and Ramanujan illustrate this dynamic negotiation. Colonial science thus produced hybrid forms of knowledge-infused with both imperial authority and indigenous agency.

More profoundly, this history demonstrates that the making of modern India was not solely forged through political struggle, but also through epistemic contestation. Science became both an instrument of colonial supremacy and a resource for liberation. The relationship between nationalism and science, initiated during the colonial era, continues to shape India's postcolonial identity and aspirations.

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Swadesamitran: A Study on the News Articles published during India's Post-Independent Period (1948 -1949)

Dr. Beulah Rachel Rajarathnamani

Introduction

The newspaper plays an important role by giving information to the public about the society. They offer comprehensivenews on politics, economy and social issues, facilitating citizens to make responsible decisions. During the freedom struggle, the press played an important role in bringing people together for a common cause.

Swadesamitran

The '*Swadesamitran'*was one of the leading papers of its time. The paper began in 1882 as a weekly. '*Swadesamitran'*played a vital role in the freedom struggle. It was founded by G. Subramania Iyer who was a pioneer in the field of journalism. Hewas the one who introduced prominent newspapers to the Tamil society. He is also the person who started the leading newspaper of the present times 'The Hindu' in 1878.

Review of Literature

The contribution of the '*Swadesamitran'*for nationalism was significant. It worked for Indian independence creating an arena for national politics[1].Coverage of news, popular appeal and reach of the newspaper was significant. It enjoyed access to latest news from various parts of the country as it was published in *'The Hindu'* complex[1].

The famous poet and patriot Subramania Bharathi, who was also a noted Tamil journalist entered the portals of journalism through the '*Swadesamitran'*, where he served as a sub-editor, for a short span of time[1].'*Swadesamitran'*raisedits voice for Nationalism. It startedto spread patriotic sentiments among the masses. It was a pioneering effort of G. Subramania Iyer and very soon he gained popularity in Tamil journalistic circle[1].

'*Swadesamitran'*highlighted to the people the importance of contemporary problems. Almost in every issue '*Swadesamitran'* used to publish articles pertaining to freedom struggle. These articles inspired the national spirit of the people. The newspaper concentrated more on the spread of nationalism[1].

The newspaper informed the public about the policies and programmes of the government and provided opportunity for them to have a public opinionabout government measures. The newspapers were the eyes of the nation through which the nationcould see where it stood[1].

Political journals in Tamil were rather a belated phenomenon. The stringent policy adopted towards the press by the Government of Madras prevented journalistic enterprises in publishing the political news. It was only with the emergence of G.Subramania Iyer, Tamil press discovered the father of political journalism in Tamil[1].

Period of Study

The post-independence period of India is a crucial phase in history. The post-independence period especially the immediate years of 1948 and 1949 was a transformative period for the newly born India. The nation had to focus on nation building, and establishing democratic governance.

Method

This study looks into the historical significance of the print media through the newspaper, '*Swadesamitran',* during the early period of post-independence. The objective of the study is to analyse and interpret the selected articles from the newspaper '*Swadesamitran',* during the years 1948 and 1949. The study employs a purposive sampling technique, by intentionally selecting the samples. The study employs a qualitative content analysis as a research method for interpreting the meaning within the data. In this study, the text of the newspaper articles are analysed and

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interpreted. The study will reveal how the newspaper '*Swadesamitran'* was used to convey vital information to the Tamil people in Madras Presidency.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

***'Swadesamitran'* Vol XIX 1948 dated June 6 No. 19**

1. News Article Heading : No other choice

In South Africa Smuts party has lost and Malan party has come to power. This is a loss to the British Empire. Already the South African Indians are suffering. It looks like they will suffer more. The Malan party is racist. The Malan party felt that Smuts have been lenient with the Indians. They will completely eradicate the Indians due to their racist mentality. They have told this in their election campaigns and have won in the elections. They will chase away the Indians from there. Also if other Indians stay, they will ill-treat them by making stringent rules. Both the political parties are not good to the Indians. In fact both ill-treat them. During the Smuts rule only, strict laws were framed against Indians. Even the United Nations condemned it. But the Smuts did not care about it, and they went on doing whatever they were doing. So, we should not be unhappy that the Smuts did not win. Now that the Malan political party has come, it should be noted that they are more tyrannical and they will come to a decision faster and we will know what is in store for the Indian people there in South Africa. Malan political party's model is Hitler, who wanted only his race to stay and wanted to eliminate other races. Now that they have come to power the racist mentality will grow. So the Indians there should join hands with the native group and work against the whites. This is the only way they can strongly oppose the whites. In this situation our country India cannot help them. We should not give false hope to our own people. We do not have ways to make Malans listen to us. The Indian Union cannot stop its Jute export to South Africa. Because then they might turn to Pakistan who is also a producer of Jute. It is a known fact that they already have a deal with Pakistan during the Smuts government. Now the Malan government can bring about enmity between the Hindu and the Muslims in South Africa and at the same time bring about enmity between India and Pakistan. Finally, the strength of the nation is its power. If there is a powerful nation then their people whenever they live will not be disrespected. But now, until we grow to that kind of power, what can be done is to ask the people there to come back to our nation if they are ill-treated, and make arrangements for that. Especially the Indian government should be ready to do this for the Indians of South Africa.

***'Swadesamitran'* Vol XIX 1948 dated June 13 No. 20**

2. News Article Heading : Ooty Conference

Pandit Nehru's advice in the Asia- Far East economics commission would have opened the eyes of many. Having the world's half the population in India like 100 crores people still exist in difficulty. There has been no effort to help them. So far the International organizations have looked into their best interests but now this has changed. That is the reason why the United Nations organization has formed an Asia- Far East economics commission. The people of this region suffer due to the domination of foreign rule. The foreign rule have taken the wealth of this place. They never cared about the people of this country. They only cared about their own interest. This lead to this bad economic situation. But now the time has changed when the Asians tolerated such a mentality. Because of the awareness most of the Asian countries have been out of foreign rule. But Holland and France have not understood this. They still think they can dominate. Therefore in places like Indonesia, Indo –China they refuse to leave and the atrocities still continue. Also people from Holland and France are included in this commission. But Indonesia is not included, but for the economic development Indonesian's inclusion in this commission is required. If the South East Asian countries get together the economic situation will improve drastically. But Holland and France are not making way for this. If the agenda of the United Nations should succeed then as PanditJawahar pointed out it is important that foreign rule in this region should completely end. If Holland refuses to understand this, then the United Nations should strongly point out this to them. PanditJawhar has clearly stated that any outside help that can lead to slavery will not be accepted by us.

America has said that the European countries have not set any wrong demands. But how America has come to such a conclusion is not known. So, India should try its own means to improve its economic condition. It might take a longer time. We should not worry about it. In order to get economic growth, we should devise plans along with the commission. And this might help us achieve it.

***'Swadesamitran'*Vol XIX 1948 dated July 11 No. 21**

3. News Article Heading:Kashmir Commission Job

The United Nations Kashmir Commission have arrived in Delhi. What is the reason for this commission, what are the aspects that they will be talking to the Indian government are questions that the Indian government has asked the Kashmir commission. There are many letters that have been sent by the members of the commission but none answers the questions raised by the Indian government. But one should understand the formation of this commission. The ones who created that commission do not care about the problem. It has always supported Pakistan's occupation of Kashmir. This commission wants to give away Kashmir to the thieves who came to steal it. It is clear from the last resolution passed by it. Indian government has stated that it will not agree to this injustice. The Indian government's decision on Kashmir is right and it will not agree to anything that goes against this. This has been conveyed by the representatives of the Indian government. The Indian government wants the people of Kashmir to decide for itself. This is the same decision the Indian government follows in any place where there is a dispute. Though the Security Council has agreed on this, the last resolution is not right. The Indian government has vehemently opposed the resolution and has said that it will not allow the commission to step into India. At the same time, the Indian government has told the United Nations that it will co-operate with the United Nations. This stand, only shows the India's greatness. But one thing is very important. Before taking a vote in Kashmir there should be complete cease-fire and there should be peace in the region. First, the United Nations should ask the concerned governments to arrive at a cease –fire and then hold talks about voting. The moment there is withdrawal of their groups, there will be complete peace. Pakistan official themselves send thieves and murderers. If Pakistan stops this, then there will be a different situation. But Pakistan is not doing that.

***'Swadesamitran'*Vol XIX 1948 dated September 26 No. 35**

3. News Article Heading: Surrender

The Indian army have put an end to the atrocities that were taking place in the Princely state of Hyderabad. The Razakars were defeated. By the fifth day, the Indian Union army was marching towards Secundarabad, the Nizam surrendered. Military Governor J.N Choudhari has taken over the Hyderabad state to bring in peace. Until the Union government took a decision like this, the Nizam was very adamant. But this surrender surprises everyone since no one expected this outcome. The victory of our army, Commander RajendraJigji, Military Governor J.N Choudhari and air force commander Mukerji cannot be stated in words. India's unity cannot be dismantled due to divisions, has been clearly demonstrated from this event. This is a lesson to India's enemies. The Nizam welcomed the Indian army and announced that the Razakars have given up. He said that, the princely state has withdrawn the steps taken against the Congress. After the surrender episode, the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru spoke on the radio last week. His talk showed the obligation of a leader towards his people. His talk was on what has to be done now. In order to establish complete peace, the Hyderbad state has to be under the military for some time. Razakars leader Razwi has been arrested and is under the Indian government custody. Laik Ali group have also been put under control. Some have been underground. They too have to be caught. By this act, everyone should know that divisions will not succeed. Now Hyderabad Sate has a new beginning. Now there is an interim arrangement but later, there should be a representative government in that place also. Any matters of Princely State or decision about joining with the Indian Union are decisions that have to be taken by the people. As Pandit Nehru has mentioned the future of Hyderabad will be good once it is with the Indian

Union. Therefore, the people of Hyderabad should understand this.

***'Swadesamitran'*Vol XIX 1948 dated October 31 No. 40**

4. News Article Heading: French disorder

The election was badly held. There were many malpractices. The French India should join the Indian Union. Even the people there want this. But in order to stop this, and to keep the place with them they have behaved in a bad way. In Pondicherry, every election booth the people who support the French have taken control. The Congress who have taken permission to go there, were not allowed inside. Some who tried to enter were beaten. The French authorities acted like dictators. They had written their name in the ballot sheet and forced the voters to put these ballots in the ballot boxes. Their supporters forced all the voters to do the same. The election booths were not open during the stipulated time. The French authorities saw to that the booths were closed two hours early and the rest of the votes were cast by the French themselves. When this told to the higher authorities, they did not address the issue. Similarly, the same was the situation in Karaikal. The Congress were attacked there. So the congress decided not to take part in the election. In Mahi, citing there is problem, the French did not conduct the elections. But the real problem in Pondicherry and Karaikal the French was never seen as a problem by them. But in Mahi, the people understood the French and revolted against them and took the authority in their hands. So, the French decided not to conduct the election in Mahi. If they wanted to conduct, they have to discuss with the Indian government and conduct the election properly. If they do not do this, it means that they want to oppose the people and create problems.

***'Swadesamitran'*Vol XIX 1949 dated January 9 No. 35**

5. News Article Heading: Good News

The year 1949 is beginning with a good news to the Indians. The 14 months Kashmir war has ended. The two big problems of the Indian government namely the Hyderbad issue that came to an end last year, and now the Kashmir issue has come to an end. Though the Kashmir issue, has come to an end, we should look for a permanent peace process. The idea that people should be allowed to take the decision has agreed upon by both India and Pakistan. This is what India has been telling from the very beginning. As per law, Kashmir is with India. But India wanted thepeople to decide. But Pakistan never wanted the people to decide. Initially it tried to send wrong elements into Kashmir to disrupt peace, and then its own army. In order to stop Pakistan's interference and also allow the people of Kashmir to decide for themselves, the Indian army went to Kashmir. This is the reason why the Indian government asked the United Nations to intervene. What Pakistan has done has been exposed. But the United Nations Organization did not take action immediately and confused the whole matter. But finallyan agreement has been reached by a commission sent by the United Nations. As per the agreement, Pakistan has to withdraw all its troops from Kashmir. OtherPakistan supporting groups should also withdraw. This is a victory to the Indian government. The outsiders are going to leave and the people will vote their decision. This situation is arriving. The places that Pakistan has left will be under an office recommended by the United Nations. We hope that this issue will come to an end with the co-operation of the Indian government and the Pakistan government. This was the only problem between India and Pakistan and now that an agreement is in place, this problem has come to an end. Now there is hope that the relationship between the two countries will move towards friendship.

***'Swadesamitran'*Vol XX 1949 dated February 20 No. 3**

6. News Article Heading: Illusionary trap

If we want to enjoy complete freedom, our economic problems should end. The production of the country has not been enough for the nation. The problem the people are facing for food and clothing is intolerable. There is inflation because of less production. TheNehru's government is trying its very best to control this problem and increase food and clothes production. To reach this goal, the labourers and workers should be in peace. But there is efforts to ruin

this peace. In order to overcome any economic situation, there has to be good production of necessary goods. Only then, the country will be prosperous. The labour leaders are asking for increased salary, but at this stage this is not possible. It should be understood by them. The labourers have a right to strike, but one should understand that this is not the time. Not understanding this situation is falling into an illusionary trap, and is also betraying the society. It is like pushing the society into a well of suffering, and falling into it. The Railway and the Postal Office union, is holding on to the strike but there are many labourers in different departments who are forgotten. The railway labourers should remember these labourers from theunorganised sectors. They are often asking for an increase in salary. If their demands are not met, there are threatening the government that they will go on a strike. As if there are doing a favour to the government, they say, they are postponing the strike in some situations. The labourers should not strike. PanditJawarhar Nehru is the main person who has immense concern on the welfare of the labourers. He has clearly pointed out the problems that will arise to the country and the labourers, if they go on strike. Even after all this, if there is plan of a strike, it would only mean that it is not for economic gain but for a political gain for which the strike is planned.

***'Swadesamitran'*Vol XX 1949 dated March 13 No. 6**

7. News Article Heading: Government and Industries

Last week estimated revenues and estimated expenditures presented by the government had many discussions from different quarters. Some of them have said that, it is having focus on the rich and owners. Within a short span of time, the Nehru government has been involved in setting the economic problem of the country right. Just like the government, the people too should turn their attention towards improving the economy of the country. In the Industry and trade meeting Sri Lalji spoke. He said that the government,and individuals should attract international trade. He has said that the policies of the government are not favourable to investors. But this is not true. The Prime Minister Pandit Nehru and the Deputy Prime Minister Vallabai Patel have over the few weeks reassured the investors. What more is required? In the present situation the government cannot take up all the investment all by itself said Vallabai Patel very clearly, and he has listed the reasons for it. Therefore,saying that the government policies are doubtful are false ideas from some people. This is an unnecessary concern.Therefore, the new industrialists and old industrialists should come and invest hearing the assurance of the government. Pandit Nehru has said that, instead of running old big industries they want to start new industries. Pandit Nehru has clearly stated that in order to increase the growth of the industries, the Indian government will render all the support. This should be understood by the industrialists. The statistics shown, with regard to the production has to be noticed. During the war period, there was an increase in production,that has now come down. Specifically, production of clothing, iron and cement, have come down. But the price of labour is increasing. If the price of labour increases, there would be inflation. He mentioned that the rising cost of labour, has not brought increase in industrial labour. Also, when compared to the year 1939, weaving and coal industrial labour has reduced drastically, he said pointing out the statistics. When the cost of labour increases, the industrial production is becoming low. Therefore this will not help in the overall national production.

***'Swadesamitran'*Vol XX 1949 dated March 20 No. 7**

8. News Article Heading: Help for the farmers

The farmers have got help with regard to pledging of the land. But this is pittance says RathnasabapathyMudaliyar, in the welcome address of the farmers loan conference. The farmers loan has been 200 crores increase but the help they have got is only 6 crores. The framers are using this money to pay off old loans. The price of grains have increased over the last few years. Very few lands have been brought by the farmers. Even if there produce more crops, their spending for the crops have also increased. They have not been able to handle this situation and have taken loans on their land. Though loans are given, it is given only to land that produces well. But this will not help

the farmers. The loans given to the farmers should increase. The Government has taken important steps in this area, since farming is the life of the nation. Not just for food, but also other industries are dependent on farming. But many years, this important thing had been ignored. The land loan conference was addressed by the Prime Minister. He said farming has to be made profitable. But for this the government itself has to give proper loans to the framers to make it profitable. This will help the growth in the farming sector.

***'Swadesamitran'* Vol XX 1949 dated April 10 No. 10**

9. News Article Heading: New team of Ministers

A new set of Ministers have taken over under the Premier Sri Kumaraswamy Raja in Chennai. Last week, this was decided in the Congress meeting. This was only after an election, because an uncontended unanimous decision could not be made. The day he has taken over, he has released a statement. Before taking over, Sri Raja has consulted the Congress high command with regard to his ministers. This will help him for sure. Sri Kumaraswamy Raja has the experience of a senior Congress leader, Congress's service and sacrifice, and he is also well –versed with the role of a Premier and its responsibilities. He will do these duties well. He has based his statement on these. Chennai is a role model for other Indian regions. But fights, small revolts and agitation, have raised their head in the recent past. When the Indian people are suffering with lack of foodand clothing, we should not waste our energy on petty things. So Sri Kumaraswamy Raja, should put an end to this within his ministers and make this place a peaceful and happy society, is the expectation of everyone.

On the whole,thenewspaper '*Swadesamitran'*, had played a decisive role in communicating information to the people during India's Post-Independent Period (1948 -1949). It helped in spreading awareness about important issues. The newspaper articles provided information to the public about the society. The coverage in the newspapers facilitated the government in identifying and addressing problems in the society. The news articles of '*Swadesamitran'*covered regional, national and international news.

'*Swadesamitran'*also served as a medium through which suggestions were offered to the general public. It helped in providing societal understanding of situations to the public. It spread awareness, about the initiatives of the government. '*Swadesamitran'* functioned as a channel between the government and the general public. It helped in national integration**.** This newspaper medium played an important role in educating and empowering the public. It shaped public perception and prioritized issues of concern.

Conclusion

Newspapers has historically played a vital role in disseminating information. From the above study, it is understood that the newspaper, '*Swadesamitran'* has been instrumental in delivering various messages to the public during the study period.'*Swadesamitran'*has been the corner stone as it offered key insights about situations and challenges in a society, thereby helping the newly born India to grow into a powerful nation.

End Notes

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Musical Traditions of Mullai Tinai: A Literary Study with Special Reference to Ettuthogai

Nivetha .R

Bards and Instruments of Sangam Literature

Sangam literature mentions about the six types of oral bards who specializes in composing and singing of songs in the Pans mentioned above .They were the Panars – bards who sang their songs in accompaniment of the yal (lutes), the Porunars – war bards who accompanied the warriors and played small drums while singing, the Kuttars – bards who would sing, dance as well as perform choral dramas, the Viraliyars – the female bards who were mostly the wives of the bards , the Akavunar – callers or summoner bards who has the habit of carrying 'Kol' or a staff instead of a musical instrument and lastly the Pulavars , who even though did not associate themselves with music or dance enjoys the position of bards , for the wisdom they possess[1]. The musical instruments of Sangam Age could be categorized into The Torkaruvi-percussion instruments such as Murasu,Mulavu, Tannumai, The Tulaikkaruvi or windinstruments such as Tumpu, trumpet, flute, conch etc., Kanchccakkaruvi or bell metal instrument , the Narambukkaruvi or stringed instruments such as Yal and Vil. Kurunji yal, Mullai yal, Marudamyal, Neithalyal and Palaiyal are the special types of yalsused in each land[1].

Mullai Tinai and its Songs

Each Tinai is identified with a specific time of a day, a specific season , a unique geographical landscape, flora and fauna that grows abundant in that region, a primary occupation , its own musical melody or raga or pan, a phase of love etc., Mullai Tinai is associated with forest landscape and it acquire its name from the flower Mullai, or jasmine which grows primarily in fertile forests in the monsoon[1]. The songs were sung in the evening time of the day , the phase of love observed was domesticity and patient waiting of wife and the season associated with Mullai Tinai was the monsoon or the rainy season[1]. The bards who would sing songs (mostly the Panars) in Mullai Tinai, would always compose it on the above-mentionedthemes. One of the poems in Ainkurunooru from the Ettuthogai collection could be mentioned as a classic example.

"The sky covered with clouds and lightning roars

resplendent with the monsoon.

Greenjasmine creepers blossom with the season

and herders with many cattle

weave them into garlands of flowers and leaves.

Tell me, unfeeling bard,

does the land where he has gone

have such loveless evenings[1]?"

This Ainkurunooru song composed by Peiyanar, describes the despair of the heroine, clearly belongs to the Mullai Tinai as the season mentioned is the rainy season, the time of the event is evening and the flower mentioned is green jasmine that were mostly referred to as Mullai.

The bards especially the Panars could be seen singing mostly in praise of kings, who would, in turn,bestow the bards with wealth and feasts. In a Purananooru poem written by KovurKizhar, it was mentioned that the family of bards under the king Cholan Nalankilli were kept wellnourished with balls of rice mixedwith meat, looking like flower garlands on which flowerbuds and fresh green leaves are strung together[1].There were also songs in Ettuthogai that talks about the bards listening to the heroine's anxious pleas, while she patiently waits for the hero to come back. In an Akananooru poem, composed by OkkurMasathanar, the bard would listen to the heroine's cries who was waiting for her husband to return. Unable to respond to her words with his words, the bard would play music on his lutein Mullai tune, praised God slowly[1].

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Instruments and Tunes of Mullai Tinai

The cattle herders of Mullai Tinai were referred to be excellent players of flute.A cowherd dwelling in forest, with the aid of the fire got by the friction of two sticks, makes holes in a small bamboo-stick and shapes a flute. With the help of this flute, he plays the tune of palai. Not satisfying with this tune he takes a hollow branch of Kumila tree (cash more tree), ends it like a bow; ties the two ends with its filers and uses them as strings and plays the tune of Kurinji[1].Many references from the Ettuthogai texts points out the flutes of the herdsmen being made from the Kondrai tree seeds and pods. A Nattrinai song composed by Kidangil Kāvithi Perunkotranār talks about the sweet flute music played by the cattle herdsmen that were made of Kondrai pods in the evenings, and how the cattle would respond to it accordingly and follow him back to the cattle pens (ஆதந்த கல்லாக்கோவலர் கொன்றை அம்தீம்குழல்மன்று)[1].

One of the tunes played by the cattle herdsmen, is the "SEVVALI" tune, played in lute, which was associated with the heroine's sadness, as the tunes were relatively sad in nature. An example could be quoted for this, from Kalithogai, where, the heroine associates her sadness with to the Sevvali tunes played by the cattle herdsmen and says that the tune is similar to her staggering words[1]. A text from Akanānūru 214, written by Vadama Vannakkan Pēri Sāthanār, refers to these cattle herders playing āmpal tune while moving their cattle, along with sevvali tune that causes sorrow to preciouslives, on lutes in the evenings[1].One of the texts from Kalithogai,describes the events of "Eru Thazhuvuthal" that was happening among a certain herdsmen clan. There, it refers to the playing of "PARAI" drums in the event, which sounds like roars of thunder in the arena[1].These Parai drums could also be seen playing at the times of war. In a Purananooru poem written by Okkur Masathanar, a woman who belongs to the herdsmen clan, and has already lost her husband in war, after hearing the Parai drums, would send her only son to the battle, which depicts her valour[1].

Sangam Poetics – Meters and Structures

In the Sangam age, it was indispensable to all the oral bards to construct the poem with metres and formulae as they have to recite their works with speed in front of the audiences, whom the bard should keep entertained. Unlike the literate poets, the oral bards would not have enough time to construct these poems as well as to sing them in front of the enthusiastic audience. And so, they would memorize traditional formulae for composing poems and sometimes perform improvisations, while singing their songs.

Every stanza in the Sangam poetry, is hierarchically organized in terms of form-meaningcomposites as follows: the poetic situation (Tinai), the theme (Turai), the motive and the formula[1]. For an oral bard, formula is an important element that facilitates composition of songsas it helps to express the ideas in fitting terms. The "AKAVAL" or "ACIRIYAM" were the predominant meters used in the Sangam poetry. The basic metrical unit used was the 'Asai', which is of two types – Ner and Nirai. The combination of two or more metrical units would comprise a 'Cir' or feet. The combination of feet constitutes an 'Ati' or line of poetry. The knitting of the above- mentioned elements into a poem is called "YATTAL", which literally means 'to stitch'.

These details are known from the Tolkappiyam text, which further discusses the metrical aspects of composition, beginning from the duration of sounds and step by step deals with syllables, metrical units, feet and lines[1]. The poems of Sangam literature have a special "rhythmic flow", which is the basis of comprehension. It is this distinct and all-embracing sound pattern that enables a person to discern the distinct nature of a poem, even if it is recited by a person at a distance, and if he knows correctly neither the alphabets nor the words[1].

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From Natural Man to Rational Citizen: Rousseau and Tamil Nadu State Education Policy

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Rousseau's Concept of the Natural Man and the Purpose of Education

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Émile, or On Education, stands as one of the most radical interventions in the history of educational philosophy. From the very first line, Rousseau sets the tone: "Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man1". This famous dictum encapsulates his belief in the natural goodness of human beings, a principle he had already articulated in his Discourse on the Origin of Inequality, where he contrasted "natural man" with the corruptions introduced by society. For Rousseau, education was the means of preserving this natural goodness while preparing the individual to live responsibly within society.

The "natural man" in Rousseau's philosophy is not a primitive or asocial being but one who learns through direct interaction with nature, guided by curiosity rather than authority. Education, therefore, must be experiential. This principle of negative education-delaying formal instruction and shielding the child from societal corruption until maturity-was a sharp critique of the rote-learning, authoritarian schooling prevalent in 18th-century Europe. "Rousseau's insistence on freedom and individuality laid the groundwork for later progressive and child-centered educational reforms,1". "While Émile may seem to be a treatise on the education of a private man for his own happiness, it is a profoundly political book. The education of Émile in solitude, away from the corrupting influence of society, is the necessary prerequisite for his ability to choose a legitimate political order later in life. Thus, education is not only about cultivating individuality but about preparing individuals to live responsibly within the social contract1".

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"Rousseau's pedagogy cannot be divorced from his political philosophy, since both rest on reconciling personal freedom with civic obligation1".Rousseau's emphasis on rationality and moral autonomy also places him within the broader Enlightenment project. "Like Locke, who in Some Thoughts Concerning Education emphasized shaping character through habit, Rousseau sought to form independent, reasoning individuals1". "Rousseau's originality lies in this tension: he envisioned an education that protects the natural child while simultaneously preparing the civic adult1."

Thus, Rousseau's concept of the "natural man" and the purpose of education can be summarized in three interlocking principles: (1) the preservation of natural goodness through experiential and delayed instruction, (2) the cultivation of autonomy and rationality as the foundation of moral life, and (3) the ultimate formation of citizens capable of participating in a just polity. This foundational tension between nature and society, freedom and obligation, individuality and citizenship, makes Rousseau's philosophy not only central to modern educational theory but also a fruitful point of comparison with contemporary policies such as Tamil Nadu's SEP 2025, which similarly wrestle with balancing individuality, rationality, and civic responsibility.

The Tamil Nadu SEP 2025 and the Making of the Rational Citizen

The Tamil Nadu State Education Policy (SEP) 2025 is the first independent education policy framed by a state in India, and it reflects the deep intellectual and political heritage of the Dravidian movement. While the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of the Union government emphasizes "Indian knowledge systems" and a Sanskritic framework, Tamil Nadu's SEP 2025 grounds its vision in inclusivity, equity, and rationality, making it a natural extension of Dravidian philosophy. "Following the economic reforms of 1991, Indian educational policy, including in Tamil Nadu, shifted from a purely socialistic model to one that increasingly embraced market-oriented principles. While the state retained its commitment to social justice, a new emphasis on producing a globally competitive workforce with skills in technology and critical thinking emerged, a subtle but significant departure from the earlier focus on ideological indoctrination1"."The policy defines education as the cornerstone of creating an equitable and knowledge-based society1".

"In Émile, Rousseau argues that the education of his contemporaries had produced clever, articulate men who lacked an inner moral compass. They were mere 'men of words,' not 'men of deeds.' This deep-seated critique against a purely intellectual education is the core of his philosophical project to reconnect rationality with the natural self1".At the heart of SEP 2025 is the cultivation of the rational citizen. The document insists that learners must be"scientifically minded, socially sensitive, and equipped to contribute to Tamil Nadu's growth1".This language directly recalls Periyar's constant call for a rational society free from superstition and religious dogma. In his 1929 speech at the First Self-Respect Conference, Periyar argued: "Only education that teaches us to think freely, question fearlessly, and live with dignity can lead to equality"1.The SEP's emphasis on critical thinking, gender equality, and secular values can thus be read as an institutional continuation of this intellectual tradition.

The policy also integrates language and cultural identity into its vision of rational citizenship. It affirms that Tamil shall remain the foundation of education, while English will serve as the medium for global engagement. This dual-language model reflects C.N. Annadurai's philosophy of a two-language policy from the 1960s, articulated during the anti-Hindi agitations, where he defended Tamil identity while embracing English as a language of opportunity. As Narendra Subramanian (Ethnicity and Populist Mobilization, 1999) notes, the Dravidian movement always tied education to linguistic and cultural pride, making language policy both a political and philosophical issue.The SEP's insistence on equity and inclusivity also reflects Tamil Nadu's unique historical trajectory. The policy states unequivocally: "No child should be denied access to education on grounds of caste, gender, language, or socio-economic status"1.This principle continues the legacy of Justice Party governments, which pioneered caste-based reservations in education

and employment as early as the 1920s. Scholars such as M.S.S. Pandianargue that such measures were not mere political strategies but philosophical commitments to dismantling Brahminical dominance. The SEP 2025 makes this explicit by treating education as a tool for social justice rather than a privilege for the elite.

Globally, the SEP's framework resonates with Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970), which emphasizes critical consciousness as the means through which oppressed groups gain empowerment. Tamil Nadu's focus on education for marginalized communities-particularly girls, Dalits, and rural students-parallels Freire's belief that education must awaken critical reflection and collective agency. As Freire writes: "Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system… or it becomes the practice of freedom1".SEP 2025 clearly aligns with the latter, presenting education as the "practice of freedom" that reshapes society rather than merely reproducing existing hierarchies.

In this sense, the Tamil Nadu SEP 2025 does more than provide a policy blueprint: it positions education as the continuation of a century-long Dravidian project. By foregrounding rationality, inclusivity, and cultural identity, it seeks to form citizens who are not only employable and globally competent but also deeply rooted in values of equality and self-respect. The rational citizen envisioned here is at once an individual thinker and a participant in collective emancipation, marking a clear philosophical lineage from Periyar's rationalism to present-day state policy.

The Convergence

Despite being separated by centuries and radically different contexts, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Émile (1762) and the Tamil Nadu State Education Policy (SEP) 2025 converge on several key philosophical principles. Both envision education as a transformative process aimed at creating individuals who are not merely knowledgeable, but also rational, moral, and capable of contributing to the collective good of society.

The first point of convergence lies in their shared rejection of rote learning in favour of experiential, learner-centered approaches. Rousseau argued that the child must learn not through imposed instruction but through discovery: "The only habit which the child should be allowed to form is to contract no habit at all1". "Policies have often sought to balance the universalist goals of a modern education system with the particularistic demands of regional, linguistic, and caste-based identities. This struggle is evident in policy documents that, on one hand, aim for a 'scientific temper' and 'rationality,' and on the other, prioritize social justice and representational equity1". "Rousseau's educational philosophy laid the foundation for later progressive education movements1".

A second convergence is their shared emphasis on rationality as the basis of moral and civic life. For Rousseau, the goal of education was not the accumulation of knowledge but the cultivation of judgment: "We are born weak, we need strength; we are born unprovided, we need aid; we are born stupid, we need judgment. All that we lack at birth, all that we need when we come to man's estate, is the gift of education"1. SEP 2025 similarly envisions citizens who are "scientifically minded, socially sensitive, and rational in outlook"1. Both thus reject superstition, blind obedience, and uncritical acceptance of authority. Here, SEP's rationalist underpinning directly reflects "The Dravidian movement, through its leaders and ideologues, established a new Dravidian common sense' on education. This was the widely held belief that education was not merely a means to social mobility for an individual but a weapon for the collective liberation of the lower castes from centuries of Brahminical dominance1".

A third area of convergence is the civic purpose of education. Rousseau famously concluded Émile by turning to the education of the citizen in Book V, where he insists that individual freedom must ultimately be reconciled with social obligation:"Each citizen would be completely independent of all the others, and completely dependent on the Republic1". Tamil Nadu's SEP echoes this when it asserts that education is not

simply an individual good but a social responsibility that fosters democratic participation and inclusivity. This commitment is evident in the policy's prioritization of marginalized communities, particularly girls, Dalits, and rural students, affirming that no citizen should be denied educational opportunity due to caste, gender, or class. "For the Justice Party, education was the primary instrument for social mobility and political empowerment for the non-Brahmins. It was seen as the means to break the monopoly of the Brahmins in administration and professions1".Finally,both Rousseau and SEP 2025 view education as collective emancipation rather than private advancement. While Rousseau emphasizes the balance between individual autonomy and civic duty, Tamil Nadu's SEP places this in the language of inclusivity and social justice. This resonates with Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970), which insists that education must awaken critical consciousnessand empower learners to resist oppression. Like Rousseau's citizen and SEP's rational citizen, Freire's student is not merely a passive recipient of knowledge but an active agent of change.

Philosophical Aim and Pedagogy

"John Locke, in his Some Thoughts Concerning Education, argued that a child's mind is a 'blank slate', and that character must be shaped by a combination of reason and careful habituation. His pedagogy, though progressive for its time, placed the adult firmly in charge of shaping the child, a perspective that stands in stark contrast to Rousseau's belief that nature should be the primary guide1".He sought to cultivate a "natural man" in isolation, believing that true learning came from a hands-on engagement with the world.By contrast, the TN SEP 2025, operating in a modern democratic context, aims to cultivate a "rational citizen." Its pedagogy blends Rousseau's emphasis on experiential and student-centered learning with the explicit goal of fostering civic responsibility. The policy envisions education as a means to equip learners with critical thinking and a scientific temper, not in isolation, but within a system designed for societal upliftment and collective progress.

The Educator's Role and Social Equity

The 18th-century teacher was an authoritarian figure who imparted knowledge to a privileged few. Rousseau's tutor was an invisible hand, meticulously controlling the environment to let the child's nature unfold. This model, however, was fundamentally exclusive and applied only to an elite boy, with girls receiving a different, more constrained education.

The TN SEP 2025 fundamentally redefines this dynamic. It rejects the exclusivity of Rousseau's era, framing education as a universal right and a primary tool for social equity. The modern teacher acts as a facilitator for all students, guiding them to acquire not only knowledge but also a profound sense of social justice. The policy, rooted in the Dravidian movement, mobilizes education as a vehicle for the collective liberation of marginalized communities, making it an active instrument of social transformation rather than a mere pathway for individual success.In essence, while Rousseau sought to save the individual by separating him from a corrupt society, the TN SEP 2025 seeks to transform society itself by educating every individual within it, bridging the historical gap between personal development and civic responsibility.

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Colonial Archives to Subaltern Voices: Historiographical Shifts in Writing The History of Irular Tribe

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Ethnographic Accounts and Colonial Writings

The first comprehensive collection of documents regarding the Irulars is found in colonial literature, but these were by no means impartial. They were closely linked to the British Raj's political and administrative agenda, especially in the Madras Presidency, where the Irulars were primarily found. In order to categorise, govern, and, if required, punish its subjects, the colonial state tried to learn about them. In this regard, ethnography and governance were inseparable. Ethnographic surveys, district gazetteers, and census operations were where the Irulars were most commonly seen. Their identities were reduced to occupational categories like "snake catchers" or "forest tribes" in the late nineteenth-century Census of India reports.Their marginalisation in the social order was reinforced by these categories, which frequently included implicit moral judgements and described them as "primitive" or "wild." Similar to this, the Madras District Gazetteers provided occupational and numerical statistics, but they portrayed the Irulars as a group that was neither entirely outside nor fully assimilated into caste society, but rather on the outskirts of it.

Edgar Thurston's Castes and Tribes of Southern India (1909), which included in-depth accounts of the Irulars, was arguably the most significant colonial work. Thurston observed their food habits, their purported physical oddities, and their prowess in capturing rodents and snakes. His writings must be interpreted critically, even though they are still a useful source of descriptive information[1]. Colonial notions of exoticism, primitivism, and otherness were often mirrored in Thurston's tone.By highlighting the Irulars' perceived uniqueness and seclusion, he successfully excluded them from the historical development trajectory that colonial rulers had in mind.

Such textual representations were exacerbated by colonial law. Although it was more widely used in northern India, the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 was expanded in the Madras Presidency, putting groups like the Irulars under criminal surveillance[1]. Simultaneously, the Indian Forest Acts of 1865, 1878,

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and 1927 prohibited traditional hunting, grazing, and gathering methods and limited tribal access to woods. Because the Irulars depended on forest resources, these regulations made subsistence operations illegal.Thus, the Irulars were defined by colonial ethnographies and administrative records in ways that benefited the state: as a population to be watched, as a curiosity to be explained, and as a problem to be managed[1]. These documents have two sides in terms of historiography: they are rife with colonial ideology, but they also include some of the few in-depth accounts of the Irulars from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Therefore, modern historians need to interpret them as writings that disclose more about the concerns of the colonial state than about the Irulars themselves.

Nationalist Historiography and Development Discourses

If colonial records made the Irulars seem like peripheral people, nationalist historiography hardly fared any better. Nationalist historians of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were primarily concerned with refuting colonial assertions of India's inferiority and fragmentation. They achieved this by highlighting Indian civilization's cohesion, age, and tenacity. Communities like the Irulars, who were difficult to include in a story of political opposition or cultural grandeur, were left out of this framework. Symbolic roles were frequently assigned to Adivasi groups when they did appear in nationalist literature. While some, like Mahatma Gandhi, cited "tribal simplicity" as proof of India's spiritual depth, others described tribes as the relics of an unadulterated and pure past[1].The material circumstances of particular communities were rarely addressed in these invocations, which were abstract in nature. Nationalist narratives provided virtually little representation for the Irulars, who were very few in number and did not have large-scale uprisings like the Munda Ulgulan of 1899-1900 or the Santhal insurrection of 1855-56. It successfully made their past invisible.

A new frameworkdevelopmentwas introduced with the post-independence period. Five guidelines for interacting with tribal tribes were outlined in Jawaharlal Nehru's "Tribal Panchsheel," which advocated for gradual integration while highlighting respect for their customs. Verrier Elwin, whose works, including Philosophy for NEFA (1957), promoted a protective isolation model, influenced the Indian state's initial efforts to preserve tribal autonomy. In actuality, however, development initiatives frequently imposed top-down plans that ignored indigenous agency.This change meant that official reports, not historical accounts, were used to represent the Irulars. They first surfaced in government reports on bonded labour, Anthropological Survey of India surveys, and development plans that addressed housing, health, and education. These publications offered empirical data, but they were presented in terms of deficiencies, such as social backwardness, poverty, hunger, and illiteracy. According to historiography, the Irulars were included into the national story as policy objectives rather than as players.

Although it took a different form, this developmentalist framing continued the colonial logic of marginalisation. Whereas nationalist and postcolonial rhetoric pathologized colonial ethnography had exoticized and criminalized.Now, the Irulars were viewed as "underdeveloped" rather than "wild," and as "problems" that needed to be resolved by the government rather than as unique phenomena. Despite its hostility to colonialism, nationalist historiography frequently repeated colonial categories when it came to tribes, as this continuity highlights.

Approaches to Marxist and Political Economics

Marxist historiography, which first appeared in India in the middle of the 20th century, introduced fresh perspectives on tribes and their historical role. Class and production methods were examined by academics like R. S. Sharma and D. D. Kosambi, who placed tribal groups in the context of peasant economies. No longer viewed as separate entities, tribes were now recognised as groupings that had been significantly influenced by colonial forest restrictions, agrarian capitalism, and feudal exploitation[1]. It was believed that their marginalisation was a structural result of economic change rather than a unique cultural feature. According

to the Marxist perspective, the Irulars are a community in Tamil Nadu that is exploited and lacks land.Bonded labour was a structural necessity for many Irular families, who were excluded from ownership and forced into rural labour markets. The larger processes of dispossession and the infiltration of capitalist relations into tribal communities are reflected in their deference to landowners, reliance on debt, and integration into rural capitalism. Marxist historiography clarifies these economic systems, but also pays less attention to oral traditions, ecological knowledge, and cultural resilience[1]. This makes it stronger in terms of structure and economy but weaker in terms of the cultural aspects of Irular life.

Postcolonial Turns and Subaltern Research

By focusing on the action of peasants and tribal groups, the Subaltern Studies collective contested both nationalist and Marxist narratives by the 1980s. Tribal rebellions, according to individuals like Ranajit Guha and David Hardiman, were independent political acts with their own logic and significance rather than just reactionary reactions to exploitation[1]. An important change in historiography occurred at this point: the tribal people were no longer merely the subject of historical narrative but also a subject whose decisions and actions might influence the course of events. By acknowledging the political importance of culture, ritual, and oral traditions, subaltern historians thus expanded the concept of resistance[1]. Rituals, religious movements, and therapeutic techniques were reframed as ways to claim identity and dignity.By emphasising the significance of oral memory, ceremonial symbolism, and indigenous knowledge as sources of historical evidence, postcolonial researchers furthered this trend.

This paradigm presents significant opportunities for the Irulars. The Irulars engaged in types of everyday resistance, such as negotiating exploitative employment contracts, fighting covertly for access to land and forests, and ingraining resilience into their rituals and oral histories, even though they did not launch significant uprisings as the Santhals or Mundas did[1]. It is possible to interpret their songs, seasonal customs, and healing procedures as records of fortitude and self-respect.But the Irulars are still not well studied, and nothing is known about their historical agency. The subaltern and postcolonial move changes the perspective from considering the Irular as a study object to acknowledging them as historical subjects, yet this potential has only just started to be fulfilled[1].

Contemporary Interdisciplinary Approaches

In recent years, research has shifted towards multidisciplinary viewpoints that include environmental studies, anthropology, law, and oral history. The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act of 1996 and the Forest Rights Act of 2006, both of which aimed to acknowledge tribal rights, have been the subject of legal scholars' investigations[1]. The ways that industrialisation, conservation policies, and climate change have impacted tribal ties to the land have been studied by environmental historians. Anthropologists have studied healing, ritual, and kinship, and oral historians have documented voice and memory. For the Irulars, these methods have opened up new perspectives. Their proficiency in capturing snakes, which was long discredited in colonial and nationalist rhetoric, is now acknowledged for its scientific usefulness in the manufacturing of antivenom, connecting them to international biomedical networks.In Tamil Nadu, reports on literacy initiatives and rehabilitation programs for bonded workers detail their fight for liberty and self-respect. There is growing recognition of oral traditions as historical sources that preserve memories that would otherwise be lost to archives, including songs, stories, and ritual performances.

Even with these developments, the problem of discoveries being dispersed across different sectors still exists. Oral history and legal studies rarely interact, while environmental analysis and anthropology frequently diverge[1]. Even though a lot of the Irulars' lives have been investigated, there isn't yet an integrated history that connects these disparate threads because of this fragmentation. Today, synthetic, participatory research is required to provide a cohesive account of Irular history by combining law, ecology, memory, and community voices.

Difficulties in Adivasi Historiography Methods

There are ongoing methodological challenges for Adivasi community historians. Although the colonial record is vast, it is incredibly skewed and frames the issues of administrators and anthropologists rather than the voices of the communities. Even while they offer knowledge, labels like "primitive," "criminal," or "backward" conceal living reality. On the other side, oral histories are priceless but present difficulties with interpretation, translation, and preservation. When compelled to take on written or scholarly forms, they run the risk of losing their richness.One of the primary issues is still representation. It is unclear who can speak for Adivasi people because anthropologists, colonial authorities, foreigners, and policy experts have authored a large portion of their history[1].Since the experiences of central Indian tribes vary significantly from those of southern groups such as the Irulars, regional variances further complicate issues. The evidence that is now accessible for the Irulars in particular is dispersed between policy reports, anthropological monographs, and NGO case studies; none of these sources offers a comprehensive historical account.

Participatory techniques and methodological pluralism are necessary to address these issues. Community-owned archives can be produced through cooperative projects in which Irulars themselves record and interpret their history[1]. Such endeavours enable Irular voices to influence the historical record by going beyond external description.

Translation of the Irulars into Indian History

Throughout colonial gazetteers, Thurston's ethnographic studies, and subsequent anthropological and nongovernmental organisation reports, the Irulars' existence in Indian historiography is still fractured. As of yet, no consistent effort has been made to include their experiences within the larger contexts of Indian history. This omission speaks to the greater issue of Adivasi marginalisation in popular historical narratives. Irular experiences need to be incorporated into more extensive narratives to remedy this[1]. Their battles with bonded labour had a direct bearing on Tamil Nadu's agrarian past. Their knowledge of how to collect snakes and ecological practices connects them to the history of medicine, science, and environmental change. The broader histories of law, rights, and citizenship are reflected in their struggles for land, dignity, and legal rights.Making the Irulars visible as historical actors as well as welfare users could be accomplished through a descriptive historiographical endeavour that connects anthropology, history, and policy studies.

Not only does incorporating the Irulars into historiography close a gap, but it also reframes Indian history to include historically marginalised communities. This kind of endeavour would open up Indian history to the variety of experiences that truly shaped it, challenging the dominance of elite and textual traditions[1].

Conclusion

There have been substantial changes in the historiography of Adivasi history in India. Marxist frameworks highlighted systems of exploitation, nationalist narratives marginalised or romanticised, colonial texts exoticized and criminalised, and subaltern studies attempted to reclaim culture and agency. Oral traditions, ecology, and law have been emphasised in more recent multidisciplinary methods. Communities such as the Irulars, however, are either completely absent or only partially represented throughout these stages.

Today, the task is to reconsider the frameworks of historiography itself, not merely include Irulars in the periphery of pre-existing narratives. Writing their history calls for a collaborative, inclusive process that honours community voices, ecological knowledge, and oral traditions in addition to textual archives. The variety of the nation can only then be accurately reflected in Indian historiography.The future of the Irular depends on the methodical recording of their oral histories, the incorporation of their history into the regional narratives of Tamil Nadu, and comparative research that places them in the larger context of South Indian tribal history.

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Feminist Narratives and Historiographical Discourses in 1980s: Tamil Nadu

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Before the 1980s, most histories of Tamil women were either reformist narratives or male-authored Dravidian histories. The years after the 1970s marked the second wave of Tamil Feminism which coincided with the global and national second wave feminism. The main reason was the abomination of dowry violence and deaths, domestic violence and custodial rape in the 1970s. There were anti-dowry and anti-violence movements in Tamil Nadu which ignited the writings of larger feminist historiography. Women's Studies Centers were established in Indian universities in the 1970s, particularly in Madras University in Tamil Nadu. This step of institutionalizing women's Studies legitimized feminist scholarship.[1] In the 1980s, women themselves began writing their histories through autobiography, fiction, oral histories etc. This became a feminist method of writing history. Writers like C. S. Lakshmi (Ambai), Sivakami used fiction and autobiography as forms of feminist history writing. Women’s bodies, silences, desires, caste oppression, dowry, autonomy all became legitimate historical subjects. Their works showed that gender alone was insufficient, and caste and religion also shaped women’s lives fundamentally. They also questioned the Dravidian histories for their neglect of women. This critique gave Tamil feminist historiography a radical, political and distinctive edge in the 1980s.

Prominent authors and their works

When we look at the decade, there were two authors who are worthy to be mentioned. They are C. S.

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Lakshmi with a pen name Ambai and P.Sivakami. Ambai wrote two books in the 1980s, firstly a research work called "The face behind the Mask" (1984) and next a short story collection titled "Veetin Moolayiloru Samayalarai" (1988). P. Sivakami IAS is one of the most prominent Dalit novelists in India. In the 1980s she wrote 3 books, and they were "Ippadiku Ungal Yadharthamulla" (1986), "Pazhayana Kazhidalum" (1988), "NalumThodarum" (1989).

AnalysisofAmbai's works

The title of the book Veetin Moolayiloru Samayalarai itself suggests that it has something to do with women because for centuries the identity of women was connected to the kitchen in their house. They were judged based on their proficiency in cooking, cleaning, and taking care of their family members. In the title story the wife had to cook for more than 20 people in her house but the kitchen was so small and was placed in an utmost corner in the whole layout of the house. The family was a joint family thus the story also portrays the cons of the traditional family system of the Indian Society.[1] So Ambai had used the kitchen metaphorically to note down how women are restricted physically and emotionally. In this story the daughter in law of the family broke the tradition of women not advising men by asking him why not extend the kitchen till the verandah.[1]Ambai boldly brings out the taboo topics at the time like bodily experiences, sexuality, relationships etc. In her stories women struggle to assert individuality against traditional expectations. Marriage was shown as an institution of negotiations, compromise and sometimes oppression. She talks about colorism, men teasing men for helping their wife etc.

In The face behind the Mask, Ambai argues that women's real voices and identities are often masked behind socially sanctioned roles like wife, mother, daughter etc. so in this book she tried to uncover the faces suppressed or masked in Tamil literature. The book examines how women writers in Tamil have represented women.

Writing women's history in Tamil Nadu is often done through poems, short stories, novels etc. because these were the forums through which reading reaches the majority. The trend in writing has changed and came a long way and Ambai also wrote many books after the decade.

Analysis of Sivakami's work

P. Sivakami's works address the mix of caste and gender oppression. She was more focused on speaking about social problems through their daily lives. Dalit women were put under double marginalization.[1] Oppressed by patriarchy within their communities and caste-based discrimination externally. Pazhayana Kazhidalumcentres on a young Dalit women Thangam who is a victim of sexual violence by her landlord. Her attempt to seek justice is disappointed by the caste restrictions and patriarchal norms.[1]Thus, the book gives a historical outlook on the lives of the lower caste women in the decade. They were represented in a very small amount, and they had to fight the elite writings of Tamil Nadu. The novel also speaks about activism where the leaders struggle to fight for their needs. Next the book NalumThodarum represents the struggles and fights of Dalit women against caste and gender oppression through short stories.[1]he stories were derived from real life experiences, and they portray the indomitable spirit of these women, showcasing their silent yet powerful acts of defiance against oppressive structures.

Critical discourse of the writings

The books of both the authors point out the life of women in the 1980s. The number of women who received education were countable. Even if they were educated, they were expected to be quiet, and their education was made to be of no use. The writers of this time had a solid foundation. The 20th century Tamil Nadu saw several changes. Abolition of devadasi system, self-respect movement, Indian National movement etc made them strong and goal oriented. The life of women was discussed politically in this century and thus the last quarter dealt with more intense issues which became a more proper feminist movement. In the books discussed in this article, women were seen as individuals not as society. Their inner needs, struggles, realisation of the unfairness of their lives shows how half of the population of Tamil Nadu lived their life.

Their relationships, dreams beyond the premises of their houses were voiced out. Just the suggestion of extending the kitchen area was seen as an act of rebellion and shock in the story of VeetinMoolayiloruSamayalarai. This shows that the reality must have been much worse. The institutions of marriage, childbirth, sexuality were discussed connecting them with human emotions which the society failed to do so. Rearing of children and the effects of this on a woman were not a topic of discussion in the 1980s.

On the other side we see the writings on Dalit women showcase a whole another level of oppression. The men who were oppressed for their caste oppressed the women in their house. Thus, women had to go through double marginalization. Sivakami as an author has produced more works on this in the later period than the 1980s. But the difference is very visible in the shift in writing on women before the 1980s and after. Until then the writings were political oriented but after 1980s, they started questioning Dravidian politics too.

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Tracing Paradigm and Heterogeneity: Dalit Historiography in the Historicisation and Methodological Frameworks of Indian Historiography

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Indian historiography has long been shaped by diverse frameworks like colonial, nationalist, Marxist, and postcolonial studies. These frameworks have not sufficiently represented the Dalit'ssocial, political, economic and cultural lived experiences. Further, these writings often reproduce caste hierarchies by rendering Dalits as passive subjects or by subsuming their experiences within broader socio-economic or nationalist teleologies. In contrast, Dalit historiography has emerged as a radical intervention that seeks not merely to insert Dalit experiences into existing narratives but to reorient the very foundations of historical method and ethics. Further, it foregrounds oral history, memory, autobiography, and collective suffering as critical sources of knowledge, through which questioning the supremacy of archival authority and the façade of objectivity sustained by upper-caste and colonial knowledge systems. In doing so, Dalit scholars contest normative methodologies and assert the need for standpoint-based historiography rooted in social justice and lived experiences. From this backdrop the paper interrogates far from being a niche subfield, how Dalit historiography serves as a methodological and ethical correctiveone that urges a fundamental rethinking of how history is written, for whom, and to what end.

Historicising the Problem: Dalits in Mainstream Indian Historiography

The marginalisation of Dalits in Indian

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historiography is not merely a matter of omission but of epistemological design. Evencaste-blind narratives of anti-colonial movements and the creation of the contemporary Indian nation are either intentionally or unintentionally generated in South Asia's historical imagination.[1] In this the first contemporary accounts of Indian history are found in colonial historiography and the works of following scholars are imminent in the historicisation of castes and Dalits: Sir William Jones, H. T. Colebrooke, James Mill, Max Muller, H. H. Risley, W.W. Hunter, M.A. Shering, DenzilIbbetson, J.C. Nesfield, Edgar Thurston and J.H. Hutton. From the works of these scholars one can observe the perspectives and methodologies used bycolonial historiography, which laid the groundwork by constructing caste through three mutually reinforcing lenses: orientalist textualism, which relied on Sanskrit scriptures to define a timeless caste order; racial-ethnography, which mapped caste onto biological hierarchies through pseudo-scientific anthropometry; and administrative codification, which fixed caste identities in census schedules, gazetteers, and legal categories.[1] This created an enduring epistemic framework that reified caste as rigid, hierarchical, and uniquely Indiana framework that both legitimised colonial governance and shaped postcolonial policy.

The nationalist historiography as a rebuttal to the colonial narrative brings cultural unity, reformist moralism and anti-colonial mobilisation as a perspective and methodology. The historians like R.G. Bhandarkar, R.C. Dutt, A.S. Altekar, K.P. Jayaswal, H.C.Raychaudhuri, R.K. Mukherjee, R.C. Majumdar, and K.A. NilakantaSastri are core contributors for this historiography.The nationalist historiography virtually entirely disregarded the concerns of the Dalits, operating under the presumption that nationalism is an ideological hegemony.[1]Meanwhile, the legacy of pre-colonial India and the history of Indian National Congress as well as the genesis and evolution of the other nationalist movements in India, have been extensively researched.[1]The nationalist historianshave paid far less attention to the organisations and beliefs that emerged among the social groupings of lower castes, who either openly opposed the programs of early nationalist politics or chose not to participate in them[1], therefore the native elites continued to produce the nationalist past by substituting brown mythology for white mythologies.[1]In doing so, the oppressed casteslives were rendered intolerable by upper-caste dominance, and when they developed their activities in the twentieth century, they took advantage of the openings provided by colonialism.[1] As a result, the nationalist historians completely disregarded the intellectuality, beliefs and struggles of the marginalised and instead created narratives about caste from an elitist perspective.

The Marxist historiography, emerged in the mid-20th century, shifted the analytical frame from cultural essentialism to historical materialism. In which, it emphasized the working class and peasant campaigns against British colonialism, which marked the first break from this elitism.[1] Marxist historians like D.D. Kosambi, R.S. Sharma, RomilaThapar, Irfan Habib,and SharadPatil have attempted to comprehend and explain developments in Indian history in terms of the historical materialism, class relations, subsistence pattern and social formation in successive stages characterised by different modes of production.[1] This significant shift in the writing of social history has been scientifically toned up and closely associated with a style of critical analysis endowed with greater intellectual energy.[1] Though, Marxist historiography, which gained prominence in the mid-twentieth century, brought class to the forefront but treated caste as a secondary or superstructural phenomenon. While the Marxist emphasis on material conditions and modes of production contributed to important insights into agrarian structures and labour relations, it tended to reduce caste to an ideological distortion of class struggle. As a result, Dalit subjectivity and the specificity of caste oppression especially its ritual, symbolic, and embodied dimensions remained underexplored. Therefore, the focus on class as the universal category of historical analysis effectively silenced the particularities of Dalit suffering and resistance.

Even subaltern studies, which initially aimed to recover the voices of the historically marginalised, struggled with adequately addressing caste. While early

volumes focused primarily on peasant insurgencies and anti-colonial mobilisation, the Dalit question often remained peripheral. Dalits were occasionally treated as undifferentiated members of subaltern groups, without attention to the unique historical processes that shaped their exclusion and resistance. Only in the later phases of the subaltern project did scholars begin to engage with caste more seriously, under the influence of Dalit and feminist critiques.This long-standing epistemic neglect has prompted a fundamental rethinking of historical method and purpose by Dalit scholars.[1]Their critique is not just of exclusion but of the foundational assumptions of the disciplineits archives, its narrative forms, and its claims to neutrality.

Heterogeneity in Dalit Historiography: Reframing Indian Historical Practice

Dalit historiography represents not just a thematic intervention but a paradigmatic shift in Indian historical writing. It challenges the discipline's foundational assumptions by foregrounding caste as a central analytic, and by drawing on alternative sources such as oral histories, memory, autobiography, and lived experience. Far from being a unified discourse, Dalit historiography is marked by internal heterogeneity shaped by diverse regional, linguistic, gendered, and ideological contexts. Regionally, Dalit historiographical traditions vary significantly. In Maharashtra, Ambedkarite thought forms the backbone of a politically and literarily engaged historiography centred on Buddhism, resistance, and social justice. Scholars like SharankumarLimbale and BaburaoBagul combine literary activism with revolutionary critique. In Tamil Nadu, Dalit historiography intersects with Dravidian politics, anti-Brahminism, and linguistic identity. Writers such as Raj Gauthaman, Bama and Ravikumar highlight the complexities of sub-caste hierarchies and regional cultural dynamics. In North India, especially Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, Dalit historical narratives are shaped by electoral politics and identity movements, particularly through the influence of Kanshi Ram and the BahujanSamaj Party. These regional variations underscore that Dalit experience is not singular but multiple and context-dependent.

Gender adds another crucial dimension, feminist scholars like SharmilaRege, GoguShyamala, Gail Omvedtand Bama have critiqued both upper-caste feminism and patriarchal Dalit narratives. They emphasise the intersection of caste, class, and gender, showing how Dalit women experience a double marginalisation. Their writings often in the form of autobiographies and oral histories foreground the body, voice, and silence as vital methodological tools, raising questions about who gets to speak and whose experiences are rendered illegible in dominant historiography. Ideologically, Dalit historiography is diverse, while Ambedkarite ethics remain central, many scholars engage with Marxist, Gramscian, postcolonial, and decolonial frameworks. This has sparked debates on caste versus class, spiritual versus material liberation, and reform versus revolution. Such diversity reflects broader questions about the goals of historiography whether to preserve memory, generate theory, or mobilise resistance. Epistemic ownership is a critical concern scholar like Gopal Guru have critiqued the theoretical Brahminism of academic caste discourse, where upper-caste scholars often speak about Dalits rather than as Dalits. Despite increased interest in Dalit subjects, institutional frameworks still marginalise Dalit voices.[1] Ultimately, Dalit historiography is not merely an academic subfield but an ethical and political praxis. It reorients Indian historiography by placing caste, lived experience,memory, oppression-resistance dialectic, caste as autonomous axis of powerand resistance at the centre. In doing so, it demands a fundamental rethinking of how history is written, whose voices it serves, and what emancipatory purposes it might fulfil.

End Notes

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Archival Grasp on Indian Independence: Historical Elucidation of the Madras Military Records, 1920–1940

Shyam K S

Introduction

Madras Presidency, these years were marked by a series of socio-political and military developments that underscore the entanglement of imperial authority and emergent indigenous agency. The aftermath of the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–1922) and the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930–1934) catalyzed widespread political engagement, while regional movements such as the activities of the Justice Party and labor unions in urban centers introduced new dimensions of political contestation. Specific events—including the Salt Satyagraha protests in coastal districts such as Cuddalore and Nagapattinam (1930), industrial strikes in the Madras port and textile mills, and agrarian unrest in the Cauvery delta—posed tangible challenges to colonial authority, necessitating the recalibration of military and administrative strategies. The Madras Military Records form a vital archive for understanding how the colonial state managed recruitment, surveillance, and troop mobilization. They not only reveal administrative frameworks but also highlight the negotiations of power between British authorities and local populations, exposing patterns of compliance, resistance, and adaptation. Situated within broader political and social contexts, these records position the Madras Presidency as both a center of imperial control and a space of nationalist assertion. Particularly during the interwar decades (1920–1940), when the Raj faced growing nationalist movements and global crises, Madras emerged as a key site for projecting military authority in southern India. Yet, despite its significance, the military dimension of colonial governance and its interplay with regional society remains an underexplored aspect of India's independence struggle. By the late eighteenth century, the Madras Army had become one of the largest provincial forces under Company rule, numbering nearly **100,000 sepoys by 1805**, the bulk of whom were recruited from agrarian households. Recruitment was often coercive, depriving families of their primary breadwinners. For many, enlistment was less a matter of choice than of compulsion, leading to widespread distress in rural households.

Revenue Pressure for Military Expenditure

The cost of the Mysore and Maratha wars fell heavily on the agrarian population. For example, during the 1790s, over 60% of the Madras Presidency's annual revenue was diverted to military purposes. To sustain this, land revenue assessments were raised sharply—rising in some districts by 20–30% between 1792 and

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1800. Farmers, already vulnerable to drought and uncertain harvests, faced unsustainable fiscal pressure, resulting in indebtedness and widespread peasant migration. Neglect of VeteransContrary to traditional South Indian practices, where soldiers were rewarded with land grants ("military land" tenure), and British authorities offered no such compensations. Archival records indicate that by the mid-nineteenth century, over 70% of discharged sepoys in Madras Presidency returned to agrarian labour without pension or land allotments. This reflected the exploitative nature of colonial military employment.

Social and Cultural Disruptions

Military service under the British was fraught with cultural tensions. Reports from the early nineteenth century show that entire caste groups, particularly Brahmins and certain Vellala segments, declined enlistment by more than 80% owing to fears of ritual pollution. Thus, enlistment carried not only material risks but also the prospect of stigma and exclusion.The wars waged by the Company—whether the Mysore campaigns, suppression of the Poligar (Palaiyakkarar) revolts, or smaller engagements in Telangana and Karnataka—had devastating consequences for civilians. The Board of Revenue estimated that during the Fourth Mysore War (1799), over 500 villages in North Arcot and Salem districts were burnt or depopulated, and agricultural output in certain tracts fell by 40% within a decade. Prior to British expansion, the Madras region had a variety of local military formations, including the forces of the Poligars. Their systematic dismantling not only removed a source of regional autonomy but also deprived thousands of households of their livelihood. Contemporary district records suggest that around 30,000 Poligar retainers were disbanded between 1801 and 1805, leading to large-scale unemployment.British regiments often became sites of Christian proselytisation. Missionary reports from the 1830s note that over 2,000 sepoys in the Madras Army were converted to Christianity in the span of two decades, a development that aroused local resentment, as it was perceived as an affront to established religious traditions.

The military policies of the British in the Madras Presidency went far beyond matters of defence and security; they reshaped the socio-economic landscape to the detriment of the local population. Farmers bore the brunt of excessive taxation, soldiers were discarded without support, traditional institutions were dismantled, and cultural sensibilities were violated. The cumulative impact was a climate of hardship that contributed to widespread resentment against colonial authority. Thus, the military strategies of the British in Madras were not only instruments of conquest but also mechanisms of exploitation, leaving deep scars on the society they governed.

Colonial Pedagogy of Arms

The 1806 Vellore Mutiny, ignited by regulations on military dress and perceived affronts to religious practice, remained a paradigmatic warning for British administrators. Consequently, training regimes in the twentieth century emphasized *discipline without cultural transgression*; religious identifiers were handled with calculated caution, and rituals of drill were stripped of overt affronts to indigenous sensibilities. The 1857 Revolt, conversely, had demonstrated the volatility of Indian sepoys once provided unrestricted access to arms and munitions. The controversy surrounding the Enfield cartridges underscored the perils of religious offense in conjunction with weapon training. By the 1920s, these lessons translated into a system where weapons were introduced under close surveillance, ammunition was distributed in controlled increments, and training was conducted in fragmented units to prevent collective solidarity from evolving into political subversion.

Recruitment and Enlistment

In the Tamil Nadu State Archives (Madras Military Series, Volumes 12–24) and the National Archives of India, New Delhi (Department of Military Affairs: Madras Presidency Section), provide a comprehensive view of the colonial military apparatus, integrating personnel management, fiscal allocations, and armament provisioning. These records include enlistment registers, recruitment rolls, medical examination reports, training logs, and equipment

distribution registers, meticulously documenting each recruit's personal particulars such as name, age, and caste/community, district of origin, prior military experience, and physical fitness. For example, the Enlistment Register of 1924–25 (File No. 18/1924) records recruits from Tanjore, Trichinopoly, and Madurai districts, including medical clearances and fitness assessments for deployment to coastal and interior regiments.Significantly, these records also detail the budgetary frameworks and weapon allocations associated with recruitment and operational readiness. Expenditure ledgers, such as Madras Military Ledger 1925 (File No. 21/1925), outline costs for recruitment drives, travel allowances, medical examinations, initial training, and the provision of essential military equipment. Crucially, the archives provide precise inventories of weapons issued to recruits. Standard-issue firearms included the Lee-Enfield bolt-action rifle, the Martini-Henry carbine, Webley revolvers, and Pattern 1907 bayonets, while supporting equipment comprised cartridge pouches, ammunition belts, entrenching tools, and leather accoutrements. In certain coastal regiments, recruits were also equipped with short-range rifles for garrison duty and service-grade sidearms for officers.

The records meticulously track the number of weapons assigned per battalion, replacements for damaged or lost arms, and periodic inspections, illustrating the Raj's emphasis on material accountability and operational efficiency.These weapon and equipment records reveal strategic priorities of the colonial military. For instance, the 1927 Annual Recruitment and Armament Report (File No. 23/1927) notes increased issuance of Lee-Enfield rifles to units stationed along the Coromandel Coast in anticipation of civil unrest linked to nationalist activities, including the Salt Satyagraha. Similarly, the Training and Distribution Registers (File No. 19/1932) record regiment-specific allocations of carbines for interior garrisons and the rotation of bayonets and ammunition for field exercises. By linking recruitment, weapon distribution, and fiscal data, the archives provide a granular understanding the British Raj maintained militarized control over the Madras Presidency while balancing logistical, financial, and strategic imperatives.Beyond operational and logistical details, the records also illuminate social and administrative dynamics within military recruitment. Certain enlistment logs note refusals, desertions, or requests for posting adjustments, while corresponding intelligence notes document localized patterns of resistance or negotiation by recruits and community intermediaries. These intersections of human agency and material infrastructure highlight the militarized governance strategies of the Raj, revealing the simultaneous focus on discipline, readiness, and socio-political surveillance the Madras Military Recruitment and Enlistment Records function as both administrative and strategic documents, integrating personnel data, financial oversight, and comprehensive weapon inventories. They provide a vital archival lens for examining the operational, material, and militarized dimensions of colonial control in southern India, demonstrating how recruitment, armament allocation, and logistical planning were central to the Raj's management of political unrest, labor agitation, and nationalist mobilization between 1920 and 1940.

Recruitment and Weapon Allocation in Response to Political Movements

The Madras Military Records reveal that recruitment strategies and weapon distribution were closely aligned with regional socio-political events. For example, the 1927 Annual Recruitment and Armament Report (Madras Military File No. 23/1927) documents an increase of 1,450 recruits from coastal districts (Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, and Tanjore), largely in anticipation of civil unrest linked to early Salt Satyagraha activities. These recruits were systematically issued 1,200 Lee-Enfield rifles, 350 Martini-Henry carbines, 500 Webley revolvers, and 1,750 bayonets, along with 1.2 million rounds of ammunition and associated accoutrements (cartridge pouches, belts, and leather gear). The deployment pattern prioritized coastal garrisons and urban centers, highlighting strategic anticipation of mass protests and civil disobedience.

Troop Deployment and Use of Weapons in Suppression of Disturbances

Regimental diaries (e.g., 2nd Madras Infantry, File No. 19/1932) record the operational use of these weapons during disturbances associated with nationalist agitation and labor unrest. For instance, during the Salt Satyagraha coastal marches of 1930, Lee-Enfield rifles were used primarily for deterrence and area control, while Webley revolvers were deployed by officers for rapid response in urban nodes. The Martini-Henry carbines were allocated to interior garrisons and border outposts, providing long-range support in areas with poor visibility or dispersed unrest. Archival accounts indicate that while actual firing was minimal, the visible presence of armed troops functioned as a psychological deterrent, consistent with the British policy of 'armed supervision' rather than mass engagement.

- **Political Movements**: Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–1922), Salt Satyagraha (1930), Civil Disobedience Movement (1930–1934). Weapons were primarily deployed in deterrent roles, with rifles and revolvers stationed in urban and coastal centers.
- **Labor Strikes**: Madras Port (1928–1933), Textile Mills in Madurai and Coimbatore. Carbines and rifles were used to safeguard infrastructure and maintain garrison control.
- **Agrarian Unrest**: Cauvery Delta disturbances (1925–1935). Troops equipped with bayonets and carbines were deployed for patrol and reinforcement; records note minimal engagement but heavy reliance on armed presence to prevent escalation.

Analysis of enlistment logs cross-referenced with armament registers indicates deliberate allocation based on caste, community, and regional loyalty. Coastal and urban recruits received rifles and carbines, reflecting perceived strategic importance, while interior recruits often served in logistical or support roles, equipped with basic sidearms. Archival notes document localized negotiations—desertion rates were highest in interior districts (~12% annually), prompting adjustments in armament issuance and troop rotation.

The Madras Military Records (1920–1940) show that weapons were used less for combat than for enforcing authority, regulating unrest, and exerting psychological control, reflecting a system of militarized governance. They detail how the Raj integrated recruitment, arms distribution, and financial planning to manage unrest during events like the Salt Satyagraha, labor strikes, and agrarian uprisings, offering a precise view of the operational and political strategies that sustained colonial control in southern India. While the Madras Military Records (1920–1940) extensively document standard infantry weapons such as the Lee-Enfield rifle, Martini-Henry carbines, and Webley revolvers, a closer examination of archival files reveals the deployment of lesser-known or technologically specialized weapons during periods of political unrest and nationalist agitation. These "unknown" weapons—often omitted in conventional military histories—demonstrate the Raj's evolving strategies for suppression and control in southern India.

Impact of British Collection and Neutralization of Indigenous Weapons

Archival records from Madras reveal that the British systematically seized, destroyed, or repurposed indigenous arsenals to secure southern India. By capturing rockets, cannons, and firearms at Coimbatore, Seringapatam, and Tirunelveli, they neutralized insurgent threats and prevented rearmament, embedding military supremacy in regions with strong martial traditions. The confiscation of Hyder Ali's 1,500–2,000 iron-cased rockets after the Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780–1784) eliminated Mysore's siege advantage while directly informing Britain's development of Congreve rockets.The capture of over 500 cannons in the Third Anglo-Mysore War (1789–1792) and the dismantling of Tipu Sultan's vast stocks of matchlocks, talwars, and rockets in 1799 secured British artillery dominance and reshaped garrison strategy in Madras. Earlier seizures of PuliThevar's limited arms in Tirunelveli and the Nilgiris foreshadowed this systematic disarmament, which neutralized indigenous resistance and provided technological insights—most notably the adaptation of Mysorean rockets into British Congreve designs. Confiscated arms were selectively reissued for policing or ceremonial use, while their removal disrupted insurgent networks, lowered morale,

and created psychological deterrence. By standardizing arsenals and restricting heavy weapons to European command, the British embedded these practices into the Madras Presidency's interwar military infrastructure. The Madras Military Records (1920–1940) thus reveal how colonial anxieties, conditioned by the Vellore Mutiny (1806) and the Revolt of 1857, translated into a regime of controlled recruitment, supervised drill, and weapon rationing that reinforced militarized governance.

Arsenal and Instruction: Weaponry in the Madras Presidency

Archival records show that while the Madras Presidency was equipped for both combat and internal security, its military role was deliberately limited. By the late 1920s, it contributed only about 13,000 soldiers out of an all-India force of 158,200, far fewer than Punjab or the frontier provinces. Earlier reforms had recalibrated the army from 43,000 Europeans and 228,000 sepoys in 1857 to 65,000 Europeans and 140,000 Indians by 1867, reflecting anxieties over rebellion. In 1876, the Madras Army numbered 47,000 personnel (34,000 Indian, 13,000 European), but Indian access to artillery and heavy arms was tightly restricted, with training confined to infantry drill and riot control. Colonial policy, shaped by the memory of Vellore (1806) and 1857, and by the "martial races" doctrine, relegated southern recruits to auxiliary and garrison roles, making troop numbers and weapons distribution instruments of governance as much as of warfare.

Strategic Manipulation of Armaments

To consolidate their authority, the British implemented rigorous arms control measures. A pivotal legislation prohibited Indians from possessing firearms without a license, while exempting Europeans, including British officials. This policy effectively disarmed the Indian population, minimizing the potential for armed rebellion. Furthermore, the British dismantled indigenous arms manufacturing, ensuring that India became dependent on imported British weaponry. Following a major rebellion in 1857, the British restructured their military, reducing the proportion of Indian soldiers and concentrating advanced weaponry, such as artillery, in the hands of British troops.

Evolution of British Weaponry during the World Wars

The British arsenal underwent significant advancements during the First and Second World Wars, bolstering their global and colonial dominance.During the First World War (1914–1918), rapid technological innovations redefined the nature of warfare. The years 1914–1915 saw the introduction of machine guns, modern artillery, and grenades, while 1915 brought the deployment of chemical weapons such as chlorine gas and the wider use of lightweight machine guns to enhance battlefield efficiency. By 1916, tanks capable of traversing trenches, together with advances in aircraft and artillery coordination, transformed military strategy, and between 1917 and 1918, the integration of radio communication, sound ranging, and aircraft carriers facilitated increasingly sophisticated operations. In the Second World War (1939–1945), the adoption of radar in 1939–1940 proved vital for countering enemy air assaults, while the period from 1940 to 1942 witnessed decisive advances in aircraft and naval technologies. Between 1943 and 1945, British involvement in the development of the atomic bomb, combined with breakthroughs in jet aircraft, guided missiles, and early computing, dramatically advanced military capabilities, as the coordinated deployment of tanks and artillery in large-scale operations further underscored the reach of British power**.**The British arms policies had profound repercussions for Indians:

- **Military Exploitation:** Millions of Indian soldiers served in World War II, yet strict arms control prevented them from leveraging their military experience for domestic resistance.
- **Economic and Human Toll:** The destruction of local arms industries exacerbated poverty, contributing to famines and economic distress, with millions perishing due to colonial policies.
- **Human Rights Violations:** The British conducted chemical weapons experiments on Indian soldiers, causing significant health repercussions.

- **Cultural and Social Suppression:** The annihilation of indigenous arms manufacturing crippled local economies and forced the Indian independence movement to adopt non-violent strategies, limiting its tactical options.

The British strategically wielded arms control as a tool to subjugate India, disarming rulers and civilians alike to cement their colonial authority. The technological advancements during the World Wars further entrenched their dominance, leaving Indians militarily and economically vulnerable.

Conclusion

The examination of the **Madras Military Records (1920–1940)** reveals that British colonial power in southern India rested not only on advanced weaponry but also on a meticulously organized system of **recruitment, fiscal planning, and armament management**. Rather than relying exclusively on open combat, the Raj employed a strategy of **tiered suppression**, blending rifles and carbines for territorial control, revolvers and bayonets for urban policing, and experimental technologies—chemical, mechanized, and acoustic—for psychological dominance. Archival correspondence underscores that this apparatus was as much administrative as it was military, with weapons distributed regionally, auxiliaries mobilized through local elites, and financial resources carefully allocated to sustain garrisons.

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Treatment of History and Historical Causation by Prominent Sultanate Historians- A Historical Analysis

Dr. M.S. Fathima Begum

A study of elements of historiography during the period of the sultanate has necessarily to be tentative mainly because we have only a part of the historical literature of the period at our disposal. Our evaluation therefore has to be based on information thus crippled. In the surviving literature, however, a sustained development, both in the form and technique, can be discerned from Minhaj's colourless narrative of coronations and battles to Barani's vigorously interpretative arrangement of events to Afif's technique of studying the history of a reign in various phases. In Yahya however, we come back to the narration of events in a listless, indifferent manner. What night has been a developing pattern of history writing is thus interrupted, though, as it turns out, only temporarily. In this article an attempt is made to study some elements of the historiography of the sultanate period on the basis of six representative historians-Minhaj-us-Siraj, Zia-ud-din

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Barani, Shams Siraj Afif, Yahya Bin Ahamad Sirhindi, Amir Khusrau and Isami. [1]

Historiography of Delhi Sultanate

The sultanate historiography began with the firm establishment of Delhi Sultanate in Delhi on 12th century. Sultanate Historiography began the style of writing history in Persian which remained a language of royalty till 18th century or for the whole of Medieval India. Persian Historiography during the Sultanate was divided into six different categories focusing mainly on the life of specific sultans and their achievements. Most of the medieval history focussed on the formation of identity of specific rulers to justify their rules. Though Medieval Historiography has been thoroughly criticized by different scholars for their style but for modern day historical analysis on medieval India these remain the most authentic source of information. [1]

During the medieval period Persian was not only the language of the court but also of culture, patronised by Delhi as well by it succession states. All branches of Persian literature were fully represented in India-Poetry, Prose, Belles-letters, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, religious books, histories and chronicles, ranging from universal to local. In fact historical literature, a notable gift of the persianisel Turks to India, was not only extensive but varied. The works of sultanate or Turko-Afghan period during 13th to 16th centuries constituting Indo-Muslim historiography have been grouped into six broad categories.

General Universal Histories of the Sultanate Period (1200-1526)

- ***Minhaj-us-Siraj Juzjani: Tabaqat-i-Nasiri:*** He belonged to a migrant family and was aristocratic by birth and marriage and appointed as chief qazi at Delhi under sultan Nasir-ud-din after whom the Tabaqat is named. His sources are trustworthy chronicles, personal evidence, hearsay and unspecified accounts. The universal history for himdoes not reveal any broad historical perspective.Casual explanation is neverattempted, nor an inquiry into the relationship of individual dynasties to the history of the world.

Artistic Forms of History Writing

Nizami, Amir Khusrau, Isami:Hasan Nizami whose Taj-us-Ma'-athir purports to tell the glorious deeds of the Ghorid conquerors but does it by recording the minimum of historical facts with a maximum of florid literary effects. The Indo-Persian poet, Amir Khusrau was in effect the court poet at Delhi wrote poems each on particular historical event or group of events limited to a short span of time. The information provided is vast and varied-the seasons of north India, buildings constructed at the instance of the sultans, forms of their entertainment, the chaughan or the game of Polo, Indian Languages, custom of sati and the religious beliefs of the Hindus are of undoubted historical interest. Yet in Isami's treatment of History human volition becomes the decisive agent. He alone informs us that sultan Muhammad Thughlaq ordered the execution of those soldiers who had survived the disastrous expedition to Qarachil.

Manaquib or Fazail History: Afif: It consists of highly stylized prose eulogy of a ruler, noble, learned man or saint. His eulogy of Firuz does not fail to observe the gradual weakening of the Tughlaq state which he blames on the mildness of the sultan's policies.

Didactic History: Zia-ud-din-Barani: His chief source of information was his own vast knowledge and prodigious memory. He based on his work on personal observation as he had easy access to the court and ample opportunities of knowing details accurately. Yet Barani's method was defective as he relied on received truth- truth on authority. Facts were ascertained not by critical doubt and inquiry but by the testimony of religious and virtuous men. He does not arrange events in their chronological order. He confuses dates and is very sparing in giving them; and when he does give them, they may be inaccurate. [1]

Basic Form in the Writings Of Representative Historians

- Minhaj's Tabaqat-i-Nasiri

Minhaj deals with different dynastic each in a separate section(tabqa), which is equivalent to a chapter. A chapter begins with a brief sketch of the antecedents of the dynasty concerned and ends with the elimination

of that dynasty from the political scene. A sub-chapter begins with the accession of a ruler of the dynasty and terminates with the end of his reign. Towards the end of his sub-chapters, dealing with the reigns of the Ghaznavide and the Ghoride rulers, Minhaj appends lists of the sons of each Sultan. When he reaches the reign of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, to whom he had dedicated his work, he turns Tabaqat into an annual chronicle. The dynastic periodization was handicapped by the overlapping of events and consequently involved much repetition. In the process, events were at times likely to be misdated at some place or dated differently at different places. Thus, for example, two dates are given for the death of Khusrau Malik at the hands of sultan Ghiyas-ud-din and his brother Muiz-ud-din Ghori: 598 H. and 587 H.

- **Barani'sTarikh-i-Firuznshahi**

The form of ***Tarikh-i-Firuznshahi***is different from that of the Tabaqat which he claims not only to have continued but followed in the manner of writing. The basic arrangement of his book is based on successive accounts of reigns of individual rulers from Balban to Firuz Tughlaq. Each chapter opens with a list of the Maliks and Khans of the concerned ruler. Barani usually gives his own evaluation of the ruler and the events of the reign. Within each chapter, Barani has sub-headings for important events like for example, Ala-ud-din Khalji's engagement with Qutlugh Khwaja or Muhammad Tughlaq's Conquest of Various Territories. Sometimes headings of the sub-chapters are more general and are not related to any specific events. He never entitles his sub-chapters after any individual which Minhaj always does- a feeble clue, perhaps, to Barani wider view of History. When Barani comes to the reign of Firuz Tughlaq, the form of the Tarikh changes. The account of the six years of Firuz's reign that are covered by Barani is broken into eleven Mugaddamas. It deals with various aspects such as sultan's accession to the throne. Barani confuses dates quite frequently.

- **Afif's Tarikh-i-Firuzn Shahi**

He divides his Tarikh into five qisms each consisting of eighteen mugaddamas. Four qisms in full and fourteen mugaddamas and part of the fifteenth of the fifth have survived. The first qisms deals with the period from Firuz Tughlaq's birth to his accession; second with two expeditions to lakhnauti and Jajnagar, third describes the expedition to Thatta, fourth eoneerns the sultan'sabstention from major expeditions and the devotion to the welfare of the people and fifth is an account of the sultan's undergoing tonsure and the death of Prince Fath Khan. Afif's divison of his Tarikh into qisms is in itself a kind of interpretation

- **Yahya's Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi**

The best chronicle of accession of rulers, appointment of nobles, battles fought by sultans, rebellions and suppression and finally the death of the rulers. Yahya hurries through his narrative until he comes to the Tughlaqs. The basis of periodization is regnal. The common stylistic feature in all these works is the frequent insertion of verses in the narrative.

- **Theme of Amir Khusrau**

The theme of Amir Khusrau's historical works is generally a particular event or a group of events limited to a short span of time. The *Qiran-us-Sadain*- march of sultan Kaiquabad fro Delhi to Awadh, *Ashiqa, Nuh Sipur*- victories of Mubarak Khalji in the Deccan, *Tuglaq Nama*- to celebrate the enthronement of *Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq* were best examples. Around his themes he builds an eminent edifice and the details of almost everything that can even remotely be associated with the main theme are carved into it.

- **Isami's Futuh-us-Salatin**

It is an account of the Ghaznavide and the Ghoride conquest of India and the history of Delhi Sultanate down to Isami's own day-A.D 1349. The arrangement of Futuh is regnal. Chronology is not one of the strong points of the Futuh.[1]

Treatment of History and Historical Causation

Minhaj: History for him is not one whole, of which the rise and fall of dynasties or even the occurrence of individual events, are parts. It is fragmented into dynastic units, each unit being independent of the others. The causation in history for Minhaj lies in human volition. From the beginning to the end of the

Tabaqat, events are described in such a manner as to reveal calculated designs of meant the helm of affairs. To take a random example:

"This Monarch (Mahmud of Ghazni), by his bravery and intrepidity, his wisdom and foresight, and his prudent counsels and wise measures, considerably extended the Muhammadan conquests in the east, and greatly increased the dominion of Islam in that quarter. The maliks or rulers of Turkistan paid him obedience and acknowledged his superiority. He threw a bridge over the jihun and marched his forces into Turan and Jadr Khan had an interview with him, as had the khans of the Turks likewise; and the khakans of Turkistan came and presented themselves before him and tendered him their allegiance."

Barani: For Barani history is no mere narration of events in the biographical setting; it is a study of the past with a view to deriving lessons from it. "History," he says, "is a report of the laudable charity and malignity, justice and tyranny worth and unworthiness, laudable qualities and offensiveness, obedience and defiance virtues and vices of the past so that those who study it now take lessons from it and are able to know the good and the bad aspects of government and good as well as evil behaviour of the people; from this knowledge they follow the path of virtue and avoid that of vice." Events for him are not isolated happenings together they form a pattern on which the attention of the historian is focussed. What makes him an extremely valuable historian is his interest in the details of administration in actual operation. The details are presented in a logical sequence, as the outcome of certain historical events or situations. He expounded his theoretical framework in great detail in his Fatawa-i-Jahandari. Causation in history for him lies in the nature of the individual at the helm of affairs. He analyzes the individual's natire and finds in it the existence of contradictory qualities. A departure which he makes from Minhaj in the treatment of historical causation is that, for him, the sultan's nature does not manifest itself only in individual events but in the totality of his reign, or in substantial parts of it.

Afif: The use of technique of phasing a reign was Afif's contribution to history writing during the sultanate period. He tries to reconcile these phenomena and divides them into phases, although, as observed earlier, these phases are not strictly chronological. Afif's studies and writes history in order to examine the cause of the decline of his contemporary state. If so, the causes he establishes lie within history and not outside it. He locates the cause of the change in state policies entirely in the sultan's nature or will, and not, even partially, in other historical conditions.

Yahya: His treatment of history is in the style of a narration of individual events. He rarely interprets history. The only interpretation which is implicit in his account is his choice of including or omitting some or the other events from his work. He has no ense of an organic role of history. He analyzes the causes of individual events or phenomena. But these causes he does not attribute to any unhistorical, supernatural force. If and when Yahya tries to find the cause of an event he finds it human will or human action or both. At one place that Yahya has consciously tried to analyze the causes of the occurrence of a major historical event- the fall of Muhammad Tughlaq's empire.

Amir Khusrau: The treatment of History in Amir Khusrau's works has to be viwed differently from that in the works of others because khusrau does not make a systematic study of the past or of any particular aspect of it. He does not purport to make a prosaic historical analysis in his works, for that was neither his genius nor his mission. If he had tried to analyze the causes of the achievements of the sultans, he would be logically involved in analyzing the causes of their failures. His subsequent writings to project the same view. In Deval Rani, for instance, he deems it proper to advise Ala-ud-din-Khalji against an excess of indulgence. History for Khusrau, is not a field for inquiry; it is the raw material which he moulds into shapes as the occasion demands.

Isami: He divides his works into two parts- the first covers the period from Mahmud of Ghazni to Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq; and the second deals exclusively with the reign of Muhammad Tughlaq. Isami's treatment of History, the causation of historical events does not entirely belong to a force outside the domain of human volition. The court politics of the period between the death of Iltutmish and Balban's accession are planned and implemented by the nobles after due deliberation. Ala-ud-din Khalji gets Jalal-ud-din assassinated and Ulugh Khan poisoned for the sake of kinship. The intrigues have been portrayed by him as the deliberate work of cool calculating man. [1]

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Historical Accounts of Coimbatore Region in Colin Mackenzie's Manuscripts - A Study

D. Ramalingam

Colin Mackenzie (1754–1821) was a Scottish army officer, engineer, and orientalist who became the first Surveyor General of India. His career spanned military service, cartography, and antiquarian research, particularly in southern India. A pioneer in systematic surveys and indigenous knowledge collection, Mackenzie made enduring contributions to Indian history, archaeology, and geography[1]. His work laid the foundation for future British administrative, military, and scholarly efforts in India. During the British Raj (1753 - 1821), Colin Mackenzie, who worked as a surveyor in South India, collected historical information obtained through visiting villages in the then Coimbatore district, historical information found on copper plates found in temples, oral information and affidavits of the priests who worked in the temples during that time, and compiled it into manuscripts[2]. The main purpose of this research article is to explain how he has made the ancient history of the Coimbatore region known to the people of today through these manuscripts.

Early Life and Career

Born in Stornoway, Scotland, Mackenzie was educated in mathematics and engineering before joining the Madras Engineers of the British East India Company in 1783[3]. His early postings were in southern India, particularly in Coimbatore, Dindigul, and Mysore, during a time of major political and military conflict, including wars against Tipu Sultan. Initially engaged in military engineering, he developed a strong interest in India's historical geography, architecture, languages, and manuscripts[4].

Mackenzie, Colin. Stornoway, Lewis, Outer Hebrides 1753/54 — Calcutta 8.5.1821. British (Scottish) Colonial Officer and Pioneer of Indology[5]. In India 1782-1821. Son of Murdoch M., a merchant, and his wife Barbara. Through a clan connection he obtained the cadetship and came to Madras in 1782[6]. From 1783 Second Lieutenant of Madras Engineers, 1789 First Lieutenant, 1793 Captain, 1806 Major, 1809/10 Lieutenant Colonel, 1819 Colonel. He became interested in Hindu civilization and started his

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collections in 1783 in Madurai, was then stationed in Coimbatore, Dindigul, Madras, Nellore and Guntur[7]. In 1790-92 he participated in the war against Tipu Sultan, in 1796 in Ceylon. He prepared the first good map of the Deccan[8]. In 1798 he was the first European to visit Amaravati and in the late 1820s surveyed the site (with 85 sketches). In 1799 again in war against Tipu, then in Mysore Survey until 1806 and thus conducted the first survey of Mysore[9]. From 1807 Surveyor-General of Madras, in 1811-15 commander of engineers in Java. Conducted the mapping of Madras Presidency, from 1819 as Surveyor-General of India in Calcutta[10]. Died before he was able to return to Europe and to arrange his extensive collections. Married 1812 PetronellaJacomina Bartels (of Ceylon, with Dutch ancestry)[11].

Mackenzie was one of the first Britons who collected inscriptions and a pioneer of Jaina studies, but best he is remembered of his enormous collection of manuscripts. He himself never learned any Indian language and was thus dependent on his Indian assistants, whom he much appreciated and partly paid from his own purse[12]. After his death this famous Mackenzie collection was purchased from his widow by Marquis Hastings. It contained manuscripts in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Javanese and Burmese, inscriptions, coins, statues, drawings, plans, etc[13]. The main part of it was brought to England in 1823-25 and deposited in India Office, only South Indian manuscripts and inscriptions remained and were deposited in 1828 in the library of Madras College where they were catalogued by William Taylor (now in Government Oriental Manuscript Library)[14].

Major Career Highlights

Military Engineer (1783–1799):

Participated in campaigns against Tipu Sultan. Built fortifications, bridges, and roads in southern India[15].

Surveyor and Scholar (1799–1815):

After Tipu Sultan's defeat (1799), Mackenzie led the Mysore Survey. Employed Indian scholars and interpreters to document local histories, inscriptions, and architecture[16].

First Surveyor General of India (1815–1821):

Appointed to this role by the East India Company. Oversaw surveys of vast regions including parts of Madras Presidency, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Kerala. Promoted the use of scientific mapping techniques and local knowledge in cartography[17].

Major Achievements

Mysore Survey (1799–1810):

The first large-scale scientific survey of a princely state. Combined topographical mapping with ethnographic, linguistic, and historical data collection[18].

Collection of Indigenous Manuscripts and Inscriptions:

Amassed thousands of palm-leaf manuscripts, coins, temple inscriptions, and oral traditions. These materials are now preserved in institutions like the British Museum and the India Office Library[19].

Pioneer of Indo-British Collaborative Research:

Worked closely with Indian scholars like CavellyVenkataBoriah and Dharmasvamin. Valued native knowledge at a time when many British officials disregarded it.

Preservation of South Indian Heritage:

Documented temples, Buddhist and Jain sites, and pre-Islamic monuments that might otherwise have been lost. Recognized the importance of pre-colonial Indian knowledge systems[20].

Legacy and Significance

Mackenzie's surveys were not just cartographic; they were cultural, linguistic, and historical investigations. His methods influenced later scholars and administrators like James Prinsep and Alexander Cunningham. As a bridge between British science and Indian knowledge, his legacy continues in modern disciplines like archaeology, Indology, and heritage conservation. His collected materials remain invaluable for researchers even today.

During the British colonial period, Colin Mackenzie (1753–1821), an Englishman, served as a land surveyor in South India. While performing his duties, he also collected historical documents, palm-leaf

manuscripts, and epigraphic notes from various places[21]. In a way, he can be seen as a forerunner to U. Ve. SwaminathaIyer, who later went from village to village collecting and publishing ancient Tamil literary works and came to be known as Tamil Thatha (Grandfather of Tamil)[22].

While Mackenzie was working in the Coimbatore district, he collected village histories, temple chronicles, and oral traditions directly from local people. These were recorded in the form of handwritten documents known as kaipēthu (handwritten grants or manuscripts). Only a few of these have been published. Among them, a notable one appears in Volume 3 of the Genealogies of the Palayapattus, published by the Tamil Nadu Department of Archaeology. It includes a document provided by KanakasabapathiPandithar, a priest of the Vikramasoliswarar Temple in Kannapuram village, under Dharapuram, Thukkudi, and Kangeyam Taluks.

One excerpt from that document, written on 26 July 1807, reads: "In such a sacred place like this, during the time when the Pandavas resided in Viratapuram, it is said that all five brothers stayed here. It was during that time that people like Duryodhana came to this land and attempted to cause disturbance (kalabham)." This shows that, even over 200 years ago, there existed oral traditions in this region that linked Dharapuram (Viratapuram) with episodes from the Mahabharata, particularly the Pandavas' exile[23]. Many more such kaipēthu manuscripts remain unpublished. This only adds more credibility and richness to such oral traditions and historical narratives.

Colin Mackenzie was more than a colonial surveyor—he was a visionary scholar who approached India not only as a territory to be mapped, but as a civilization to be understood. His career was marked by a deep respect for local knowledge and a scientific spirit that transcended his era. Through his pioneering surveys and collections, Mackenzie left an indelible mark on the study of Indian history, archaeology, and culture.

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Fake News in Social Media Sculptures Depicting Science and Technology In Tamil Nadu

Dr. Beulah Rachel Rajarathnamani[1] and Priyanga A[2]

Introduction

Social media plays a vital role in communication, information sharing, entertainment and for other purpose etc. It becomes a fundamental part in the modern lives. The growth of social media, the need of smart phones, and the number of media messages increased drastically which cause information overload. This makes the users to find difficulty in processing the information. Information explosion in the modern world is the biggest problem among people. Commonly, Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, create, understand, and reproduce the message sent through mass media[1].

In the study area of misinformation, the fake news dissemination about historical artefacts and the historical misinterpretation is growing widely. The social media platforms have amplified the pseudohistorical claims. Algorithm plays a vital role in spreading fake content where it amplifies the highly shared content than the factual ones[1].

In research ofBronstein et. al states that the believability of fake news is more associated with the cognition. The analytical thinking was reduced and the believability of fake news correlates with cognitive belief[1].Users share the post or content which aligns to their belief even the information falls into historical bias. The social conformity plays significant role in spreading fake news[1].

People who are less in analytical thinking and over estimate their knowledge often fall for fake news. Mere exposure effect or familiarity effect tends to believe the fake news even without solid evidence[1]. The digital misinformation and the representation of culture and history related media content creates unique and destructive challenges,also creates an opportunity for the user to preserve cultural and historical heritages and encourage the public to learn critical media literacy to evaluate and engage in the media content critically[1].

Information Disorder

Information disorder is the intersection of Mis-information, Dis-information, and Mal-information[1]. The process of debunking is considered to ensure the transparency and accountability of a news or

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information. Debunking of information is needed to emphasize the truth, expose the fake information and conspiracies among people, and mainly to educate the users about critical thinking[1].

Science & Technology Sculptures

This study explores on several fact checking websites and found the fake news about the science and technology sculptures.The verified information was taken from the prominent fact checking websites.

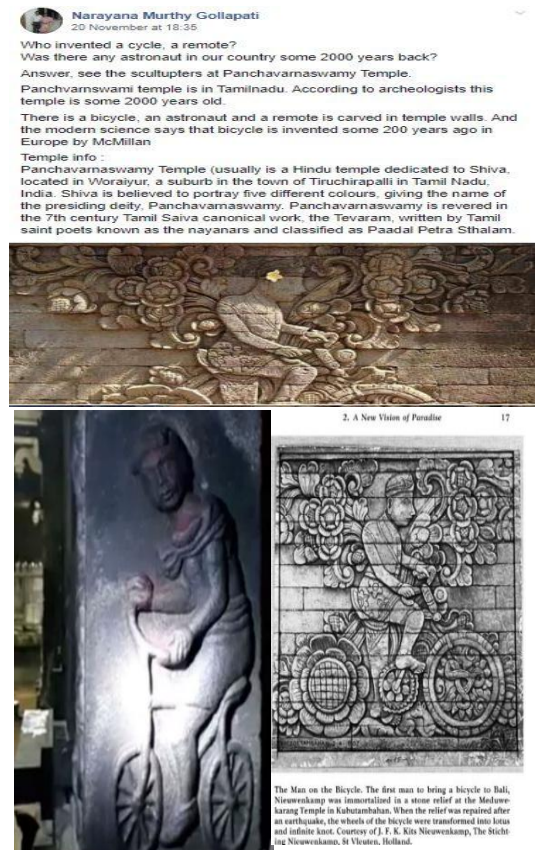
1. CLAIM: Cycle and Panchavarnaswamy Temple, Woraiyur

A Bicycle carving in the Panchavarnaswamy Temple, Woraiyur which was built over 2000 years ago. In social media users argued that the bicycle was carved in the 2000-year-old temple but the credit was given to the European McMillan[1]. Also, the then Union Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel shared the picture of the carving depicts bicycle on June 03rd, 2020 in his twitter account and deleted after few minutes[1].

Fact:

Several fact checking websites debunked the information using Reverse Image Search on Google and Tineye found that this sculpture was miscaptioned. Many historians explained that some part of the temple was renovated 100 years ago around 1920's. Historian and Ophthalmologist Dr. Kalaikovan claimed that the resemblance of the boy in the sculpture was contradictory to the carving of ancient 5th century style. He also states that the carving was not the part of original temple constructed during Chola era and neither the historians nor the inscriptions wrote about this in anywhere. Perhaps, the sculptor would impress by someone had seen on a cycle and interested to record it by carved the sculpture in the temple [1]. Initially this claim was debunked in 2018 and later in 2019. But in 2020, the then Union Culture Minister Mr. Prahlad Singh Patel tweeted by captioned Where would the invention have taken from? After few minutes, he deleted his tweet but it goes controversial[1].

Another sculpture's picture was taken from the Images Dart, a French website illustrated by Eriogan in 20th century. Another carving was taken from Getty Images and it was located at PuraMaduweKarang Tempe, North Bali which was built around 1906 and it is a caricature. It depicts a Dutch artist WOJ Nieuwnkamp roamed around the Bali in 1904 and it was carved in the temple. It was mentioned in a book "Bali and the Tourist industry Writes" authored by David Shavit in 2003, mentioning the Dutch artist wants to amuse the Balinese people by roaming around the place to show the bicycle. Furthermore, Bicycle was invented by several inventors throughout the 19th century[1].



Source: altnews.in, snopes.com.

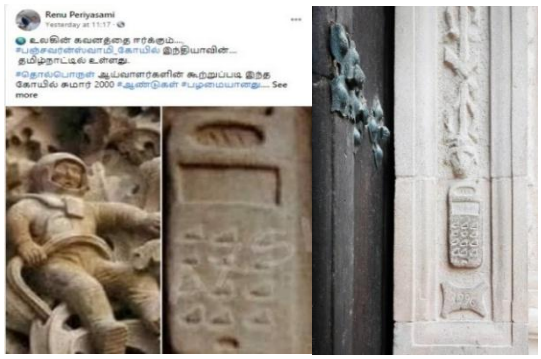
2. CLAIM: Cellphone and Panchavarnaswamy Temple, Woraiyur

A Cellphone sculpture was carved on the wall of 2000 years old Panchavarnaswamy temple[1].

Fact:

The full image of the cellphone shows 1996 year in the bottom of the carving. The image was debunked by Google Reverse Image Search and found it was

carved in a Clahorra Cathedral in Spain's La Rioja Province. This cathedral was renovated and restored in 1990's during the period the Nokia model cell phone was released where the restorer got inspiration to sculpt on the stone wall. In the carving itself they sculpt the year 1996[1]. These were debunked and recorded by the Alt news[1]. It was not even sculpted in the temple and the sculpture was also not too far old.



Source: altnews.in

3. CLAIM: Astronaut and Panchavarnaswamy Temple, Woraiyur

An astronaut sculpture was carved on the wall of 2000 years old Panchavarnaswamy temple, Woraiyur[1].

Fact:

The astronaut sculpture was carved in the New Cathedral of Salamanca, Spain which was built in between 1513 and 1733. The sculpture was added in the church during the renovation in 1990's. This information was published in the website of Catedral Salamanca[1]. This information was verified using Google Reverse Image Search and the claim was misleading. This was verified by various fact checking organizations[1].





Source: factly.in

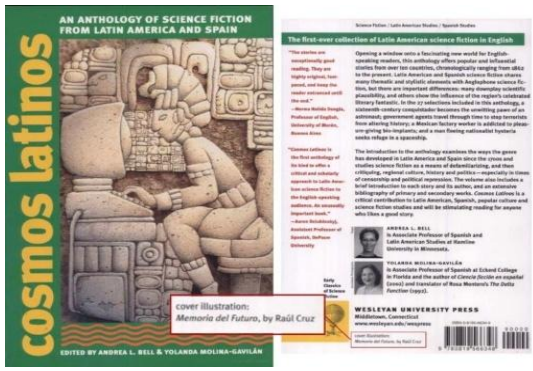
4. CLAIM: Computer and Pallava King

A social media post spread over the internet and shared by several users stating, "The Pallava King Narasimha II used computer and keyboard. This was carved in the stone wall of Thalagiri Shiva Temple which was built 1400 years ago". Also, the user states that this historical engraving of a man with computer shows that India was in advance in civilization[1].

Fact:

A fact checking website called Newschecker verified the information using Google Reverse Image Search Technique and found that the post was not a sculpture, it was an artwork called "Future Ancestors" illustrated by Raul Cruz inspired by Aztec and Mayan art which mixes the traditional element with modern science and technology themes. This was issued on 09th October 2006. Also, another version of the image was found in the Instagram account of Cruz titled "Memoria del future, acrylic on fiberglass" in 2015. This artwork also featured as the cover of the book "Cosmos Latinos: An Anthology of Science Fiction from Latin America and Spain (Early Classics of Science Fiction)" edited by Andrea L. Bell and Yolanda Molina – Gavillan[1].





Source: newschecker.in

5. CLAM: Knowledge of Fertilization &Varamoortheeswarar Temple

The sculpture in the Varamoortheeswarar temple in Ariyathurai, Tamil Nadu is 6000 years old temple which depicts the process of fertilization – that a male sperm pierce into the nucleus of the embryo. Also, the sculpture depicts the cell division[1].

Fact:

Using Google Reverse Image Search Technique and found that the temple Varamoortheeswarar is in Gummidipoonditaluk, Thiruvallur district. In the ceiling of the mandapam outside the shrine, snake's sculptures were carved and it meant for SarpaDhosham or Naga Dhosham. The sculpture depicts the snake swallowed the moon which was misrepresented as sperm and nucleus. It depicts the story of "Sun & Moon eclipse". The sculpture was painted in multicolor and it clearly shows snakes[1]. These stories were posted in several Social Network websites and the webpage of Deemag and Chest Clinic.





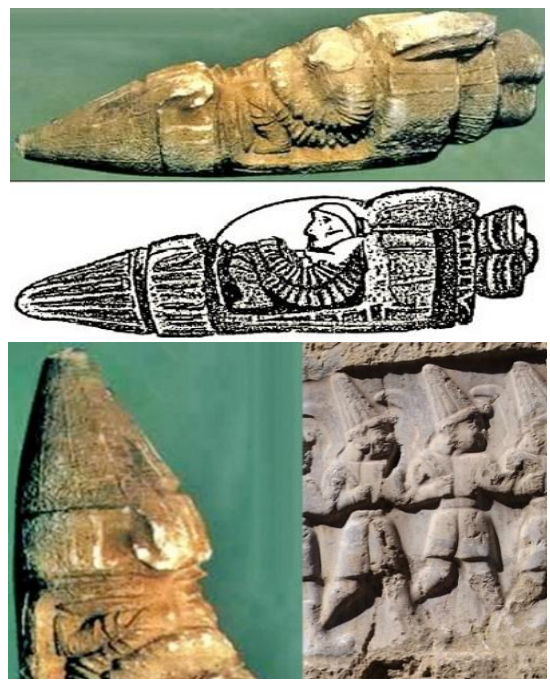
Source: youturn.in

6. CLAIM: Space shuttleand Sculpture

A space shuttle like sculpture was found by Tamilians before 2000 years[1].

Fact:

The image was a manipulated picture where the sculpture was found in Turkey. The living moon website states that the picture resembles the sculptures of the Hittite warriors wearing headgear who speaks Indo-European language[1].



Source: youturn.in

Discussion

This study shows the way how social media amplified the spread of fake news, particularly about the sculptures depicting science and technology in Tamil

Nadu. The misrepresented claims were spread in the social media by the users additionally by the favour of algorithm which was spread due to the increase in visibility of sensational content but false, misleading information.

Fabricating stories about the historical artifacts will distorts the truth. Simple lie will erode the public trust on historical values. In the era of widespread of fake news, skepticism is needed among the users. The fake news about historical artifacts starts with harmless and gives temporary advantage to the field by sparking interest in lesser-known sites like Panchavarnaswamy temple, etc. But the exaggeration will make easier pathway to harmful falsehoods. Each post contained with pseudoscience elements which rise the gaps in historical literacy among people.

The issue on algorithmic amplification of unverified information and the cognitive bias among the users underscores for sensationalism and never pay attention even after knowing the factual contradictions. The fake news about the historical artifacts in Tamil Nadu provides temporary advantage and starts harmlessly. Beyond erosion of historical trust, it increases the threat to the accuracy of Tamil Nadu's culture and history.

It fuels the conspiracy theories and may not attack any individual directly but indirectly it could create slippery slope of justification. By emphasizing short term visibility rather than long term interest the intrinsic value for the truth becomes distorted and it will damage the credibility of the historical and ancestral value.

The misinformation about ancient sculptures extended beyond Tamil Nadu to other regions of India like Gujarat and Karnataka. For instance, carving of clay tablet and mirror in the Palitana Jain Temple in Gujarat have been misinterpreted as modern tablets and mobile phone. In Karnataka, the sculpture of Lord Varaha often claimed to depict the spherical shape of the earth supposedly predated to Galileo's discovery. These claims disrupt the accuracy of the history, promotes pseudoscience and prioritize profit over integrity.

This analysis showed that all the highlighted claims were based on misinterpretation, fabrication or manipulated content debunked by the prominent fact checking credible organisation using reverses image search. This shows that the misinterpretation of historical artifacts widely spread and the algorithmic filter bubble played a vital role in the dissemination. The key to combat the issue is to practice critical thinking and media literacy.

Media literacy helps to critically access and evaluate the sources and claims to cross verify the credibility of the information. It helps to preserve cultural integrity and prevents the spread of false claims. In the world of sensationalism, media literacy empowers people to distinguish credible information from fake news. Media literacy is vital to counterfeit the fake news and manipulated content and eradicates the spread of pseudohistorical facts.

Conclusion

This paper highlights the crucial need for critical thinking and media literacy to overcome the challenges. The necessity for source evaluation is undeniably in this information bombarded world. To overcome from this eradicating confirmation bias is indeed which fuels the acceptance of fake without verification. This study emphasized the importance of critical thinking while encountering information about historical facts and artifacts.

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Case Studies on Cybercrimes in Tamil Nadu (2000-2010)

Beulah Rachel Rajarathnamani[1] and Gayathri B[2]

Introduction

The cybercrime in Tamil Nadu emerged in the year 2000. The Information Technology Act, 2000, the first law to address computer and internetrelated digital offences, was introduced by the Indian government in the same year[1].The Information Technology Act, was later amended in 2008. The main goals of the Information Technology Amendment Act 2008 are stronger data protection and information security through the implementation of authorized norms against cybercrimes[1]. As with the growing speed of internet penetration throughout the state in the early 2000s, new types of crime began to emerge, increasing the risk associated with the medium.Through the advancement of the internet, it has also created the way for more crimesoccurring in the digital world. After the rise of mobile phones and internet connections it has created both benefits and risks forsociety.

Cybercrime definescrimes happening against individuals or groups with the criminal intention to purposefully damage the victim's reputation or cause direct or indirect physical or mental harm on the victim through the use of modern telecommunication networks, including the Internet (Chat rooms, emails, notice boards, and groups) and mobile phones (SMS/MMS)[1].

Cybersecurity refers to safeguarding data, devices, computer resources, communication devices, and information stored on them against unauthorized access, misuse, disclosure, disruption, alteration, or destruction[1].

According to the Tamil Nadu State Crime Records Bureau's Crime Review 2010,77 cybercrime cases were registered in that year in Tamil Nadu. As shown in Table 1, there weren't many cases at first, from 2007 to2010 official records of reported cybercrime

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[2]*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Journalism and Communication, University of Madras*

Table 1

Crime Head	CasesRegistered under Information Technology Act				Cases Arrested under Information Technology Act			
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2007	2008	2009	2010
Tampering Computer Source Documents	1	5	3	4	0	0	0	1
Hacking with Computer system, Loss/ Damage to Computer Resource/ Utility	2	10	4	13	1	4	3	18
Hacking with computer system hacking	0	0	8	26	0	0	5	16
Obscene publication/ transmission from digital form	7	4	3	9	7	1	3	9
Un-authorized access/attempt to access protected computer system	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Breachof Confidentiality/ Privacy	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	10	21	18	52	8	6	11	44

Source.Tamil Nadu State Crime Records Bureau, Crime Review 2010

cases under the Information and Technology Act reveal a consistent increase.

As per the Table 1, the number of cases began from10 in 2007 and steadily rising to 52 cases by 2010, representing an 188.9% increase from 2009. The number of arrests made under the Information Technology Act increased by 300%, from 8 in 2007 to 44 in 2010.Thisindicates thatsurge in criminal activities and police involvement.Hacking (39 cases in 2010) was spotted as the leading offence during 2010. The majority of the offenders were aged between 18 to 30, with over 60% of arrests indicatingayouthful profile involved in cybercrime activities.[1]

The risk behind cybercrime is growing along with the digital world. In India, the Information Technology Act, 2000 has astrong basement of the legislative framework for preventing cybercrime and advancing cybersecurity. India can commendablystrive cybercrime and provide a safer digital atmosphere for society by combining strong law, technology improvements, and public awareness[1].

Cybercrime is a highly risky illegal activity carried out by skilled people who know how to handle technology with ease to commit cybercrimes in the digital world. In India, the Information Technology Act strives to provide a solution to the problem, but the act misses the truth that cybercrime is a worldwide problem with no limitations. Therefore, the laws should apply worldwide, then cases of cybercrime will decrease[1].

Objectives

To analyse the content of cybercrime cases fromTamil Nadu by examining how the laws have been applied in addressing the crimes.

Research Method

The study employed a qualitative case study method analysing data from the official reports of cybercrime cases from the year 2000 – 2010 in Tamil Nadu.The reports were chosen using a purposivesampling techniquefor the in-depth understanding of the cases. Five cases have been selected for this study.

Data Analysis

This analysis will discover the Case Studies on Cybercrimes in Tamil Nadu between 2000 and 2010. The five cybercrime cases were taken from the official reports.

Case 1: State of Tamil NaduvsSuhasKatti (2004)

It was the first case to be registered under the Information Technology Act 2000 in Tamil Nadu. And it was the first case to be assigned to the cybercrime cell, Chennai.The victim of the case is a divorced woman, and the accused of the case is SuhasKatti. The victim's family acquaintance was the one she accused. The victim rejected the accused's proposal of marriage and married someone else. But they got divorced, so the accused again approached her for marriage. Once more, the victim rejected his proposal. So, he got frustrated and created an email account from the victim's name. He wrote offensive, derogatory messages in the Yahoo group with the victim's phone number, then many unknown people continuously called her, which led to the mental suffering and harassment for the victim.Through the proof were submitted in the court, and the IP address belonged to SuhasKatti. So, the judgment given by the Metropolitan Magistrate, Egmore, held the accused guilty on 5-11-2004. He was convicted and these are the charges that were put for the accused under Section 67 in the Information Technology Act 2000, publishing information which is obscene in digital form. The accused shall be punished for imprisonment which will extend to five years then a fine which may extend to one lakh rupees.[1] Then section 469 in IPC, where anyone who commits forgery with the document will be used to damage someone's reputation, they will face up to three years in jail and with fine. And the last section 509 in IPC, which means a statement, gesture, or action meant to demean a woman's modesty. If someone violates a woman's privacy through speech, sound, gesture or item they will be penalized with imprisonment for up to a year or a fine.[1]The accused has to undergo 1 year in imprisonment and should pay a fine about 500 rupees under the Section 509 of the IPC, then he should face two years in imprisonment under section 469, IPC. Then he should pay a fine of 4000 for violating section 67 of the Information Technology Act, 2000. This case was completed from filing of the FIR within 7 months[111].

Case 2: Dr. L. Prakash vs State of Tamil Nadu (2002 -2009).

One of the earliest FIR filed cybercrime cases in Tamil Nadu.Dr. L. Prakash wasdetained by the Chennai police for creating the website where he would put obscene images of women and distribute explicit pornographiccontent. So, the police took action, but Dr. L. Prakash was involved in selling the sexual content. After the investigation, Chennai cyber cell discovered the proof that he is the one that who circulated online. The Chennai court observed that his use of the internet to disseminate explicit content was harmful, and the court held himas a "Goonda" for his crimes under the Tamil Nadu Prevention of Dangerous Activities Act, 1982. He was charged under the section 67 of the Information and Technology Act 2000, publishing information which is obscene in digital form[1]. And in section 120-B in IPC, for the Criminal Conspiracy[1]. Sections 4 and 6 of the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986. Section 4 means no one should produce any type of content through any medium creating the Indecent Representation of Women. And section 6 means penalty up tofive years and fine up to 1 lakh rupees.[1] The case began in 2002 but he got convicted in 2009 with 10-year imprisonment and fined. It shows that difficulties of investigating cybercrime complex cases involving online obscenitywhich will take many years to resolve. This was an important case since it is among the first FIR filed cybercrime cases in Tamil Nadu, shows how this internet penetration was used to spread explicit pornographic content highlighting the Information Technology Act importance in legal proceedings[11].

Case 3: A. Shankar vs State Rep. (2008 - 2010).

A. Shankar, while he was working as a Special assistant in Chennai, he commits a cybercrime in 2008 by breaking into the computer of the Legal Advisor at the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC). When the legal advisor was not present, he downloaded an audio recording file of a phone conversation between former Chief Secretary L.K. Tripathy and former DVAC Director S.K. Upadhyayvia a pendrive called "SUJATHA" to access a protected folder called "Director's back up 2". He took the confidential audio file and leaked it to the Deccan Chronicle newspaper, which was aired on Makkal TV

and Jaya TV on April 14, 2008.The Chennai Cyber Crime Cell conducted an investigation and submitted a charge sheet, followed by a complaint from the IAS Principal Secretary S Malathi.He was charged with Sections 43, 66, 70, and 72 of the Information Technology Act, 2000. Section 43 meansa penalty for damaging the computer system.Section 66 means hacking the computer system. Section 70 means computer should be a protected system and Section 72 means penalty for violating privacy and confidentiality[1].Sections 378, 379, 463, 465, 470, 471, 505 in IPC, which means Theft, Punishment for Theft, Forgery, Punishment for Forgery, Forged document, using as authentic a forged document,encourage public mischief, anyone who creates,disseminates, or publishes a statement, rumour, or report[1].Section 5 of the Official Secrets Act, violation of official secrets[1].The charges were not dropped because of theMadras High Court denied Shankar's request permitting the case to go to trial on 13th December, 2010. One of Tamil Nadu's first cybercrime cases by anInsider threat in government offices and the application of cyber laws to data leaks were brought to light by this occurrence[1].

Case 4: CBI vs. N. G. Arunkumar (2009).

N. G. Arunkumar, a software specialist, was found guilty in 2009 of gaining unauthorized access to broadband accounts by the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate in Egmore, Chennai. In response to a complaint alleging that the accused had altered subscriber database records and logged in as an authorized user using theChennai broadband account passwords of 52 BSNL customers and the user ID and password of the Press Information Bureau (PIB).An estimated ₹38,248 was theloss that was reported to the subscribers.In accordance with Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code, which defines the offense of cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property[1], and Section 66 of the Information Technology Act, 2000, which deals with computer-related offences, such as unauthorized access, data alteration, and other misuse of digital systems[1]. The Magistrate's Court found Arunkumar guilty. The case was prosecuted by the CBI. The court issued a ₹5,000 fine and sentenced him to a year of imprisonment[11].

Case 5:GoureshMehra and SusilMehravsThe State Rep. (2010),

GoureshMehra and SusilMehrawere the petitioners, and the complainant was Rajesh Arora, father of the accused GoureshMehra's wife.Cyber Crime Cell, Egmore Chennai, handled the case. Rajesh Arora's daughter married to GoureshMehra on 23.11.2008 in Chennai, both lived in Bangalore after marriage but they had marital problems, so the wife complained a case in Bangalore on 2009 of June for Dowry harassment issue Section 498A IPC means Wife's husband or relative subjecting her to cruelty, Section 506 IPC means punishment for criminal intimidation[1], Section 3 of Dowry Act means penalty for taking the dowry from the woman[1].Later, Rajesh Arora filed a complaint about aggressive and offensive emails sent by Gouresh and his father. In the mail, GoureshMehra and SusilMehra said that they will hire goondas to Kidnap, Rape, and harm Rajesh Arora's daughter. And they also mentioned that she is mentally ill and incapable of marital relations. These emails caused Rajesh Arora's daughter mental pressure and fear.The petitioner resisted, and they said that there shouldn't be two independent inquiries into the same matter. Rajesh Arora's daughter filed a case in Bangalore, so it will not be considered because they didn't attach the email proofs under the 65-Bwhich means accessibility of electronic records under the Evidence Act[1]. The charges in this case were brought under Section 4 of the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Harassment of Women Act, 1998, for harassment of women but harassment under the act will be applicable for public place issues, not in digital form[1]. So, the second complaint raisedin Chennai was valid with email proof of the threats, and they have been charged under Section 506IPC, meaning criminal intimidation[1], which was charged in the judgment of the case that happened on October 25th, 2010by Justice C.T. Selvamwho occurred in the Madras High Court[11].

Conclusion

In the early 21st century, cybercrime became an emerging risk in Tamil Nadu. From 2000 to 2010,the cases have been gradually increasing, largely due to the rise inInternet penetration which creates more freedom for the offenders. Cybercrimes are easy to commit because of the anonymity of digital space, which allows offenders to commit illegal activity easier than offline offences behind the screens without directly facing the people.Investigating these crimes is often difficult, as complex cases may take years to resolve.The Information Technology Act 2000 was formed because of the crimes happeningon the internet. But the laws are not properly enforced, preventing people fromcommitting cybercrimes.

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Transition from Traditional Learning to Digital Learing in Tamil Nadu – A Study

Dr. Beulah Rachel Rajarathnamani & Ms. B. Suganyaa

Introduction:

The Indian sub-continent is known for its diversity in culture, race and religion.The Education in India, can be traced back to the existence of ancient civilisation, where people transferred their knowledge from generations to another, in the form of word of mouth or through different forms of arts, stressing on their cultural significance. The existing evidences of ancient education system in Tamil Nadu, can be considered from the third century B.C. to third century A.D. i.e., the Sangam Age. It was during this period, the Tamil literature flourished that reflects the life of the Tamil civilization. It is said that education was pursued by everyone in the society, and includes subjects like languages, literature, astronomy, astrology, fine arts, philosophy, mathematics, medicine, etc. Many Sangam literatures, like Purananuru and Thiru Kural, mentioned about the importance given to education during ancient period. The schools were usually located in a public building, or in the house of the teachers. And it is commonly known as Palli. The students and teachers used dried palm leaves and writing nails known as eluttani. The ancient education system in India followed the Vedic education in the form of Gurukul System. The arrival of the Buddhists, Jains and the Aryans from the north were also reflected in the philosophy and educational system. The places of education were in mountains, river beds, caves, temples etc. The early teaching learning methods was in the form of word of mouth, memorisation, recitation and hands on experience. This was followed by, classroom teaching practices, where they used teaching aids, like chalk and talk lecture method. The invention of computers and software paved way for image sharing, power point presentations, etc., to digital learning via websites, mobile applications, etc.

Objectives:

There is a need to understand the various commissions, policies and schemes, that was launched for the development of Education in Tamil Nadu,in order to understand the transitional changes, that have occurred from traditional learning to digital learning in the school education. The Tamil Nadu State Government has taken various measures to increase the education of the people since independence.

Method:

In this study a qualitative approach, descriptive analysis is used to analyse the various development policies and schemes, introduced by the Tamil Nadu Government, to understand the transition, that education has undergone from traditional learning to digital practices.

Importance given to Education by Tamil Nadu Government:

The Tamil Nadu government has always prioritised educating the people, as they are future of the nation's growth.The Tamil Nadu government along with Central Government of India, has been working towards the development of Education. In Tamil Nadu, during the reign of the former chief minister, late Mr. K. Kamarajar, as the enrolment of school students was less, the primary education was given free. He also announced the Mid-day meal scheme, in order to encourage and ensure the presence of students, from poor family background.

In the beginning, the development policies and schemes, mainly focussed on students' enrolment, and continuing education, for which the many policies like free primary education, mid-day meal scheme, nutritious meal scheme, free and compulsory education for children of age 6-14, etc., were introduced and implemented as a part of the central government schemes like Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan

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(RMSA), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), and Teacher Education (TE). The Government of Tamil Nadu, consistently announces many welfare schemes for school students like providing free uniforms, text books, school bags, school shoes, stationary items, free bus pass, bicycle, scholarship and free education schemes over the years in order to motivate the students and the parents and ensures zero dropouts, so that the students come to school regularly.In the later years the government further focussed on providing quality education for all with inclusive education for all, improved infrastructure, smart classroom, digitization of text books, etc.

Educational Policies and Schemes by the Tamil Nadu Government:

Tamil Virtual Academy (TVA):

The Tamil Virtual Universitywas established by the Tamil Nadu government, with an objective to provide internet-based resources on Tamil language, literature and culture.This was launched on 18th May 2000, and the website was opened for public access from 17th February 2001 by the late former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi.The Tamil Virtual Academy is a E-learning Web Portal that offers tamil education through internet across the world, were anyone can Register and login to dograduate programmes and certificate courses in Tamil language with three different levels – Basic, Intermediate and Advanced. The Tamil Virtual University was later renamed as Tamil Virtual Academy (TVA) in 2010. The main functions of TVA are to compile tamil learning materials - tamil digital library, to promote tamil computing, to provide academic programmes from primary education to higher education. Around 68,620 students have enrolled in the certificate, higher certificate, diploma, higher diploma and B.A. Tamilology degree courses since the courses were launched.

Information Communication Technology Policy:

The Information Technology department of Tamil Nadu, in its Policy Note 2006-2007, has implemented various project like computer education through Electronic Corporation of Tamil Nadu (ELCOT), in 1197 government higher secondary schools and corporation schools; 60 Government Arts and Science colleges; 5 Law colleges and 12 Medical colleges.The Government of Tamil Nadu in its Information Communication Technology Policy 2018, has mentioned Content Creation, E-learning and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), as some of the key area of focus for the growth in future. The Government of Tamil Nadu has also started the ICT Academy of Tamil Nadu – a joint initiative of Government of India. Its main focus is to enhance the skills and quality of students graduating from colleges and prepare them for instant employment in ICT industry.

Free Distribution of Laptops to Students:

The Tamil Nadu government,under the late former Chief Minister, Ms. J. Jayalalitha, was the first in the country to initiate the scheme of Free distribution of laptops to Students of Tamil Nadu in 2011. The laptops were distributed to the students studying in government and government-aided higher secondary schools, Arts and Science colleges, engineering and polytechnic colleges. The news report says that the Tamil Nadu government has distributed nearly 51.67 lakh laptops to the students since 2011. At present the state government has allotted Rs. 2000 crore and planned to distribute free laptops for 20 lakh college students.

Tamil Nadu Innovation Initiatives (TANII):

The Tamil Nadu Innovation Initiatives (TANII) Scheme launched in 2015, which works by introducing new ideas and projects in governance to bring about transformation in public services. The state planning commission had arranged many initiatives, like Training teachers on the use of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), Orientation programs for Teachers Handling Virtual Classrooms, Enhancing learning through Image Recognition Application Technology, Enhancing Project Based Learning, and Setting up of Satellite Interactive Terminals for EDUSAT – allows lectures to be transmitted to the satellite from where they are broadcasted back to the earth covering a wide geographical area. It has also recommended the setting up of smart class in selected schools using all in one ICT kit in selected schools in the year 2016 - 2018. The

Government has sanctioned to set up in 64 schools with the ICT kit worth one lakh rupees per school.

Samagra Shiksha:

Samagra Shiksha started in 2018, is an integrated scheme of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), and Teacher Education (TE). It is funded by the Government of India and the State Government, with fund sharing in the ratio of 60:40. This looks into the quality of education provided inclusively and equally to children of all ages. It also provides study materials in the form of digital content like text books with QR codes, access to e-text books, uploads Audio visual contents, etc. The Tamil Nadu government has alsolaunched various schemesunder Samagra Shiksha with a similar objective, like establishment of Tamil Nadu Vagupparai Nokkin (Classroom Observation Module) in 2020, Tamil Nadu Teachers Platform (TNTP), Tamil Nadu - Educational Management Information System (TN-EMIS), Smart Classrooms in Government Primary Schools and Hi-tech computer Labs in Government Middle Schools, High Schools and in Higher Secondary School. It also assesses the efficiency of these digital learning programs by conducting regular formative assessments every week and a monthly summative assessment online.

TN-DIKSHA:

TN-DIKSHA is a teaching learning portal, a part of the Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) portalby the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), and Ministry of Education, Government of India. It is an application started in July 2018, that makes learning easier, were learning can take place from anytime and anywhere. It contains Audio video classes, digitized textbooks in both Tamil and English medium, for all subjects and classes from standard 1 to 12.

Kalvi Tholaikaatchi (Kalvi TV):

Education through television channel, though it is not new to India, the Kalvi Tholaikaatchi, Television channel in Tamil Nadu was started telecasting from August 26th 2019. It was the first TV channel in Tamil Nadu, that focussed on Tamil Nadu State Curriculum. It broadcasts programs and video lessons, related to class 1 to 12, guiding students preparing for Board Examinations and Competitive examinations. The Kalvi TV channel is available in most of DTH servicesand in Arasu Cable TV, can be accessed in channel number 200. The Kalvi Tholaikaatchi lessons can also be accessed via KalviTVOfficial YouTube channel, and TNSED YouTube Channel.

E-learn TNSchools Portal:

The Tamil Nadu School Education department, hosts an online learning portal with digital contents through e-learn TNSchools portal in the name of Veetupalli, which provides resources for students studying in class 1 to class 12 as per Samacheer Kalvi Curriculum. This contains digitized text books in Tamil and English medium for all subjects, and also chapter wise audio video lessons.

TN-EMIS (Tamil Nadu - Educational Management Information System):

The TN-EMIS is an Educational Management portal, were the functioning and administration of the government schools and students, are monitored by School Education Department, Head Masters, Teachers, and administrative officers, digitally via websites and Mobile Apps. The Class teachers enter the student details, attendance, and they keep updating on information, that can be accessed by the head masters and administrative officers, to check on the overall progress. This technology advancement has transformed the maintenance of manual attendance registers into digital mode. The TN-EMIS can be accessed through,emis tnschools website and via TNSED Schools application available in google playstore.

Conclusion:

The National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), launched a scheme in 2014,to give away National Awards for Innovations & Practices in Educational Administration for District and Block level Education officers, in order to encourage innovative practices.For the Peranamallur Block in Tiruvannamalai district, which was found to be weak in online education mechanism in the government schools, the block education officer decided to improve the quality of education in government schools through E-

learning. In order to overcome this situation, various facilities were made available, like computers, laptops and internet connections for the students and teachers of the government schools. The outcome of this project was found to be successful in 2018, where the school students actively participated and won many awards. This shows that the government school students, were able to adapt to E-Learning, when supplied with proper resources and guidance the quality of Education will automatically improves. This study gives an overall idea of the various policies and schemesby Tamil Nadu government, onthe transition of how the educational system is undergoing from Traditional learning practices towards digital learning practices. In Tamil Nadu, the present Chief Minister, Mr. M. K. Stalin, has launched and implemented various schemes to enable digital learning in schools. Some of them are TNSED Manarkeni app;Thiranmigu Vaguparrai – the Smart Classroom Project; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Labs; Hi-Tech Labs; Meta Kalvi VR Labs, Technology Educationand Learning Support (TEALS) Programme for Artificial Intelligence (AI) training, etc.

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"A Historical Study of Catholic Churches in Manapad, Thoothukudi District"

M. Thangaraja[1], Dr. M. Joseph Raj[2] and Dr. R. Selvaraju[3]

Introduction

Manapad is renowned for its rich Christian history and missionary activity. Its significance emerged in the 16th century when European missionaries, particularly Jesuits, journeyed along India's Coromandel Coast to propagate Christianity. Among them, St. Francis Xavier played a defining role, residing in a cave near the site that would later become Holy Cross Church, and actively engaging with local communities to promote the Christian faith. During the early period, the Church of Our Lady of Assumption served as the primary Christian worship center, catering to both European settlers and indigenous converts. However, in 1585, the Dutch transformed this church into a military arsenal, leaving the Catholic population without a central place of worship. To meet the spiritual needs of the growing community, St. James Church was established as the principal parish. Under Jesuit guidance, both churches flourished spiritually, socially, and architecturally.

The Jesuits not only oversaw structural renovations and expansions but also implemented community programs, promoted education, and facilitated cultural exchange, ensuring that the churches served as centers of learning and missionary coordination. Holy Cross Church, founded in 1581, became a prominent pilgrimage site due to its relics of the True Cross and its association with St. Francis Xavier. Over the centuries, these churches have evolved to meet the changing needs of the faithful while preserving their historic and architectural heritage. This study examines the history, architectural development, Jesuit influence, and cultural significance of St. James Church and Holy Cross Church in Manapad.[1]

Early Christian Presence in Manapad

The introduction of Christianity to Manapad can be traced to the arrival of Portuguese missionaries in the 16th century, who sought to establish the faith along India's southeastern coast. Among these missionaries, St. Francis Xavier emerged as a key figure, dedicating himself to spreading Christian teachings among local populations and maritime communities. His travels along the Coromandel Coast brought him to Manapad, where he engaged with both European settlers and indigenous communities, conducting catechism and facilitating religious instruction. The Church of Our Lady of Assumption served as the earliest Christian worship center in Manapad. It functioned not only as a place for Mass and sacraments but also as a hub for education, social gatherings, and missionary activities. The church provided literacy instruction, religious education, and guidance for converts, while also acting as a center for Christian literature and cultural exchange. Portuguese missionaries introduced vernacular printing and religious texts, helping disseminate Christian values across the region.[1]

In 1585, the Dutch occupation of the Coromandel Coast led to significant changes. The Church of Our Lady of Assumption was repurposed as a military arsenal, interrupting the local Catholic community's spiritual activities. This disruption necessitated the establishment of a new parish to serve the growing population of Christians in Manapad. St. James Church was conceived as the replacement parish, with the Jesuits spearheading its construction and administration. Jesuit missionaries were central to sustaining Christianity in the region. They were known for their educational initiatives, architectural expertise, and organizational skills. They not only ensured continuity of worship but also worked to integrate local communities into the Christian fold, blending European traditions with indigenous practices. Early Christian

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structures in Manapad served multiple purposes: spiritual centers, educational institutions, and community hubs, providing a foundation for the enduring presence of Catholicism in the region. Their efforts laid the groundwork for the churches' continued influence in subsequent centuries.[1]

Holy Cross Church Origins and Significance

Holy Cross Church, founded in 1581, occupies a prominent hillock in Manapad and holds a special place in the religious landscape of the region. Rev. Fr. John D. Salanova S.J. laid its foundation, with the first Mass celebrated in 1582. The church's significance is heightened by the presence of two small relics of the True Cross, brought to the church by Rev. Fr. Caldius Aqua Liva. The church is closely associated with St. Francis Xavier, who reportedly resided in a nearby cave while undertaking missionary work. In his honor, Rev. Fr. Louise Lousus S.J. planted a cross above the cave, and later, Msgr. Paul Robinston constructed a small chapel in 1975. These associations transformed Holy Cross Church into a major pilgrimage site, attracting devotees from across Tamil Nadu, especially during annual festivals dedicated to the Exaltation of the Cross.[1]

Architecturally, the church reflects a harmonious blend of Portuguese design and local construction techniques. Its coastal hillock location offers a panoramic view of the surrounding sea, adding a spiritual and aesthetic dimension to the pilgrim experience. The church's layout, vaulted ceilings, and altars demonstrate Jesuit attention to functionality, symbolism, and beauty, while local artisans contributed to its construction using indigenous materials and techniques. Holy Cross Church serves not only as a spiritual center but also as a hub for community gatherings, education, and missionary coordination. The Jesuit integration of European ecclesiastical practices with local culture ensured that the church became a symbol of enduring faith, bridging centuries of Christian tradition and local devotion.[1]

Foundation and Development of St. James Church

St. James Church was established to serve the Catholic community after the Dutch converted the original Church of Our Lady of Assumption into an arsenal. It quickly became the principal parish of Manapad, meeting the spiritual needs of the local population. The church's development was guided primarily by Jesuit missionaries, who played a pivotal role in its construction, expansion, and administration. In 1745, Rev. Fr. Duarthu, the superior of the Jesuit Malabar region, undertook significant renovations, enlarging the church to accommodate a growing congregation. Subsequent expansions included the extension of the nave, reinforcement of walls, and enhancement of the sanctuary, reflecting the European ecclesiastical architectural style adapted to local climatic and cultural conditions. Notable features of St. James Church include vaulted ceilings, ornate altars, and spacious interiors designed for large congregations, demonstrating a blend of European and Tamil architectural influences.[1]

St. James Church also functioned as a center for community life. The Jesuits emphasized education, social cohesion, and religious instruction, providing catechism classes, literacy programs, and training for local clergy. The church hosted festivals, social gatherings, and missionary meetings, becoming a hub for both spiritual and cultural activities. Its consecration by Bishop Tiburtius Roche in 1929 marked a milestone in its spiritual and administrative history. Over time, St. James Church became more than a place of worship; it emerged as a symbol of continuity and resilience for the Catholic population of Manapad. The Jesuit approach to church management, combining architectural excellence, pastoral care, and community engagement, ensured that St. James Church retained its significance across centuries, bridging historical legacy and contemporary relevance.[1]

Jesuit Influence in Manapad

From 1695 to 1752, Manapad served as the headquarters of the Malabar Jesuit Province, known as the Collegium. This institutional presence elevated the village into a key center for Jesuit missionary administration, education, and cultural coordination. Jesuits stationed at the Collegium supervised religious activities, trained clergy, and directed missionary efforts

across the Coromandel Coast. Jesuit influence extended beyond spiritual guidance. They established schools, provided literacy training, and introduced social welfare initiatives, including healthcare and community support. By promoting education and religious instruction, the Jesuits empowered local communities, challenged social hierarchies, and facilitated intercultural exchange. Churches under Jesuit supervision became centers of learning, social cohesion, and cultural preservation, ensuring that Manapad retained its prominence as a hub of Christian influence in southern India.

Their architectural and administrative initiatives reflected a synthesis of European models and local traditions. Jesuit missionaries trained artisans, supervised construction, and maintained meticulous records, preserving both the spiritual and historical significance of the churches. By integrating pastoral care with education, social services, and cultural activities, the Jesuits created enduring institutions that continue to shape the religious and cultural landscape of Manapad.

Renovations and Modern Developments

Over the centuries, St. James Church and Holy Cross Church underwent several renovations to preserve their architectural integrity and adapt to the needs of growing congregations. St. James Church saw expansions in the 18th and 19th centuries, including structural reinforcements, enlargement of the sanctuary, and improvements to seating arrangements. These renovations reflected both practical considerations and aesthetic enhancements, aligning the church with contemporary European and local design trends.

Holy Cross Church was renovated in 2007 under Rev. Fr. Theophilus, restoring its architectural grandeur, repairing structural damage, and conserving religious relics. Modern amenities, such as lighting, sound systems, and pilgrimage facilities, were incorporated while respecting historical authenticity. These efforts ensured that the churches remained accessible to contemporary devotees while preserving their historical and cultural significance. Both churches continue to serve as focal points for worship, community engagement, and pilgrimage. Their preservation and modernization reflect a balance between maintaining heritage and meeting present-day spiritual needs, illustrating the enduring relevance of these religious institutions in Manapad.[1]

Conclusion

St. James Church and Holy Cross Church stand as enduring symbols of Christian faith, Jesuit missionary activity, and cultural heritage in Manapad. Established during the era of St. Francis Xavier, these churches have witnessed centuries of devotion, architectural evolution, and community engagement. St. James Church emerged as the principal parish, providing spiritual guidance and social cohesion, while Holy Cross Church, with its relics of the True Cross and association with St. Francis Xavier, became a major pilgrimage site. Continuous renovations and modern developments have preserved their architectural integrity and spiritual significance. Today, they attract pilgrims, foster community cohesion, and maintain the rich Christian heritage of Manapad. These churches exemplify the lasting influence of Jesuit missions in India, serving as living monuments that inspire devotion, historical awareness, and cultural pride among generations of believers.

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The Commercial Heritage of Tamil

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The Historical Context

Tamil Nadu and its commerce have unique characteristics. The political impact of the Mughals, who ruled India for over eight centuries, only penetrated the southern tip of India in the late 17thCentury. However, this influence was short-lived, as the British established their dominance in South India by the end of the 18thCentury. After India was unified under British rule, Muslims constituted only 7 per cent of the total population of the Madras Presidency in 1931. In other districts of Tamil Nadu, their number was just four per cent. It is within this Tamil context that we will explore the commercial contributions of the Muslims who were born, raised, and lived here.

Early Trade and Settlements

By the 8th or 9thCentury CE, Arab merchants and sailors had already settled on the Coromandel Coast. According to Susan Bayly, the number of Arab traders increased after this region began to play a significant role in the international textile trade, connecting South India with the commercial ports of West Asia and the Indonesian archipelago[1]. Tamil Muslim scholars state that Arab merchants brought horses to South India for sale and purchased pearls, cardamom, pepper, other spices, and textiles in return[2.] The 9th-century poet Manikkavasagar mentions the horse trade in Tamil Nadu in his work, *Thiruvasagam*.

In the 13th century, the Venetian traveller Marco Polo noted in his travelogues that Muslim merchants from Hormuz, Dhofar, Sohar, Aden, and other Arab nations brought horses by sea to Kayalpattinam, a major port on the southern Coromandel Coast. The kings of Tamil Nadu greatly favoured these horses. According to Marco Polo's account, 10,000 horses were imported annually.[3]

Like Marco Polo, the historian Wassaf also mentions the vibrant horse trade between the Arabs and South India and the immense wealth of the Pandyan kings[4].

The Age of Great Merchants

In the 15thCentury, when Kayal was a centre for the pearl trade, Niccolò de' Conti visited the city[5]. Besides pearls, the horse trade also flourished in Kayal and Keelakarai. It appears that rice was purchased in exchange for horses in Hormuz and then shipped to ports like Kayal[6]. Vasco da Gama noted that Muslims and Hindu Chettis resided in Kayal, trading in pearls, gems, and other goods. He also stated that the region was ruled by a powerful and wealthy Muslim leader. This Muslim chief, mentioned by Vasco da Gama as being in Kayal[7], collected taxes on pearls and administered justice for the Muslims without interference from the King of Quilon. However, it seems the King of Quilon held the full rights to the pearl diving industry and a share in the profits from the pearl trade.[8]

By the 15thCentury, Muslim traders from the Coromandel Coast were present in several kingdoms of Southeast Asia, where they held considerable influence[9]. In the 17th century, the King of Ramanathapuram (Ramnad) relied on coastal Muslims for maritime trade and financial administration.[10]

The growing importance of the British in Madras and the Dutch in Nagapattinam impacted the Coromandel trade and its Indian merchants. In the latter half of the 17th century, prominent Muslim merchants like Periya Thambi Maraikkayar, who had trade links with Bengal, Southeast Asia, and Sri Lanka, attempted to resist the growing dominance of the Europeans. Periya Thambi, who owned several ships, challenged and curtailed British influence with minor successes. He traded on his own behalf and for the King of Ramnad, wielding significant influence in the kingdom's political, administrative, financial, and judicial affairs.[11]

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Tamil Muslim traders also held great sway in the Southeast Asian sultanates of Kedah, Jambi, and Bantam. The Sultan of Bantam even purchased ships from Coromandel merchants.[12]A Tamil Muslim merchant named ChiththiLebbai controlled the entire tin trade of the Perak kingdom and maintained commercial ties with powerful Tamil Muslim merchants in Parangipettai (Porto Novo) and Cuddalore.[13]

Commerce in the Colonial Era

Records at Fort St. George show that the British, who gradually established themselves in Madras in the 17th century, made trade agreements with Periya Thambi Maraikkayar of Ramnad for the sale and transport of pepper and rice[14]. However, in the early 18th century, they failed in their attempts to persuade prominent Tamil Muslim traders from the southern Coromandel Coast, such as the famous merchant and shipowner Mahmud Naina of Parangipettai, to trade from British-held ports.[15]

In 1812, Muhammad Abdullah Basha travelled to Arabia, Egypt, and other West Asian countries, which resulted in substantial profits for his business. One of his sons, H. Muhammad Quddus Basha Sahib, worked as a commission agent and merchant from 1883. In 1890, along with his brother H. Muhammad Hadi Basha Sahib, he engaged in the profitable trade of indigo, tamarind, coffee, pepper, mica, and many other goods. He also served as an agent for general insurance companies, owned extensive lands and a diamond mine, and was a pioneer in the mica industry in the Madras Presidency[16]. For his loyalty to the British Empire, he received the title of 'Khan Bahadur.' He represented the Muslims of the Madras Presidency at the Delhi Durbar on December 12, 1911, highlighting his importance in the public life of the region.

The business network of Kasim Muhammad Maraikkayar was extensive. He used thirty boats for loading and unloading goods on the Ramnad coast and employed a thousand people year-round. Khan Bahadur Sharum Hameed Maraikkayar was the Ramnad representative for the British India Steam Navigation Company and exported cattle to Sri Lanka. Similarly, Khan Bahadur V. Hameed Sultan Maraikkayar was a prominent merchant and landowner in Thanjavur[17]. He also worked as a broker (*dubash*) for deck passengers, an interpreter, and a contractor, and served as an agent for the British India Steam Navigation Company.[18]

Sir Ahmad Thambi Maraikkayar was the agent for the British Navigation Company in Nagapattinam and was also involved in import-export activities from Madras.

N. Muhammad Mian Rawther Bahadur of Trichy started a factory in 1883 and later owned three factories in Sembattu, near Trichy.[19] Jamal Mohideen Rawther of Ramnad moved to Madras in the late 19thCentury and started a business there. His company exported raw and tanned hides and also acted as a commission agent for tanners across South India. After his father's death, his son Jamal Muhammad Rawther took over the business. Due to his wealth and business acumen, he was hailed as the "Prince of Commerce of South India."

Conclusion

When we analyse the development of commerce through the ages and the rise of the people behind it, based on historical evidence, it becomes clear that the Muslims of Tamil Nadu have not only preserved their ancestral tradition of trade but have also earned an indelible place in the commercial history of Tamil Nadu.

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Dr. S.S. Pillai: A Forgotten Genius in Indian Mathematics

Dr. A. Sintha Mathar

From Aryabhata and Bhaskara to the renowned Srinivasa Ramanujan, mathematics in India has generated some of the finest thinkers in history. One member of this distinguished family is the mathematician Dr. Siva Sankara Narayana Pillai (1901–1950), also referred to as Dr. S.S. Pillai, who was exceptionally brilliant and visionary. Born in a poor family in Vallam, Tamil Nadu, close to Courtallam, Pillai overcame adversity to become a trailblazer in the field of number theory. He is ranked second only to Ramanujan in the hierarchy of Indian mathematics for his internationally acclaimed research, especially on Waring's Problem and Fourier Series.Pillai refused many offers from prestigious colleges, including Princeton, where even Albert Einstein awaited his cooperation, in contrast to many of his peers who pursued recognition outside. He was about to represent India at the International Mathematical Congress in San Francisco when he was tragically killed in an aircraft crash in 1950, ending a career that had the potential to revolutionise mathematics worldwide. This essay examines his life, contributions, and lasting influence as a mathematician, patriot, and modest person.

In the illustrious tradition of Indian mathematicians, Dr. Siva Sankara Narayana Pillai, also called Dr. S.S. Pillai, was a world-renowned mathematician of the highest grade whose vast and gigantic contribution to "Number Theory" has placed him beside the great Ramanujan. His fascinating work on the "Warings problem" and the "Fourier series" is very influential and frequently cited in scholarly works.

On April 5, 1901, Sankara Narayana, as he was previously known, was born in Vallam Village, close to Courtallam, a well-known health resort in Tamilnadu, to impoverished but devout Saivaite parents. His early years were filled with hardships and upheavals. He was raised by a good-hearted Sastri from the neighbouring village of Elathur after losing his father when he was around ten years old and his mother when he was still a baby.

After completing his elementary and middle school education at Shencottah and Scott Christian College in Nagercoil, Pillai transferred to the Maharaja College of Science in Trivandrum to earn his degree in mathematics. He focused more and more on the more advanced facets of mathematics during his time in college. He was not attracted to or charmed by conventional formulas and theorems, which are crucial from an examination perspective. He was only able to

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graduate with a second class as a consequence. He remained optimistic. He desired to go Madras University to pursue further education. In doing so, he encountered certain difficulties. Because only first-class graduates were permitted to continue their education at Madras University during that time. But in Pillai's instance, the university accepted him after taking his pledge into account. They relaxed its oxisting regulations, and Pillal also lived up to their expectations by earning credit for his postgraduate degree. In addition, he was the first person to graduate from Same University with a D.Sc. in Degree.

At the young age of 29, Pillal began working as a lecturer at Meenakshi College in Chidambaram in 1929. Later, the college became a part of the newly established Annamalai University. His time at the university ought to be immortalised in gold letters. His mind began working on a complex and difficult problem known as "WarringsProblern" in the calm and serene environment of the university. This problem had been unsolved for hundreds of years, almost 300 years, since 1640, despite the best efforts of prominent mathematicians like Dr. Euler (Switzerland), Prof. G.H. Hardy (England), Prof. Littlewood (England), Prof. Vinogrado (Russia), Dr. Paul Erdos (Hungary), Prof. Hilbert (Germany), and a host of others. Pillai was determined to find a solution. His coworkers made fun of him in every manner imaginable. They believed Pillai was inexperienced and too young to handle a problem the size of Warring's. He investigated the issue despite their criticism. A master of approximation and infinite, he examined the problem from all possible perspectives, researched it thoroughly, and in 1936 discovered a virtually accurate answer. In just five years, the 300-year-old, difficult challenge was resolved. What amazing accomplishment from the Himalayas.

The entire globe rejoiced at his accomplishment. Pillai remained unmoved despite the influx of congratulations and compliments. He began working on another issue without making a big deal out of his prior success. He was nothing more nor less than a karmayogi. He used to reply that "India is just enough for my research" when he was invited to collaborate with eminent mathematicians by prestigious universities like Cambridge. He was very patriotic! He was very devoted to the country.

At the height of Pillai's prominence in 1939, Sir C.P. Ramasami Lyer, who was then the Devan of Travancore Samasthan, met Pillai and urged him to become a Research Professor at Travancore University. Under some restrictions, Pillai accepted the offer and carried on working in Trivandrum under his early mentor, Professor K. Srinivasan, who was also a musician and mathematician.

He was working on the "Fourier series" in Calcutta when one day he received an invitation from Princeton University to study with the renowned Dr. Einstein and Ophemeun "Humour," who was the chairman of the U.S. Atomic Commission at the time. Additionally, Einstein wrote a private note to Pillai expressing his anticipation of his arrival. What a wonderful honour! What a unique privilege! But as usual, Pillai hesitated. Pillai was convinced to accept the offer at that time by the combined efforts of his family, friends, and well-wishers. In India, intelligentsia believed that the time had now come for him to show the world his depths and abilities. Pillai himself had high hopes for the journey. A few days prior to his departure, he said that "this would bring more credit to the nation than Warrings" after displaying a sheet of paper on which he had solved the Fourier series. However, the will of Providence had been different. Pillai sacrificed his valuable life when the unfortunate plane carrying him crashed on August 31, 1950. In Indian mathematics, a rare flower that had not yet opened its petals completely and released its fragrance in all its splendour was mercilessly destroyed. According to G.H. Hardy, a unique genius who was unrivalled by anybody save Ramanujan in terms of intuitional strength had sadly left this planet. Pillai was scheduled to speak at the International Mathematical Congress in San Francisco, but they were silent.

Then-prime minister of India, Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, mentioned the disaster in Parliament in 1950 and lavished Pillai with praise. According to Professor Littlewood, Pillai is among the top Indian mathematicians. He was praised by notable figures of his era, including Sir C.V. Raman, Dr. K.S. Krishnan, Dr. Vijeya Raghavan, Prof. Chavla, Dr. Renganathan, and the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri. Without a doubt, he would have been a better Ramanujan if he had lived a little longer.

Despite Pillai's disappearance, his work endures and is shared by a number of mathematicians. Mathematics relies heavily on "Dr. S.S. Pillai's theory on Numbers." Dr. S.S. Pillai's answer to the unresolved difficulties of Ramanujan is thoroughly discussed in his magnum opus "Twelve Lectures on Ramanujan," which Hardy has dedicated a special book for.

Recently, there has been a resurgence of interest in Pillai's works. His unpublished, unresolved writings have been purchased by Madural Kamaraj University and Sattanathan Trust, and they are now on display in the university library for reference. The establishment of a sub-science centre in Shencottah under the name Pillai has been proposed by the District Science Centre at Tirunelvell. His life and works are often featured on A|| India Radio in Tirunelveli. Since Dr. Siva Sankaranaryana Pillai hails from this region of Tamil Nadu, scholars have often called for the establishment of a mathematical research facility in his honour at either Madura Kamaraj University or ManonmaniamSundaranar University in Tirunelveli.

Although I have written a great deal on Pillai as a mathematical genius, I would be remiss if I did not at least briefly discuss his personal life. Pillai was a straightforward, modest, and approachable man. At one point, Pillai was contacted by a well-known photographer from a major international magazine who wanted to take a picture of him. The lensman hesitated a little when he saw his unkempt face, undressed hair, etc. To which Pillai promptly replied, "As I am with my warts and all that" He reportedly only brought two coats, the bare minimum, with him when he travelled overseas. Despite his "high position," Pillai was always his typical self—simple, modest, spontaneous, and unpretentious.

Pillai's manners and habits were likewise very Indian. He once hosted a foreign dignitary for dinner at his home in Calcutta. As is our tradition, Indian food was served on plantain leaves. The absence of the typical forks and spoons that the foreigners would use to assist themselves was noticeable. I paraphrase Pillai when he says, "While in India, they, the foreigners should eat what we have and in the way we do," in response to Wehn's question about it.

Pillai was orthodox like Ramanuja, and his unusual dislike of meat and liquor was cited as one of the reasons he was reluctant to travel overseas.

Pillai was a staunch nationalist and patriot as well. The oldest daughter of the late Sri Chavadi Arunachalam Pillai, a revolutionary freedom warrior and the brains behind VanchinathaLyar's killing of Ash, the collector of Tirunelveli at the time, he married Sunderathammal. When the country gained independence in 1947, Pillai commemorated the event in his own modest way by giving flowers and candy to underprivileged kids.

It has been forty years since Pillai's premature death. However, there isn't a single genius of his kind in Indian mathematics. It's unusual to find someone that brilliant and skilled on earth!

Conclusion

The life and efforts of Dr. S.S. Pillai serve as a testament to the strength of tenacity, intelligence, and patriotism. He rose to prominence among mathematicians of his era thanks to his contributions to Fourier analysis, his near-solution of Waring's Problem, and his understanding of Number Theory. More significantly, his simplicity, humility, and dedication to India over international renown demonstrate the qualities of a genuine karma yogi in the scientific community. Even though mathematics lost him too soon, his thoughts, publications, and theorems still serve as an inspiration to researchers today. In terms of

mathematical intuition, Pillai was ranked second only to Ramanujan, according to G.H. Hardy. In addition to paying homage to India's intellectual legacy, remembering and celebrating such a genius serves as a reminder that brilliant minds may come from the most modest backgrounds. In addition to honouring his efforts, creating research institutes in his honour would inspire next generations. The scent of Pillai, a rare flower of Indian mathematics, continues to permeate the realm of numbers.

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Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Vision For Women Empowerment

***V.Sathiya[1] and S.Gomathi[2]**

Inducation:

B.R. Ambedkar was one of the most famous intellectuals of India of the twentieth century. He was a determined fighter and a social scientist who received academic awards from some of the world's most prestigious universities. He made significant efforts to lead the society on the road to freedom, equality and brotherhood.

Ambedkar was not only the father of the Indian constitution; he was a great freedom fighter, a political leader, a philosopher, a thinker, an economist, an editor, a social reformer, a revival of Buddhism and the first Indian to interfere in the advancement of women in India. He laid the foundations for concrete and sincere efforts, codifying the general Civil Code for the Hindus and other layers of Indian society. He said that women should ensure the comprehensive development of more important social education, their welfare and socio-cultural rights. He stressed that every part of Indian women gets a proper share, and this is necessary to maintain and protect the dignity and modesty of women.

Dr. Babashahheb Ambedkar consistently supported movements that empowered women. He added that if we take into account women from all walks of life, they can play a significant role in social reforms. According to him, they played a very active role in eradicating social abuses. He insisted that every married woman should participate in the activities of her husband as a friend and she must show the courage to deny the life of a slave in marriage. She should insist on the principle of equality. According to Babasaheb, if all the women follow this principle, they will get real respect and their own identity.

Women's Emancipation:

In 1920, Ambedkar started his campaign. He established the magazines *Mook Nayak* in 1920 and *Bahiskrit Bharat* in 1927 in order to conduct a propaganda campaign on public order. He paid due attention to gender equality and the need for education and identified the problems for the depressed status of women.Ambedkar emphasized their right to education, equal treatment with men, the right to property and participation in the political process, similar to the

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demands of global feminists. As J S Mill put it in the "Subjugation of Women", the 'legal subordination of one sex to another is incorrect in itself and is one of the main obstacles to human development; and must be replaced by the principle of perfect equality, which does not recognize any privilege or power, on the one hand, and disability, on the other hand'.

A women's organization led by Ambedkar's wife, Ramabey, was established in Bombay in January 1928. In 1930, five thousand women participated in the temple of Kalamma Satyagraha in Nasik, and many of them were arrested with men and the sick were treated in prisons. Dr. Ambedkar's encouragement, which allowed women to speak boldly, was noticed when Radhabay Vadale spoke at a press conference in 1931. She said: "It is better to die a hundred times than to live a life full of humiliation. Sacrifice our lives, but we will get our rights. "The credit for this self-respect and the firm determination of women goes to Ambedkar.Dr. Ambedkar believed in the power of women and their role in the process of social reforms. The historical "Mahad Satyagraha" witnessed the participation of three hundred women together with their male counterparts. Speaking at a regular meeting of about 3,000 women, he said: "I measure the progress of the community with regard to the degree of progress achieved by women. Let every girl who marries her husband, claims that she is her friend and her equal husband, and refuses to be his slave. I am sure that if you follow this advice, you will bring honor and glory to yourself. "

Legislative and Social Efforts:

He was a fervent supporter of family planning for women. In Bombay's Legislative Assembly, in the Executive Council as Minister of Labor, he introduced a Maternity Benefits bill in 1942. He established several clauses in the Constitution that protect women's civic rights and welfare. He discussed the issues surrounding women's property rights and introduced a bill on the Hindu Code in Parliament. The bill received strong opposition from many political leaders. In turn, Dr. Ambedkar left his office expressing his dissatisfaction with the fact that the parliament did not accept the rights of women. In addition, he focused on the problems of Muslim women. His secular perspective is known for his thoughts on the *Purdah* system (Veil), religious transformations and legal rights for Muslim women. In short, along with depressed class women, his thoughts about the emancipation of all women are expressed with the same devotion. Ambedkar's vision for women was based on the restoration of the Hindu society on the basis of equality, and not by mere social reforms initiated by Brahma Samaj or Arya Samaj, since their attempts were limited only to the upper layers of society. His profound study of Smritis and Shashtras and his experience of responding to higher castes during the movement of the entrance to the temple crystallized his conclusions about Hindu philosophy and society.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Vision on Women Empowerment:

After receiving inspiration from Ambedkar, many women wrote on different topics. Tulsibai Bansode launched the newspaper "*Chokhamela*". This shows how Ambedkar created awareness among poor, illiterate women and inspired them to fight unfair and social practices, such as child marriage and the caste system. Dr. Babasheheb Ambedkar exclaimed: "I firmly believe in the movements that guide women. If they are really perceived in confidence, they can change the current picture of society, which is very unfortunate. In the past, they played a significant role in improving the condition of the weaker section and classes. " He always respected women for their work and deprivation. Speaking at conferences with women, he could easily communicate with them as a domestic person and conversation. He called the women in the following words. "Never wear clothes that worsen our personality and character." Avoid wearing ornaments on your body everywhere. It is not a journey to make a hole in the nose and wear a "nat". In this he condemned all the bad traditions, habits and way of life that made life complicated. And to the surprise, even illiterate women followed his advice from the heart. Dr. Babasaheb spent his life for the betterment of women even involved in the sex work profession. The greatest example of it was seen in Kamathipura. There was a person named David who was the mediator working in a brothel. He left his profession persuaded by the thoughts and teachings of Dr. Babasaheb

Ambedkar. He evoked the entire group of sex-workers to give up their profession and lead the life of honour. In the *Manusmriti*, Manu not only demonstrates contempt for women, but also humiliates them as slaves deprived of intelligence; deprives them of their right to education and the right to property; and forbids them to perform sacrifices. As the first Minister of Law and Chairman of the editorial committee of the Constituent Assembly, Dr. Ambedkar considered it expedient, but rather his duty to free women from the old age of the previous internal trend by reforming the Hindu social laws created by Manu.

Constitutional Rights and Women:

In the Indian constitution and political lexicon, Dr. Ambedkar attempted to adequately incorporate women's rights. The following articles of the constitutio of India specifically address the issue of women's rights: Article14 - Equal rights and opportunities in political, economic and social spheres; Article 15 prohibits discrimination on the ground of sex; Article 15(3) enables affirmative discrimination in favour of women. Article 39 – Equal means of livelihood and equal pay for equal work. Article 42 – Human conditions of work and maternity relief; Article 51 (A) (C) – Fundamental duties to renounce practices, derogatory to the dignity of women; Article 46 – The state to promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of weaker sections of people and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Article 47 – The state to raise the level of nutrition and standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health and so on; Article 243D (3), 243T (3) & 243R (4) provides for allocation of seats in the Panchayat Raj System.

The Hindu Code Bill, the most formidable legislative measure of modern India, sought among other reforms, to put an end to a variety of marriage systems prevailing in India and legalise only monogamous marriages. The Code also sought to confer on women the right of property and adoption which had been denied by Manu. It puts men and women on an equal level in all legal matters. Dr. Ambedkar said, "I should draw attention of the house to one important fact. The great political philosopher Burke who wrote his great book against the French Revolution said that those who want to conserve must be ready to repair. And all I am asking this House is: If you want to maintain the Hindu system, Hindu culture and Hindu society, do not hesitate to repair where repair is necessary. This Bill asks for nothing more than to repair those parts of the Hindu system which have become dilapidated".

In his letter of resignation of September 27, 1951 to the Prime Minister, he wrote: "For a long time I thought about dismissing my seat from the office. The only thing that distracted me from my intentions was the hope that it would be possible to implement the bill on the Hindu Code before the life of the current parliament came to an end. I even agreed to break the bill and limit it to marriage and divorce in the hope that at least this much of our work could bear fruit even if this part of Bill was killed. I see no purpose to continue to be a member of your cabinet. "

The Hindu Code Bill was later split into four Bills, and the same were put on the Statue Book by Parliament. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955; The Hindu Succession Act, 1956; The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956 and The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 are the four enactments which incorporate the ideas and principles of Hindu Code Bill formulated by Dr Ambedkar. They give independent status to women and endow them with the right of adoption, succession and property, so completely denied by Manu. Thus, it is obvious that Dr. Ambedkar is responsible for bringing much of the Hindu social law up to speed with the legal framework found in developed western nations.

Conclusion:

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru expressed his condolences on Ambedkar's passing in a statement to Parliament : "Dr. Babashahib Ambedkar was the symbol of an uprising against all oppressive features of Hindu society." His dream of a society based on gender equality has not yet been realized, and therefore his thoughts are important for social reconstruction, which promotes the empowerment of women. Dr. Babashahib

expressed his views on the state of life of all women. He said that women should be treated equally and with equal prestige. He insisted on a draft industrial code that offered significant improvements and amendments in the assembly. He also insisted and urged all members of parliament to help pass the bill in parliament. In the end, he resigned for the same thing. Even now, all Indians can benefit from Dr. Ambedkar's ideas and teachings, not only women. Every word and sentence conveys their profound care and emotions for all women. "In the final speech of the Indian Parliament, we can show our feelings and respect to women. He quoted an Irish patriot, Daniel Nelsen's famous idea: "No one can receive blessings on the value of his honor, no woman can be grateful to the value of their purification. And no nation can be grateful to the value of their freedom." His famous book "His part of Pakistan and India" expressed their views about their Muslim women and their traditional traditions, their weddings, and so on. There were certain religious customs that applied to Muslim women. All women were entitled to human rights, regardless of their class, religion, or level of patience. He frequently voiced his opposition to injustices against women.

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Medicine, Morality and Gender Respectability: The Role of Women Medical Practitioners in Travancore's Social Order.

Bernice Rufus A

Introduction

Who could touch a woman's body in Travancore? This question—whether in childbirth, vaccination, or surgical care -- was central to the state's moral order in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Caste restrictions, ideals of female seclusion, and notions of purity strictly governed women's bodies. Yet, paradoxically, the rise of hospitals, vaccination drives, and public health reforms required bodily access, intimacy, and mobility.

This paper argues that women medical practitioners, missionary reformers, nurses, midwives, and doctors became the moral mediators of modernity in Travancore. Their respectability legitimized practices of touch, movement, and speech that would otherwise be considered transgressive. Figures such as Johanna Celestina Mead, who linked women's dignity to education and bodily freedom during the upper-cloth movement, laid the moral foundation for women's entry into medicine. Later, pioneers like Dr. Mary Poonen

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Lukose translated this respectability into professional authority, recasting domestic virtue as civic hygiene and transforming Travancore's health administration itself.[1]

By bringing together canonical Travancore historians (Nagam Aiya, Shungunny Menon, Velupillai), missionary archives, and feminist historiography, this paper situates women practitioners not as passive auxiliaries but as active architects of a moral-medical order unique to the princely state.

Travancore's Context: Monarchy, Caste, Missionary Presence

Travancore's nineteenth-century rulers proudly claimed to be "progressive." Shungunny Menon, in his History of Travancore, and Nagam Aiya in the Travancore State Manual, highlighted royal initiatives in education, vaccination, and hospitals as evidence of enlightened rule. Velupillai's Travancore Manual celebrated the monarchy's patronage of modern institutions. Yet these elite narratives largely obscured the gendered and embodied struggles through which reform was realized.[2]

Missionary activity especially by the London Missionary Society (LMS) at Neyyoor—introduced western medicine alongside Christian teaching. Here, women were central: Johanna Celestina Mead, a missionary reformer in the mid-nineteenth century, championed women's right to education and dignity in the context of the upper-cloth movement. For lower-caste women, the ability to cover their breasts symbolized not only bodily autonomy but also moral respectability. Mead's advocacy extended to schooling and medical care, laying the groundwork for women's future participation in public health.

Thus, Travancore's modernity was co-produced by monarchy, missionaries, and social reformers. But its distinctiveness lay in how morality and caste boundaries shaped medical practice: touch could pollute, movement could scandalize, and education could elevate. Women practitioners were uniquely placed to navigate these contradictions.[3]

From Polluting Hands to Healing Touch: The Rise of Respectability in Women's Medicine

Traditional midwives (*dais)* were indispensable but stigmatized as "polluting." Training programs in the early twentieth century—often initiated in hospitals like Neyyoor—sought to recast childbirth as a domain of "skilled touch." Christian nurses and midwives were framed as morally respectable, transforming the perception of medical touch from defilement into healing.

Respectability also redefined mobility. In a society where women's movement outside the home invited suspicion, medical service gave legitimacy. Zenana visitation by women practitioners exemplified this: entering elite households was justified as service, not impropriety. Respectable mobility thus created new geographies of women's presence in public and private spaces. Respectability also reframed domesticity. Infant welfare programs in the 1920s–30s encouraged mothers to adopt "hygienic motherhood," supervised by trained nurses. Here, the skills of the household became reinterpreted as civic duty an extension of domestic virtue into the sphere of public health.[4]

Case Studies on Respectability in Practice: Mission, Dress, and the Medical Bureaucracy

Missionary hospitals such as Neyyoor provided not only curative medicine but also training for women nurses and midwives. Zenana missions in Trivandrum enabled women practitioners to enter spaces barred to men, reframing seclusion as compatible with medical modernity. These efforts demonstrated how respectability was harnessed to expand medical access.5

Mead's advocacy during the upper-cloth controversy highlights how bodily dignity, clothing, and medical access were inseparable. Her efforts to promote women's education and health redefined what it meant to be respectable in Travancore. By insisting that lower-caste women deserved dignity, she expanded the moral boundaries within which women could later become medical professionals.

Dr. Mary Poonen Lukose, educated abroad, became India's first woman Surgeon General and head of Travancore's health department. Her career illustrates the culmination of this trajectory: respectability and professionalism fused in a way that enabled her to

reform midwifery training, expand public health units, and integrate women into the state medical bureaucracy. Lukose embodied a new form of civic respectability, transforming service into statecraft.[6]

Respectability as Social Capital in Education, Institutions, and the Feminization of Public Health

The demographic shifts between 1900 and 1940 reveal more than numerical growth—they signal a reconstitution of women's place in society through education and institutional presence. The expansion of girls' schools, medical colleges, and hospital wards for women created not just opportunities but *arenas of moral legitimacy*. As native women entered higher education and medical training in increasing numbers, respectability functioned as a form of social capital, transforming personal virtue into collective mobility.[7]

(Values in parenthesis are percentage)

Participation in medical institutions reframed women's labor from private obligation to public service, legitimizing their presence in state bureaucracies and community life.[8] By the 1940s, the feminization of medical spaces in Travancore had redefined civic participation itself: educated women were no longer marginal figures but became indispensable actors in public health and governance. This institutional embedding of respectability marks one of the most powerful shifts in Travancore's social order, where education and medicine converged to generate an unprecedented female professional class.[9]

From Private Bodies to Public Health: The Gendered Reordering of Citizenship

The entry of women into medical education and institutional labor in Travancore did more than expand professional numbers; it redefined the very meaning of citizenship.[10] As women practitioners moved from the zenana to hospitals, and from domestic virtue to civic hygiene, they transformed bodily care into a form of public responsibility. Their training, mobility, and institutional authority marked a shift from women as dependents of the household to women as agents of the state's welfare apparatus.

Respectability here became not only a marker of individual morality but also a criterion for civic belonging. Women who embodied education, discipline, and medical skill were recognized as legitimate participants in Travancore's governance of health.[11] This process reordered citizenship itself along gendered lines: women's bodies, once enclosed and policed, became the very grounds on which modern public health and state legitimacy were constructed.[12]

Crucially, this transformation blurred the lines between domestic care and civic duty. The maternal body, previously a private site of reproduction, became central to state discourses of population health, infant welfare, and hygienic modernity. By embodying this shift, women practitioners not only claimed space in hospitals and bureaucracies but also expanded the very grammar of citizenship in Travancore: to be a respectable woman was no longer only to serve the household, but to safeguard the health of the polity.[13]

Historiographical Critique

Subaltern historiography emphasizes marginality and resistance, yet it inadequately captures the position of women practitioners in Travancore. They were neither colonial elites nor silent peasants, but professionals negotiating authority. Resistance alone cannot explain their agency; instead, they transformed structures from within.14

Moreover, Subaltern Studies often treats archives as elite mediation. But in Travancore, women like Mead and Lukose left self-authored voices—reports, speeches, and writings—which demand recognition as historical actors in their own right. Finally, Subaltern frameworks rarely address respectability as a category of power. In Travancore, respectability structured access to touch, mobility, and legitimacy, making it central to any analysis of women's medical roles.

Thus, while indebted to Subaltern Studies, this paper argues for a gendered social history of medicine attentive to princely-state dynamics and the moral dimensions of professional women's labor.[15]

Conclusion

Travancore's women medical practitioners did more than heal bodies; they reordered society's moral grammar. Reformers like Johanna Celestina Mead

linked bodily dignity to education and health, while professionals like Dr. Mary Poonen Lukose institutionalized this respectability within state health structures. Their contributions transformed touch into skill, mobility into service, and domesticity into civic virtue. By integrating monarchy, missionary initiatives, and women's professional labor, Travancore forged a distinctive modernity in which women practitioners were not auxiliaries but moral architects of the social order. Their histories compel us to see medical modernity not merely as scientific or administrative progress, but as a deeply moral project in which women's respectability was both a tool and a transformation.

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The Narration of Sudhandhira Sangu on the Three Round Table Conferences in Colonial Tamil Nadu, 1931 – 1932

R. Jayshree

The Tamil nationalist Press played a crucial role in India's struggle for freedom from British rule. ***Sudhandhira Sangu,*** a Tamil journal popular among the masses was published in Madrasfrom 1930 to 1934. It was instrumental in mobilizing public opinion against the British Government in India which led the increased participation of people in Tamil province in the civil Disobedience Movement. It devoted its columns and cartoons to Gandhian programs and Congress propaganda.

On 18 April 1931, ***Sudhandhira Sangu***published an article entitled, "The Gandhi-Irwin Settlement" by K.

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Santanam, a prominent Congress leader. He wrote - What is the reason for the suddenconclusion of the Gandhi-Irwin Settlement, even while the Satyagraha movement and therepression of Government gained strength. The Government has admitted that it is notpossible to put down the Satyagraha Movement. Though both Gandhi and Viceroy have nottriumphed as a result of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, nobody can deny that it is a triumph of non-violence.The settlement foreshadows the early dawning of complete independence, though it is only asmall ray of light. Huge clouds are still hiding our sun. If we still follow Gandhi unitedly, eventhese will disappear and we shall attain and establish Purna Swaraj.[1]

Second Round Table Conference

Gandhi was the sole representative of theCongress in the Second Round Table Conference which took place from 7 September 1931 to 1December 1931. Gandhi and British Government could not reach anagreement mutually on affairs of India.The conference ended in failure and Gandhi returned to India.[1]Civil Disobedience Movementwas resumed on 3 January 1932.He was arrested on 4 January, 1932 on the behest of the new Viceroy of India, Lord Willingdon. Several articles and cartoons were published in ***Sudhandhira Sangu***about the Second Round Table Conference.

On 7 September 1931, an article entitled, "RoundTable Deception"was published. In it, the editor compares the Second Round Table Conference to Duryodhana's Sabha, where Pandavas and Mahabharata were not invited, even though the Sabha decided their fate. Similarly, no representatives from Indian industrialists were called to the Round Table Conference, deliberately.***Sudhandhira Sangu***calls this a conspiracy or deception on the part of the British government.[1]

14.11.1931 – Round Table Puppet Show

Gandhi attended the conference as the sole representative of the Congress. Gandhi could not make any headway in that stage managed and manipulated conference. Gandhi was almost powerless to secure any agreement among the wrangling delegates.



The cartoon portrays British Prime minister, Ramsay McDonald as the cunning puppeteer who controls the strings of the Round Table puppet show. Indian delegates to the Round Table Conference are portrayed as the puppets. The puppeteer is seen making the puppets (Indian Muslims and Hindus) beat each other. The puppets are ignorant of the identity of the puppeteer. Gandhi is seen standing outside the stage as the only representative of the Indians and feeling sad for the Indian delegates. ***Sudhandhira Sangu*** bemoans that Round Table Conferences are a drama and a shameful puppetry masterminded by McDonald to deceive the world.[1]



Sudhandhira Sangu published an article on 7 December 1931 condemning and lamenting about the failure of the conference. It says that the Round Table Conference has fallen to the ground and is lying on the ground as a dead body and no one has bothered about it. The silk rope of love with which Gandhi went to London has been completely severed by the British Government.[1]

17.12.1931 – Game Table

The cartoon depicts Gandhi and Viceroy Willingdon playing a game of cards on a Round Table. The Viceroy holds various: 144 Criminal Penal Code, Bengal Ordinance, Press Laws, 124A Indian Penal Code, etc without revealing to Gandhi while Gandhi has only one card, Satyagraha and is open about it.[1]Willingdon has added a new card to his collection, the United Province Ordinance.

This is in the context of the second Round Table Conference. ***Sudhandhira Sangu*** remarks – 'In the political game of cards played at the Round Table Conference, let us wait and see who wins. Even though Gandhi has only one card, it has tremendous weightage in the game.'[1]

Third Round Table Conference



The Third Round Table Conference was held from 17 November 1932 to 24 December 1932. Only 46 delegates loyal to the British government were invited to attend the conference. Nobody from Indian National Congress participated. This was held to review the political situation and take up constitutional reforms for India. This also ended in failure.

10.10.1932 – The Monkey charmer Minister

The cartoon depicts the viceroy as a monkey charmer and several Indian political leaders as monkeys listening to his every word without questioning him. Their plight is similar to that of monkeys. This is in the context of viceroy persuading leaders to attend the round table conference.



Sudhandhira Sangu says that our elders have sung that just as how a monkey jumps from one tree runs to another, a human mind also wavers. The British Prime Minister is saying - 'Lay! Lay!.. London is a big city... Lay! Lay! Cross the ocean and I will give you peanuts.' ***Sudhandhira Sangu*** observes – 'Several Indians are hoping that they will also be called by the viceroy to cross the ocean and go for the Roundtable conference. Some others are unsure of whether to cross the ocean or not. This is only the first part of the Round Table drama.'[1]

19.11.1932 – Conference in a Shallow Vessel

The***Sudhandhira Sangu*** published a cartoon portraying British representatives at the Round Table Conference as foxes and Indian delegates (Sapru, Jayakar and Kelkar) as cranes. The former duped the latter serving them soup in a shallow vessel fully aware that the cranes cannot drink it. The vessel is symbolic of the shallow promises made by the British officials at the Round Table Conferences. The cartoon is accompanied by a six line poem giving the essence of the cartoon.[1]


8 சுதந்திரச் சங்கு 1—12—32

முகமூடிகள் மகாநாடு

இந்த வட்டமேஜை மகாநாட்டின் நடவடிக்கைகள் எல்லாம் அத்தாரிக்க மாம்! பத்திரிகைக் காரர்களுக்கும் அனு மதி யில்லையாம்! இரகஸ்யமாம்! இந்த அழகான முகமூடிகள் மகாநாட்டுக்கா விழுந்தடித்து ஓர் கூட்டம் ஓடிற் றென்று உலகம் முழுதும் கேலி செய் கின்றது.

—Courtesy: Hindustan Times.

01.12.1932 (pg.8) – The Conference of Masked Men

The cartoon by Shankar published in Hindustan times is republished in ***SudhandhiraSangu***. It depicts a large group of men fully clad in masked clothes except for their eyes and are seen going towards the venue of the Round Table Conference. The British are waiting for them at the entrance without revealing what is inside the venue. This cartoon is in the context of the third Round Table Conference where only those supporting the British government were invited to attend.

The caption accompanying the cartoon reads – 'All the activities of the Round Table Conference are shrouded in mystery. Even the journalists are not permitted to attend the conference. Secret! A group of people have come running to attend this beautifully masked conference. The whole world is laughing at them.'[1]

Failure of Three Round Table Conferences

02.01.1933 – Feeding Life into a Corpse


Regd. No. M. 2811 காலணி 40

சுதந்திரச்சங்கு

பிணத்துக்கு உயிரூட்டல்

The cartoon depicts the corpse of the Round Table Conference lying on a table. Life is being pumped into it through a tube of blood from the can of united politics. Another man is seen pouring the medicine of safeguards into the mouth of the corpse through a funnel. Another man is trying to make the corpse come alive. The other is checking the heartbeat of the corpse through a Stethoscope. All this is done to make the corpse dance. This is in the context of the utter failure of all 3 Round Table Conferences. The caption below the cartoon reads - The Round Table Conference has died thrice, but it is being given treatment to make it dance fiercely. Ramsay McDonald is watering it with blood. Samuel Hoare is pumping breath into it. Lord Sanghi is feeding it medicines. Lord Reading is monitoring it with a Stethoscope.[1]

The White Paper, 1933


23 காலணி Regd. No. M. 2811.

சுதந்திரச்சங்கு

மணலுப் பிழிந்தால்—

Courtesy of "Hindustan Times"

The final features of a concrete plan for a new constitution of India were decided in the Third Round Table Conference and were embodied in a White Paper presented to the British Parliament in March 1933.[1] But most of the opinions of the Indians were not included in the White Paper. The Indian public and Gandhi began a Protest Movement against the provisions of the White Paper.[1]

23.03.1933 - If the Sand is Squeezed

This cartoon was republished by ***Sudhandhira Sangu*** from the ***Hindustan Times.*** McDonald and Samuel Hoare dropped sand in the mill of Round Table Conference and squeezed it dry. The Sapru, Jayakar and Kelkar group supported the British officials and eagerly waited for something tasty to come out from the squeezing machine. They awaited the day of announcement of the White Paper .On the long awaited day, the Moderates from Indian National Congress gathered around the machine and eagerly bent down to see the end product. But they found only sand. Churchill is seen nonchalantly smoking a cigar in the side.

This cartoon was published by ***Sudhandhira Sangu*** in the context of the release of White Paper .

Civil Disobedience Movement lost its momentum by the end of 1932. Gandhi suspended the mass Movement in May 1933 while still in Yerawada Jail. The Civil Disobedience Movement was officially withdrawn by the Congress on 7 April, 1934.

Conclusion

Sudhandhira Sangu was vehement in its criticism of British policies. The articles and cartoons published in***Sudhandhira Sangu***laid emphasis on the ineffectiveness and failure of the three Round Table Conferences. It clearly indicated that the conferences were held to deliberately mislead the Indians about the intentions of the British Government. The newspaper adopted ingenious methods to capture the attention of its readers while succinctly sowing the seeds ofstrong nationalistic feelings among the Indian masses and firmly bring them into the folds of Civil Disobedience Movement. It largely succeeded in its efforts.

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The Indra Sawhney Judgement (1992) and its Impact on Tamilnadu's Reservation Policies

Thirsha Brightlin. D

Background of the Indra Sawhney Case

The Government of India appointed the Second Backward Classes Commission headed by B.P. Mandal on 20th December 1978 to determine the criteria for defining the socially and educationally backward classes, to recommend steps to be taken for their advancement and to examine the desirability or otherwise of making provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of such backward classes of citizens which are not adequately represented in public services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of any State.[1] In 1980, the Second Backward Classes Commission, submitted its report recommending candidates belonging to OBCs recruit on the basis of merit in an open competition should not be adjusted against their reservation quota of 27%, it should also be made applicable to promotion quota at all levels, relaxation in the upper age limit for direct recruitment should be extended to the candidates of OBCs in the same manner as done in the case of SCs and STs and a roaster system for each category of posts should be adopted by the concerned authorities in the same manner as presently done in respect of SC and ST candidates and it also recommended that these reservation should be applicable to public sector under both Central and State Governments, as also to nationalised banks.[1] The report was implemented by the government in 1990 and Formal orders were issued thereafter in Office Memorandum No. 36012/31/90-Estt. (SCT) dated 13th August 1990 providing 27% reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes, leading to widespread protests and legal challenges. In 1991, the P. V. Narasimha Rao government issued the second Office Memorandum with two changes: preference to the poorer sections among the OBCs in the 27% quota, i.e., adoption of the economic criteria in granting reservation and reservation of another 10% of jobs for economically backward sections of higher castes who are not covered by any existing schemes of reservation.In 1991, the P. V. Narasimha Rao government released a second Office Memorandum introducing two key changes: first, giving preference within the 27% OBC quota to the poorer sections by applying economic criteria, and second, reserving an additional 10% of jobs for economically weaker sections of higher castes not covered by existing reservation schemes.

The Indra Sawhney Case

A number of writ petitions were filed in the Supreme Court questioning the said Memorandum along with applications for staying the operation of the Memorandum. The petitioners in the case argued

- Is Article 16(4) (which talks about reservations) just an exception to Article 16(1) (equality of opportunity), and does it cover the whole scope of reservations in government jobs?
- What does "Backward Classes" in Article 16(4) mean? Can caste alone be treated as a class?Can poverty/economic status alone define a class?Does "Backward Classes" also include groups mentioned in Article 46 (weaker sections)?
- If poverty/economic status alone cannot define "Backward Classes" under 16(4), can reservations based only on economic criteria be allowed under Article 16(1)?
- Can reservations under Article 16(4 (or combined with 16(1)) go beyond 50% of total government jobs? Can this percentage be fixed without

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checking whether each group is poorly represented in different services?

- Does Article 16(4) allow dividing Backward Classes into categories like "Backward" and "Most Backward"?Can classification be done based on economic or other factors?

Reservation System of Tamil Nadu Pre-1992

Tamil Nadu (then Madras Presidency) was the first state in India to introduce cast-based reservation. The Justice Party Government (1921) issued a Government Order reserving 44% of seats in public employment and education for non-Brahmin Communities. Ater Independence, by 1951 the reservations in Tamil Nadu were fixed at 25% for Backward Classes (BC), 16% for Scheduled Castes (SC) and 1% for Scheduled Tribes (ST). In 1969, the Tamil Nadu Government appointed the First Backward Classes Commission under A. N. Sattanathan. The Sattanathan Commission Report (1971) recommended to increase BC quota to 31% and retaining SC/ST quotas at 18% and 1%. It also recommended to introduce creamy layer exclusion within BCs to prevent elite capture but this was ignored by the governments. By 1971, the DMK government increased reservation as 30% for BCs, 18% for SCs, 1% for STs and 20% for the Most Backward Classes (MBCs) with total reservation of 69%. By the early 1990s, Tamil Nadu reservation stood at 69%. This set the stage for direct conflict with Indra Sawhney ruling in 1992.

State Legislative Response in Tamil Nadu

The Indra Sawhney v. Union of India (1992) judgment imposed a 50% ceiling on reservations and introduced the "creamy layer" principle. This directly affected Tamil Nadu, where the total reservation stood at 69% (BC/MBC – 50%, SC – 18%, ST – 1%).For Tamil Nadu, which historically regarded caste-based reservations as central to social justice and Dravidian politics, this ceiling posed an existential challenge. Leaders feared that reducing quotas would cause widespread social unrest and political backlash.Unlike many states where reservations were politically contentious, in Tamil Nadu both ruling and opposition parties united to safeguard the 69% quota.The AIADMK government under Chief Minister Jayalalithaa (1991–96) took the lead in legislating protections.The DMK, Congress, and Left parties also supported retaining the higher quota, reflecting the broad political consensus that caste-based reservations were non-negotiable in Tamil Nadu's political culture.

To shield the policy, the state enacted:

- The Tamil Nadu Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the State) Act, 1993 (Tamil Nadu Act 45 of 1994).
- This law formally codified 69% reservations, which had until then been implemented through Government Orders (G. Os)
- Reservation Breakdown under the 1993 Act:Backward Classes (excluding Most Backward Classes): 30%, Most Backward Classes &Denotified Communities: 20%Scheduled Castes: 18%Scheduled Tribes: 1% with total: 69%

To shield the 1993 Act from judicial review, the Tamil Nadu government successfully requested the Union Government to place the law under Article 31B of the Constitution, i.e., the Ninth Schedule.

- In 1994, the Constitution (76th Amendment) Act added the Tamil Nadu law to the Ninth Schedule.
- This made Tamil Nadu's 69% reservation immune from direct judicial invalidation, since Ninth Schedule laws are generally protected from challenge under **Articles 14 (equality) and 16 (equal opportunity)**.

Thus, Tamil Nadu successfully insulated its 69% quota policy, making it an exception to the national 50% rule.

Educational, Employment and SocialImpact of Reservation in Tamil Nadu

- Educationally, by the 1980s and 1990s, enrolment rates of BC and MBC students in universities rose

sharply. For instance, the Report of the Backward Classes Commission (1985–86) showed that over 50% of seats in professional courses (engineering, medicine, law) were occupied by backward classes.Reservation enabled communities historically excluded (MBCs, SCs, STs) to gain entry into high-status professions. A Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Report (1992) noted that without reservation, nearly 80% of medical seats would have gone to forward caste students.Many MBC/SC students were the first in their families to attend school or college, leading to long-term socio-economic mobility.

- In Employment, reservation significantly increased the share of backward classes in Group C and D government posts, which had previously been dominated by upper castes. By the late 1980s, over 70% of clerical and lower administrative positions were held by BC and MBC communities.However, representation in Group A posts (IAS, IPS, higher bureaucracy) remained relatively low, even with reservations. The Justice Sattanathan Commission (1971) acknowledged this disparity, noting that elite castes still had a disproportionate presence in the higher services.
- Socially, reservation policies undermined traditional caste monopolies in education and employment. Dalits and backward classes began to enter professional fields (medicine, law, engineering, academia), disrupting upper-caste dominance.
- Reservation created a new OBC/MBC middle class, which gained political, cultural, and social influence.

Conclusion

The *Indra Sawhney* judgment (1992) introduced significant principles into India's reservation framework, particularly the **50% ceiling** and the recognition of the **creamy layer**, with the aim of balancing social justice with constitutional equality. Tamil Nadu, with its long-standing tradition of affirmative action, responded by enacting the **1993 Reservation Act** and securing its **69% quota** through the **76th Constitutional Amendment**, thereby safeguarding its policies under the **Ninth Schedule**. These measures reflect the state's deep-rooted commitment to **equity, inclusion, and the upliftment of socially and educationally disadvantaged communities**. Over time, the expansion of opportunities in **education and public employment** has helped reshape Tamil Nadu's social structure, ensuring broader participation across communities. The state's approach illustrates how regional histories and priorities can adapt national judicial frameworks, offering a distinctive model of **federalism, social justice, and inclusive development**within India's democratic order.

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William Miller: A Pioneer of Missionary Education in Madras.

Balasubramaniyan S.L

Introduction:

Throughout history there have been many eminent figures who come and go, but there are only a few who have left indelible footprints on the sands of time. True to the adage that knowledge is indestructible, the contributions made by pioneers of education cannot be rendered obscure. In the long list of the proponents of educational initiatives of Christian Missionaries in Southern India, the name that always garners utmost reverence and respect, remains to be that Rev. Dr William Miller. In the 1800's, with the start of the evangelical revival trend that dominated the western world in the 18th century, Christian education initiatives in Madras majorly constituted the missions developed by the society of Propagation of the Gospel, London Missionary society, Church Missionary society, Wesleyan Mission, and the Free Church Mission of Scotland.

The Free Church was formed by Evangelicals who broke from the Church of Scotland in 1843 in protest against what they regarded as the state's encroachment on the spiritual independence of the Church, in what is known as the disruption of 1843. Led by Dr. Thomas Chalmers, the Free Church concerned itself with the problems of urban society and they made a real attempt to overcome the social fragmentation that took place in industrial towns and cities.

India was among the early fields of missionary activity by Scot Presbyterians, and became a major location for Scottish foreign missions in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It was in 1824 that the Free Church of Scotland endorsed foreign missions, sending out their first missionary leader-Alexander Duff to India in 1829. Following the success of Alexander Duff in Calcutta and John Wilson in Bombay, John Anderson was assigned to follow their footsteps and setup similar educational endeavors in Madras in 1837. He was subsequently succeeded by William Miller in 1862.

Hailing from Thurso in Scotland, Miller was one of the youngest Scottish Missionaries that took up service in India. He was initially assigned to spread the preachings of the Free Church of Scotland, congregational work and child education. He later took over the Christian boy's school near Anderson Church, which would in the consequent years transform and earn the reputed name of 'Madras Christian College (MCC)', under the instruction and guidance of William Miller.

Birth and early life:

Dr. William Miller was born in Thurso in County Caithness, in the northern province of Scotland on 13th January 1838. Miller's father was an efficient merchant. His early education was at the school of Thurso which was run by the Christian missionaries. Later he moved to Aberdeen to attend Bellevue Academy, He completed his school education at the young age of 13 and in 1852, Miller joined Marischal college at Aberdeen and was considered to be the best student of the college in the very same year. Here, Miller studied for four years in various fields like Christian doctrines, Latin, Greek, Natural history, Mathematics, Philosophy and Logical reasoning and then moved to Edinburgh.

The education he received at Edinburgh served as a great inspiration throughout his life. Miller once quoted that his days at Edinburgh were his happiest days.Miller took up theology in the year 1857 to 1861 at Free church which was separated from the established church of Scotland. He was very interested in the subject of theology and participated in many theological debates which enhanced his spiritual knowledge and gave him new ideas in spirituality and theology. He also preached at the free church with great excitement and enthusiasm.

After completing his education at Edinburgh, he was appointed as an assistant to the free St. George's church at Edinburgh. Miller just like the other Scottish men had no idea of coming to a country like India.

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Many of whom believed that service in education and spreading the word of Christianity was not a character of the Scottish, it was during this time that the school started by John Anderson in Chennai was in desperate need of an able administrator, Dr. Candlish who was the head of the church had remembered a youthful Miller who was consequently called forth to take the reins of school in Chennai. However, Miller despite have no idea about India and its educational development accepted his call and left for India.

Arrival in India and early missionary years:

Within a year of his arrival in Madras, Miller took interest in the educational work of the Central Institution and its progress. Miller was a profound visionary and at a time when missionary societies of different churches operated in independent of each other, in 1874, Miller proposed partnership among missions of Madras for more effective ministry. There was a general agreement to the resultant resolve that the Church of Scotland Central Institution in Madras become the Central Christian College for South India. Though, as the secretary of the ecumenical mission, Miller had to look after various activities such as outdoor preaching, congregational work, medical aid, girl's education and social work, his primary focus remained the central school. In 1874, Miller proposed the idea of a Christian College in South India with a corporate framework to the Foreign Missions Committee and was subsequently approved in 1875 by the General assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. Thus, Miller transformed the institution into an ecumenical and co-operative enterprise and named it as Madras Christian College (MCC) on 1 January 1877.

After obtaining the status of recognition as a college, under the affiliation of the University of Madras, F.A classes started. By 1865, the first class of six students appeared for matriculation examination. Consequently, a junior B.A class was formed in February 1867 and thus the institution became a first-grade college. Its growing popularity can be attributed to Miller's hard work as well as the institution's focus on intellectual progress. In what is famously referred to as the 'Miller's era', the institution grew and flourished under the leadership of Miller into one of the most prestigious colleges in India.He is widely known for the educational reform and schemes that he helped introduce and implement during his tenure as a University of Madras senate and in the legislative council. Miller was chosen as a senate member of the board of the University of Madras in the year 1867. Miller served for almost thirty years in the senate board of the University of the Madras thus playing an important role for the growth that the University achieved in leaps and bounds. This ecumenical approach to Christian education served as an impetus for the establishment of other educational institutions like the United Theological College in Bangalore, Meston Training College in Madras and the Vellore Medical College.

Years at Madras Christian College:

Miller realized that MCC was a changing college in a changing nation and emphasized how essential the existence of societies, associations and clubs was to equip the students to confront big, worldly challenges. About 45 such clubs, most of them being the oldest in the country was set up for the students to express their talents freely. This helped create a conducive environment for intellectual, moral and physical growth. Further, as a move ahead of its time, he also introduced the flavor of social work experience to the students through the Brotherhood Society and the Rural Service League.

He also instituted scholarships and studentships, built hostels and staff residences, thereby facilitating strengthening of spiritual and social service interests of the community.

He also ensured that the college contributed to intellectual stimulation by launching the Christian College Magazine in 1883 which then grew to become a popular monthly periodical encouraging free expression of new ideas, in an era where such journalism was almost non-existent.

He not only erected great buildings for the college, chiefly by his own gifts and those of his brother. but also garnered support and sponsorship from a group of loyal and able men, both Indian and British.

His dormitories, or college hostels were first of their kind in South India—he used these to train future government officials and members of municipal and local boards in the art of conducting public business and running democracy. He introduced the principle of self-governance and believed that the residential framework would help shape responsible graduates. In these hostels, students of all castes, language, color or creed interacted, studied and lived together.

The alumni of the college, occupied prominent positions in all fields, including national movements, politics and government offices. He also setup up the common library in 1863 and ensured that the college provided excellent library facilities focusing on both private study and research. He also ensured that the leadership abilities of the students were nurtured through establishing various clubs and societies.

Miller wanted the College to develop as one of the foremost educational institutions in the East and a rich source of Christian thought and influence in Southern India.Miller was very much involved during the first ten years after the University of Madras was founded. His unmatched interest in the development of the standard of the education of the University made him a very charismatic person for the development of the University.

Miller's Theological views and perspectives on Christian Education:

Miller set out to redefine the role of educational missions and firmly believed that education should make a leavening impact. 'The central idea is that of associating all education and all thought with revealed truth, and of making them thus a channel whereby it may enter into and leaven the mind of the community'.

He is quoted to have used the analogy of 'ploughing and harvesting' implying that the task of education is the former and the responsibility of 'harvesting' would be in the hands of preachers. Though the Free church considered education as a preparation for evangelism, Miller firmly opposed the use of education as a 'bait for conversion'.

Miller believed that the objective of Christian education was to provide education for Christians in developing leaders for the Church. As for MCC, its aim was to mold character, to send out men into the world with their whole being so developed that when "truth comes before them they will love it, that when duty comes to them, they will do it". He strongly encouraged the students to think independently and discuss their ideas with others to form a comprehensive judgement through participation in debating societies, associations and through literary publications in the monthly Christian College magazine. In the inaugural article, Miller says, that a new era is dawning on India and that new thoughts are stirring in men's minds and new aspirations are awakening and that these thought and aspirations will continue to be weak as long as they shared with only a few.

He urged his students to always focus on the truth rather than custom. He says that though Indian students are the best at intelligent apprehension, they have a habit of the 'Western mind'- to let statements lie dormant side by side. He elaborates that there is a real interest in truth, or what is believed to be the truth, but there is not that ferment of thought which truth ought to excite. He strongly encouraged his students to preach the truth, however unpleasant it may be, which they have learnt by experience as it would be one of the things that they would be conspicuously called to do if they wish to serve the country as well.

Controversies:

The most important controversy that Miller's views ensued was that of ministry education. Townsend who jointly authored the magazine 'Spectator' wrote an article asking, "Whether the cost spent by the ministry groups on India was right and bore fruit?" Miller replied by stating that "the luxurious life that the Europeans lived in India was because of the Christian missionaries." His reply however was not received well by many people.

Moreover, Miller's writings about the educated Hindus irritated various Christian groups, both in India as well as England. Miller was also a huge critic of the Government's schemes which he deemed non beneficial. He expressed this thought, boldly in the year 1893 at Mumbai to the community of the heads of the

missionaries. Miller was not deterred by the hatred and the controversies surrounding him he believed that it was gods call for him to spread Christian education in India. He also spoke at the "Worlds Congress of Missions" which was held at Chicago in the year 1893. In the conference, he spoke about the ambitions of the missionaries amongst which the first one included the training and strengthening the students and developing the skills, and the second one was to make them ready to face the challenges of the future world. This speech of Miller can be considered as a great reply to the critics of the missionaries of Christian education.

Addressing the criticism that his students face in his college Day message in 1909, Miller exclaimed that though he has no objections to the hard things being said, provided the things said were true and not a result of unsympathetic and one-sided observation. He says that not many have had the opportunity of knowing what South Indian schoolboys and students really think and feel both when they are being educated and later when they have gone out to the world and that in his experience, very few young people anywhere have been more responsive than his students to strict and regular discipline or more appreciative in later years of the good it has done them.

Conclusion:

In the mid of Nineteenth century missionary education had become part of a more general provision of education for India but without any focused aim. Missionaries were liberal in their thoughts about education. Scottish missionaries in particular believed in moral training through imparting quality education to ensure that the future generation carries on their duty.

Miller revolutionized this thought through a systematic approach to the missionary enterprise that included the development of indigenous leadership, active engagement with cultural elites, and an understanding of the Church as essentially a missionary enterprise. The main aim of the missionaries was conversion and large resources were spent on the education but these were not sufficient for this vast purpose. But with perseverant hard-work and a mindset that focused on progress and not on individual gain, Miller's work set an example of what imparting proper, quality education can help achieve the aim of education and the true build of character.

Miller believed in the influence that Christian missions had on education and its importance. Dedicated to the actualization of this conviction, he worked untiringly through 45 years of his stay in Madras, committed to an education aimed at brightening not only the intellect of the students but also his conscience and religion. Though he succeeded in most of his endeavours, the most important of his victories will always be the way his ideas, principles, inclination for duty and teachings were reflected in all his students. Miller still lives in the hearts of millions of Indians, particularly the love and respect that the people of South India have for him is everlasting.

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Reform and Resistance: An Annual Study of Social Movements Between 1850-1950

K. Parthiban

Introduction

Social movements have played an important role in human history. They throw light on the dynamic aspect of human society and also human behavior. Members of society are *not* always content to be the passive playthings of social forces. On the contrary, they attempt to influence the course of human events by collective action. It does not mean, all social movements become successful in achieving their objectives. Social movements represent a powerful instrument of *social* change. Some movements have brought about social changes - some minor, some far-reaching. These social movements may last for years or even decades.

Social movements are comparatively well structured. Their members are not scattered, unorganized individuals but rather people consciously acting together in accordance with a shared belief system or ideology. The ideology provides a criticism of existing social conditions, a concept of the movement's purpose, a programme for action and a justification for the same. Some social movements become so organized and structured that they cease to be social movements and instead become formal organizations.

Definition, Concept and Types of Social Movements

"Social Movement" represents a social phenomenon that assumes great importance in the study of not only collective behavior but also of social change. Sociologists have started evincing great interest in studying its role not only in bringing about changes in society but also in resisting them. A social movement is a type of collective behavior that could be a lasting one and at the same time, an influential one. It is, indeed, *"a generator of social change"*.

Social movements of various types have been taking place in most of the societies of the modern world. In fact, they have become a part and parcel of modern democratic societies. We hear of various types of social movements launched for one or the other purpose. There are movements to demand more and more reservation for the SCs and STs and other backward classes and there are counter movements demanding its cancellation or at least the status quo. There are movements to *"save the environment*", to "save wildlife" and to *"save world peace"*. There are movements for and against the construction of Sri Ram Temple at the disputed place of Ayodhya. There are

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Fascist Movements, Communist Movements, Naxalite Movements, Tribal Movements, Peasants' Movements, Women's Movements, Youth Movements, Labor Movements, Civil Rights Movements, Human Rights Movements, Afforestation Movements, and so on. What do we mean by social movements**?**

Characteristics of Social Movements

M.S.A. Rao, one of the prominent Indian sociologists, has made an analysis of the nature of social movements in the book "Social *Movements in India ",* edited by him. According to him, social movement includes two characteristics about which there is considerable agreement among the sociologists. They are as follows.

Collective Action. Social movement undoubtedly involves collective action. However, this collective action takes the form of movement *only when it is sustained for a long time.* This collective action need not be formally organized. It could be an informal attempt also. But it should be able to create an interest and awakening in a relatively large number of people.

As Paul Wilkinson has pointed out, a social movement requires a minimum of organizational framework to achieve success or at least to maintain the tempo of the movement.

Types of Social movements

Sociologists hence classified social movements into different types on the basis of their objectives. Wallace and Wallace, Horton and Hunt, M.S.A. Rao and others have mentioned three main types of movements: (i) reform movements, (ii) revolutionary movements, and (iii) revivalist movements.

Reform Movements

During the 18th century, and afterwards, a great change swept over the land of India. The Hindu mind that had been molded for centuries by a fixed set of religious ideas and social conventions was exposed to new ideas and new ways of thinking. It was the result of the western impact on India. As a result of that impact, the rigid rituals in religion and traditional beliefs started losing their influence on the masses. The western contact opened the Hindu mind to the social evils and set in motion a social reform of its time to honor institutions in the new light. Several traditional beliefs and practices dysfunctional to society were discarded and many new customs, practices, institutions and values were adopted.

Indians who came under the influence of the new values and practices became aware of many of the existing social evils like child marriage etc. this awareness led to a revolt against tradition and that was the first step towards reforms in social, religious and political spheres of life. This awareness led to the launching of a series of social reform movements right from raja ram Mohan Roy down to mahatma Gandhiji. Raja Ram Mohan Roy's "Brahmo Samaj", swami dayananda saraswathi's "arya samaj", swami vivekananda's "sri ramakrishna mission", and such other movements not only served to eradicate some of the social evils but also to enlighten people regarding modern values.

T*he Brahmo Samaj* - Raja Ram Mohan Roy [1772-1833] of Bengal, often known as the "first modern man of India", was the first socio-religious reformer of the 19th century. He was the first to see the evils that had crept into the Hindu society on account of orthodox religious practices and superstitious beliefs. He was also the first to challenge the existing religious beliefs and practices of the day. He pointed out that they were not according to the basic scriptures of the hindu dharma.

Prarthana Samaj - 1867 represents one of the Indian reform movements that took place in the 19th century. The Brahmo Samaj entered Maharashtra as early as in 1849 and obtained some initial support especially in Bombay.The Prarthana Samaj devoted attention to social reform. It aimed at reforming the Hindu religious thought and practice in the light of modern knowledge. It preached the worship of one God and tried to free religion from the hold of caste and priestly domination. It encouraged interlining and intermarriage among different castes.

Arya Samaj-1875-Dayananda Saraswathi [1824-1883] was another religious leader who stood for the reformation of the Hindu society and the Hindu

religion.Dayananda Saraswathi drew inspiration from the Vedas which he regarded as infallible. Since the Vedas are believed to have originated from divine inspiration, they represent an inexhaustible reservoir of all knowledge.

An outstanding movement which stood for religious reformation is the "Sri Ramakrishna Mission" of Calcutta. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa [1834-86] and his great disciple Swami Vivekananda [1863-1902] launched this movement which has now assumed the form of an institution.Unity of God - Equality of Religions and Service to Mankind: Sri Ramakrishna Mission was totally an indigenous movement due to the personality of a simple and almost illiterate saint, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He preached the unity of God and equality of religions and taught the philosophy of the Upanishads in universal language and laid particular emphasis on social service.

Influence of Reform Movements

During British rule various social reform movements were initiated by the enlightened Indians. Most of these movements aimed at eliminating caste disabilities, promotion of education among women, abolition of sati, upliftment of the depressed and the down-trodden castes such as the Scheduled Castes, and so on. These movements definitely played their role in the beginning of the non-Brahmin movement. At least in the beginning, these movements were generally led by the learned members of the forward castes themselves. These movements created conditions of self-awareness among the deprived sections of the society.

Backward Classes Movement

The Backward Classes / Castes Movement started in the early part of the 20th century. The backward classes or castes represent the underprivileged sections of Indian society. The concept of "Backward Castes/Classes Movement" virtually refers to the movement launched by the backward castes / classes to fight against caste inequalities, Brahmin domination, socio-economic-religious discrimination and deprivation. The movement aims at removing or lessening the caste inequalities, promoting the economic advancement of the poor, the deprived and the low castes, and to obtain for them equal educational facilities and political opportunities. The backward classes movement which first took place during the British rule in Maharashtra [in 1860 and 1870s] later on spread to various south Indian states such as Kerala, Andhra and Karnataka, still continues with different dimensions.

Factors Contributing to the Backward Classes Movement

The backward classes' movement which started as a non-Brahmin movement, ultimately degenerated into an anti-Brahmin movement. This movement is the cumulative effect of several factors among which the following may be noted.

The Dual Effect of the Politics Pursued by the British Government-The growth of the backward classes' movement is in no small measure due to the politics pursued by the British Government. The advent of British rule in India had led to many far-reaching consequences. The consolidation of the political regime by the British, introduction of Western-oriented educational system, opening of vast occupational and professional opportunities, produced a lot of structural disturbances in the caste structure. The British rule in a way, caused two contradictory effects on the Hindu society.

British Rule Further Widened the Gap Between the Brahmins and Non-Brahmins:

The British rule led to an increase in the structural distance between the Brahmins and the rest of the political power. In most parts of the country Brahmins were the first to benefit from the Western education. They also increased their representation in the professional and administrative and managerial services especially in the first quarter of the 20th century. There was a preponderance of castes in the Hindu society. It led to an increase in the disparities in the distribution of economic the Brahmins among the literates and particularly the English knowing population in the Madras Presidency and the then princely state of MysoreThe British, for their own benefit, started supporting the non-Brahmin movement. Though the British used to favour the Brahmins in the beginning, they later realized that Brahmins were potentially dangerous. During the first phase of the 20th century, a

section of the British in India believed the Brahmin to be their primary enemy.

The desire for more mobility among the backward castes came from the census operations also. The caste "sabhas" represented to the census authorities the demand of individual castes to belong to a particular "varna" and not to a lower one. For example, the two peasant castes of Tamil Nadu, the Vellalas and Padaiyachis wanted to be recorded as "Vaishyas" and "Vaniya Kula Kshatriyas" respectively, and not as "Shudras." Many such claims were made in the 1931 census. The "Sabhas" also altered the lifestyles of their castes in the direction of Sanskritisation. This included the giving up of forbidden meat [pork and carrion beef] and liquor, and the donning of the sacred thread, the shortening of the mourning period like that of the Brahmins. In the case of very "low castes" it included .non-performance of a traditional degrading duty such as "Carvee" or other free labour or carrying palanquins, or beating the "tom-tom" on ceremonial occasions. The upper caste people were mainly indifferent towards these trends. On some occasions, they used force to make the lower caste people perform their traditional duties. The caste consciousness created by the census system thus favoured the backward classes movement.

Non-Brahmin Movement As A Type Of Backward Classes Movement

The foundation for the non-Brahmin movement was laid by the great social reformer Poona Jyothirao Phule. He was the first to have revolted against the tyranny of caste in general and Brahmanical dominance in particular. He established the "Sathya Shodhaka Samaj" in 1873 which spearheaded the non-Brahmin movement. Phule undertook the social reforms by establishing schools and hostels for the low caste people, etc. in order to elevate the status of the low caste people. He appealed to the non-Brahmin castes and particularly the depressed castes to liberate themselves from mental and religious slavery. He preached against idol worship and superstitions.

Justice Party and the Non-Brahmin Movement: The Second Phase

The discontentment of the non-Brahmins began to express itself through various efforts to organise the non-Brahmins in the city of Madras. A Vellala medical student by name Natesh Mudaliar established a Dravidian Association Hostel in Madras in June 1916 with the help of non-Brahmins. He also started a joint stock company called "South Indian People's Association Ltd." for the purpose of publishing English, Telugu and Tamil newspapers to express the grievances and problems of the non-Brahmins. The "Non-Brahmin Manifesto" of the Justice Party : The Justice Party released the "Non-Brahmin Manifesto" in December 1916. It was directed against the Brahmins who had dominated the fields of education, public service and politics. It revealed an extremely high concentration of the Brahmins in all the important positions who constituted only 3% of the total population of the Madras Presidency. The chief leader of the Justice Party Movement, Dr. J.M. Nair announced that without a provision for communal representation the reforms would be a failure. He made known to his people through the Manifesto that the Brahmins had secured 94% of the positions in Madras Provincial Civil Service between 1892 and 1904

The "Self Respect Movement" or The Dravidian Phase : Leadership of E.V. Ramasami Naicker, The non-Brahmin movement assumed the form of the Self Respect Movement when E.V. Ramasami Naicker became its leader. Ramasami Naicker, a Baliya Naidu had begun his political career with the Congress. But he was unhappy with the way in which the non-Brahmins were treated within the Madras Congress organisation and hence he decided to come out of it. He was also very much annoyed with Gandhiji's support of a purified Varna ideology. He left the Congress Party to start the "Self Respect Movement" [1925].

Conclusions

Agitations or struggles in which the agitators make a frontal attack on the opponents who are regarded as their enemies, belong to this category. Capturing the people who are dubbed as enemies, torturing and tyrannizing and finally killing them, and such other violent activities are common here. Agitations of this kind are different from that of other categories for there is a scope for violence and armed revolt.

DR. PREMA KASTHURI ENDOWMENT PRIZE

Blood, Body and Belief: A Social History of Menstrual Practices in Tamil Nadu

Nivedha E

Menstruation, though biologically universal, is far from being socially neutral. In Tamil Nadu, the experience of menstruation is deeply embedded within historical, religious, and mythical frameworks that have both celebrated and regulated the female body. Tracing its conceptual origin to Vedic myths, particularly the narrative from the *Rig Veda* that frames menstruation as a form of divine penance, this study interrogates how such ancient myths laid the foundation for contemporary taboos. In recent decades, however, Tamil Nadu has also become a site of change, with growing health awareness, state-sponsored hygiene programs, and grassroots campaigns challenging traditional notions. By situating these developments within a broader social history, this paper examines how menstruation reflects the tensions between ritual purity and modern bodily autonomy.

Menstruation, Myths and Restrictions

Myths are traditional narratives that help explain the beliefs, practices, and natural phenomena of various cultures. Commentary on the Rig Veda also offers a feminist interpretation, particularly around themes of menstruation and childbirth. From this emerges the concept of ritual pollution, wherein women often describe feelings of impurity or uncleanliness during menstruation.

The myth of Indra and Vritra offers insight into such beliefs. Apparently, there existed an evil being called Vritra, who withheld water from people and was called the demon of droughts. Now, Indra, the king of gods, in all his guardianship glory, kills the water demon with a thunderbolt to the chest, releasing water to the people and ensuring future prosperity. Indra is consumed with guilt for killing Vritra, because the demon was a learned Brahamana, considered an upper caste in Indian society. So, Indra went to womenkind and asked them to take his guilt upon themselves via a regular cycle of repentance aka menstruation. In the process of doing Indra a solid, and washing away his sins with their blood every month, the ability to menstruate was a sort of eternal punishment that women were forced to accept. Chawla argues that the entrenchment of this mythological association of menstrual blood with guilt and sin, which is repeated in other historical texts, managed to gain a foothold in Indian society and influence public opinion over centuries.[i] In this way, menstruation was framed as a form of eternal punishment that women were compelled to bear. The Dharmasutras also echo this, stating that a menstruating woman is considered impure for three days and nights. This early association of impurity with menstrual blood, beginning in the Vedic period, laid the foundation for the continued exclusion of women from kitchens, temples, and other sacred spaces during their menstrual cycle.

Menstrual blood has been depicted in cultural narratives as both a punishment for sin and, paradoxically, a sacred gift from the divine, yet it is consistently regarded as powerful and magical. The stigma attached to menstruation has far-reaching effects on women's health, sexuality, well-being, and social participation. Numerous myths surround menstruation, often portraying menstrual blood as disgusting or dangerous. There is a belief prevalent in the study area that women often throw their ‘used’ rag/pad at road crossing to cast evil eyes/magic on others. Anybody who steps over this thrown rag/pad is said to

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become the victim of evil eye/magic. The idea that whatever a menstruating woman touches will be ruined is common: if she touches a cow, it will become infertile; if she uses water-a cleansing agent in itself-she will pollute the water.[ii] In some communities, menstruating women were even barred from using communal baths during the first three days of their cycle. These myths have contributed significantly to the social restrictions and stigmas imposed on menstruating women.

A survey titled "Unveiling the Silence: Menstruation Awareness Survey" sheds light on these persistent attitudes and practices. In earlier Tamil cultural contexts, however, women's bodies were viewed with reverence, and menstruation was not always perceived negatively. Ananku is a word used to describe the powers associated with women's sexuality and women's blood which were consistent with, and equivalent to, the divine power in gods, goddesses, forces of nature, animals, warriors and kings. The bodies of women in ancient Tamil Nadu/Kerala were considered particularly potent and full of ananku at menarche, during menstruation and after childbirth. *Ananku* is a term also used for a goddess who manifests in many aspects.[iii] During this period, menstruation held sacred and transformative significance, marking a positive transition in a girl's life. The onset of menstruation was observed through rituals such as pen kulavi vizha, which included brief seclusion followed by a celebratory feast. This distinction is very important because of the later ideas about menstrual pollution and impurity brought in by the Brahmins. Pollution itself, which is one of the most important factors in the working of Sanskritization, appears to be a development of the ancient Dravidians' notion of being infected with immanent sacred power.[iv]

This shift reflects more than a change in religious interpretation; it symbolizes the increasing patriarchal regulation of the female body, especially as women's roles became more defined by marriage, reproduction, and caste purity. With the rise of Shaivism and Vaishnavism, menstruation began to be understood through the Brahminical lens of "theetu" (ritual pollution). Sacred texts like the Manusmriti and Shaiva Siddhanta literature, dominant in Tamil Nadu, classified menstruating women as untouchable and prohibited them from entering the garbhagriha (temple sanctum). Furthermore, female education was often discouraged, many girls were withdrawn from school post-menarche due to these stigmas.

Although Tamil Nadu is identified as a Dravidian state with a strong ideological resistance to Brahminical dominance, it is paradoxical that Brahminical beliefs regarding ritual pollution remain deeply ingrained and rarely challenged. The term "theetu veedu", used for homes where girls attain menarche, also refers to houses where a death has occurred -raising the question:

Why is a natural, biological process likened to death? This comparison underscores the cultural sorrow attached to menstruation in later periods. Historical evidence suggests that women were treated with more dignity before this stigmatization of menstruation became entrenched in society.

One of the most enduring restrictions placed on menstruating women is isolation, with the duration and terminology of this practice varying across castes and regions.Over the last decade, Koovalapuram and its neighbouring villages, Chinnayapuram Pottalpacheri, K Pudupatti, Saptur Alagiri, and Govindanallur have been in the news for sequestering menstruating women for five days, at muttuveedu. In Pandalur and Gudalur of Nilgiris, the Kaattunaikar tribes have dedicated huts called gudda for menstruating women. Besides, the Kattunaikar and Kota tribes also follow the practice of having separate houses for menstruating women in their villages. The Muthuvar tribes of the Anamalai Reserve also follow the practice of maintaining menstrual segregation huts called thinnaiveedu. This practice is also prevalent among the Badaga community in Nilgiris, and they call such houses Olegidy.[v]

Ritually Celebrated but Religiously Forbidden

When a girl gets her first period in Tamil Nadu, it is celebrated with a range of rituals based on caste and geographical location. customs like dousing the menstruating girl with turmeric water to 'purify' her (called manjal neeraattu vizha in Tamil), asking her to carry a piece of iron to ward off 'evil spirits', and a 'puberty ceremony' at the end of the menstrual period to clear the theetu (loosely translated to mean impurity) that the family experienced because of her menstrual cycle, are not uncommon in Tamil households even today. In some parts of Tamil Nadu, a hut-like structure is made from palm leaves, and the menstruating girl is supposed to live in it during the course of her first period. a grand feast is thrown for immediate and extended family. Professional photographers are hired to document the events, and the girl is dressed to resemble a bride, presented with gifts, and blessed to be a dheerga sumangali (long and happily married). Though largely associated with Hinduism, puberty ceremonies cut across religions in Tamil Nadu. The girl's thaai mama (maternal uncle) plays a significant role in most of the rituals and is often the one who gifts the saree to be worn by her during the puberty ceremony.[vi] Bathing rituals were an essential component of the menarche ceremony. After seclusion or special rituals, the girl may take a purification bath, enabling her to rejoin normal activities, including worship, entering puja rooms, and handling sacred objects. Phrases such as "theettu kazhithal" ("erasing impurity") are used to ritually purify the house upon her return. Often, the rituals occur without consulting the girl about her comfort or emotional readiness. The focus is on tradition and public display rather than her personal experience.

While a girl's menarche is celebrated with ritual and pomp, temple entry restrictions for menstruating women remain deeply rooted forms of exclusion, embedded at the intersection of patriarchy, purity politics, and historical mythologies. The restrictions are grounded in mythological notions that a menstruating woman may disturb the sanctity of the temple, defile idols, or attract divine wrath. Tamil Nadu is home to numerous powerful goddesses, such as Mariamman, Angala Parameswari, and Kali, many of whom are linked with fertility, blood, and cyclical transformations. This raises the question: if the goddess herself menstruates, why are her devotees restricted?

These beliefs reduce menstruating women to a state of contamination, something to be managed, concealed, or excluded. Temples thus function not merely as sacred spaces but as sites of surveillance, where the body is disciplined through myth. There is an exception in Hinduism, the Ma Linga Bhairavi temple in Coimbatore allows menstruating women to worship. Similar rules exist in other religions: in Islam, menstruating women do not pray or fast, and in Tamil Muslim communities, additional customs often restrict women from touching the Qur'an, prayer beads (tasbih), or prayer mats. Official Christian doctrine imposes no menstrual taboos; however, in practice, many Tamil Christian families have adopted local customs, including ceremonies resembling Manjal Neerattu Vizha. The educated people are increasingly criticising these restrictions as patriarchal, unscientific, and unconstitutional. While some defend them as cultural traditions, culture itself must evolve to reflect principles of equality and bodily dignity.

The survey highlighted that many people continue to accept menstrual restrictions as part of their cultural traditions. While these restrictions are often viewed as manifestations of patriarchal dominance, in practice, it is frequently women within the family who enforce them strictly on their daughters, an aspect that is rarely discussed. In a secular democracy, access to public religious spaces should not be contingent upon one's reproductive state. Landmark movements such as the "HappyToBleed" campaign and the Sabarimala protests, although outside Tamil Nadu, have sparked important conversations about menstrual equality across South India. Yet, in Tamil Nadu, resistance to such practices has largely remained subdued, particularly in rural areas, where adherence is normalized and questioning the tradition is often considered taboo.

Caste Based Differences in Menstrual Approach

In general, caste differences are not often associated with menstrual practices, yet customs surrounding menstruation vary significantly across different castes and religious communities. For example, The Vattima Brahmin community, a small Brahmin subcaste. When suffering from menstrual or birth pollution, women were secluded in a room at the rear of the house or in the backyard; they were not allowed to touch other adults (though children were exempt from pollution) and were prohibited from entering the kitchen and from preparing or touching the food of others. The kitchen and the hall containing the domestic shrine formed the centre of the house, in which a specially heightened state of purity (mati) should be maintained. This central portion was closed to anyone of lower status, including members of the family temporarily suffering pollution, particularly menstruating women. During her period, a woman is secluded for three days and takes a purificatory bath on the fourth day; she resumes her normal status and can reenter the kitchen on the fifth day. In the past, menstruating Vattima women were secluded in the cow-shed or the backyard and could only leave through the back door. Menstruating women are no longer confined to the rear of the house and can sit in the courtyard, although they do not cross the threshold into the street unless they have to.

Although the notion of impurity was strongly enforced by Brahminical texts, it also held sway among non-Brahmin communities. According to Muthuvan culture, menstruating women were considered impure and confined to a small thinnaveedu. It is a small hutment in the isolated corner of the hamlet with less space, unhygienic, unkempt, with limited facilities for cooking. Women and girls were scared and felt uneasy or not comfortable during confinement. One of the respondents said that, “Sometimes, we are very much frightened to sleep here because of elephant's movement near the thinnaveedu and also hut is full of rodent's wastes strewn around and it stinks.”

Hence, to overcome this situation, they started to consume oral contraceptive pills with the idea of avoiding thinnaveedu. In most of the surveyed hamlets, for the past 6 months, no girl/woman has gone to the thinnaveedu. Muthuvan women always store around 50 strips of tablets in the home and consume regularly at night for every day in a month. The study found the prevalence of childless women in the Muthuvan community as 30.65% because of the pills.

While notions of impurity span caste lines in Tamil Nadu, the manner in which this impurity is enforced reflects deep-rooted caste hierarchies and unequal burdens. Among Brahmins, menstrual taboos are largely symbolic, involving avoidance of rituals, sacred spaces, and bodily contact, often cushioned by privacy, education, and hygiene access. In contrast, for non-Brahmin, particularly Dalit and tribal women, the same concept manifests as physical isolation, social stigma, and unsafe conditions like seclusion huts. Among Scheduled Caste (SC) adolescent girls in Cuddalore district, due to significant socio-cultural taboos and economic barriers, with only 30% using sanitary pads, while many relied on cloth or unhygienic alternatives.[ix] The concept of impurity is the same across castes, but its consequences are uneven: symbolic for some, harsh for others. This disparity illustrates that caste not only influences gendered experiences but also determines a woman’s control over her body, space, and dignity. Menstrual taboos, therefore, are not merely gendered-they are caste-bound, reinforcing social distance under the guise of tradition. A survey question on whether caste background affects menstrual practices revealed responses, which are shown in the chart below.

Changing Practices in Modernity

In recent years, Tamil Nadu has witnessed a gradual shift from strict enforcement of menstrual taboos toward more health- and rights-oriented practices. The collective mindset surrounding menstruation is slowly evolving. Once cloaked entirely in silence, shame, and seclusion, menstruation is now increasingly part of public discourse through schools, media, policy initiatives, and grassroots activism. Health education in

schools, access to menstrual products, and social media support have contributed to normalizing menstruation as a biological rather than spiritual process. Initiatives like Project Kannamma, launched by the Rotary Club of Madras North, distribute free sanitary napkins made by Irula tribal women to schoolgirls in Chennai. Thinkal, in Chennai, distributes menstrual cups to women from reusable alternatives.

However, this transformation is uneven. In many rural and caste-bound contexts, menstruation continues to be viewed through the lens of impurity, with taboos framed as cultural obligations rather than discriminatory practices. While silence around menstruation is gradually breaking, complete transformation remains a work in progress.

The survey shows that 85.7% of respondents perceive a significant shift in society regarding the stigma, shame, and hesitation associated with menstruation. However, the remaining 14.3% highlights a concern that even in contemporary times, some individuals continue to adhere to traditional myths and stigmas surrounding menstruation.

Conclusion

Rooted in ancient Vedic cosmology and reinforced through religious practices, caste hierarchies, and domestic customs, menstruation has long been linked to ritual impurity, giving rise to a complex network of restrictions that differ according to social position. Yet, despite these enduring legacies, recent decades have witnessed a gradual but discernible change. Public health initiatives, menstrual education, and feminist discourse are slowly breaking the silence and challenging the shame historically associated with menstruation. However, this transformation is uneven, the coexistence of celebration and stigma, tradition and change, highlights the influence of cultural narratives on women's bodily experiences. Ultimately, understanding the history of menstruation in Tamil Nadu highlights how belief systems continue to shape women's autonomy, dignity, and social standing.

End Notes

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DR S. GOINDARAJU ENDOWEMENT PRIZE

Martial Art Weapon Valari and Its Cultural Significance- A Historical Study

Dr. S. Rajagopal

Introduction: Boomerang is a Neolithic weapon used by tribe origin of Australia, Eritrean, Sumerian and Indian. Valari was so called as boomerangs of Southern India. Valari or Valai tadi (bend stick). Erivalai, Thigiri, Sudhulpadai, Padivattam and Paravalai are other names of martial art heritage weapon. Valari was a forgotten martial arts South Indian cultural heritage weapon created by Tamil ancestors. In earlier times, it was used as a fascinating hunting tool for birds and small animals. Later, it was developed an outstandingly dangerous martial arts weapon and it to be used inflict harm or kill enemies on the battlefield. Because, the valari designed for direct hitting the target with high impact on target. Also, another version was designed to change the direction and return after being thrown from the original position.

Valari was a short distance offensive weapon made from hand grained wood, ivory and iron. It is crescent-shaped, one end being heavier than the other, and the outer end is sharpened. Men trained in the use of the weapon hold it by the lighter end, whirl it a few times over their shoulders to give it impetus, and then hurl it with great force with dizzying velocity against the aimed object and knocked down the enemies in one stroke. It is said that there were experts in the art of throwing the valari. Valari is an indigenous traditional heritage weapon it was constructed to feature 'L' and 'V' shapes generally. The creators tenaciously constructed these forms because they resulted in superior flight performance. The Valari functions differently from arrows and spears because it requires extensive rotational movement, more so than linear thrust. Fast spinning of the Valari after release stabilises the object while enhancing its accuracy during flight. Some Valaris types specifically featuring broad 'V' design elements show an ability to come back to their throwers just like famous Australian boomerangs do. The skill to strengthen our appreciation of the Valari through historical and modern aerodynamic perceptions allows us to view it both as a weapon and an early engineering artefact, which offers precious insights into modern practice.

Valari in Sangam Literature

The Sangam literature, Tamil enthusiasts, the Purananooru and the Eight Anthologies (Ettuthokai) speak about Valari rotating a speedy metal weapon. The Sangam literature, the Purananooru poems 233: 2-4 mentioned by Vellaerukillaiyar about the Thigri or Valari weapon or a similar "Valai Thadi weapon used on the battlefield. The same Sangam literature, the Purananooru poems 339: 4-5 mentions Valari. This poem records that the hunter threw the Valari, which hit a rabbit. Tamil classical Sangam literature Aikurunuru poems 421:1-2, a poem of the Eight Anthologies (Ettuthokai), speaks about throwing a weapon (Valari), in the rainy season evening by the protector (Kavalar), for a rabbit. The Purananooru poems, 347:46 mentions that Akutai, the chieftain of Kudal who faced enemies on the battlefield. The enemy threw a wheel (valari), it hit his chest and its sharp point broke. The Sangam Tamil literature work, a book of Eight Anthologies (Ettuthokai), the Natriṇai compiled by Pannaṭu Tanta Pandyan Maran Valuti. He says that in Narriṇai poems 48: 5-7, 3in a forest pathway where the mulberry field is blooming and spreading its fragrance. The forest enroute, the skilled robbers appear, and they throw the Valari, striking with lightning speed.

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Valari Hero Stones Keezhakuilgudi in the Madurai South Tehsil

Valari commemoration stone, erected in Tamil Nadu, indicates that the amazing Valari weapons in warfare and continued utility since ancient historie periods of South Indian history. In 1311 C.E. the Malikkapur army invaded the Pandya country of Madurai. Defending the Pandya kingdom army, many soldiers fought against the Malikkapur army, and many soldiers sacrificed their lives to save the country. To commemorate the soldiers' courage, two hero stones have been erected in the village of Keezhakuilgudi in the Madurai South Tehsil of Madurai District to the warriors Veerathevar and Kazhuvathevar. This nadukal, both courageous soldiers holding a Valari in their left hand and a sword in their right hand. The commemoration stone is now worshipped in the name of Pattavan samy, a deity by the local village maravar community people. Also, near the hero stone another nadukal erected which is called as Muthuveeranan Temple. Here also two soldiers are holding a Valari in their left hand and a sword above their head in their right hand.

Pattavan Pottuk Kazhuvathevar alias Peyandithevar TempleVeerathevar alias

Samy Temple Pattavan Muthuveeranan TempleValari Hero Stones at E.Kottipatti in Usilampatti Taluk of Madurai

A four-hundred-year-old, uncared memorial hero stone identified by a local researcher at E.Kottipatti village in Usilampatti Taluk of Madurai district in Tamilnadu. The sculpture measured 3 feet high and 2 feet wide to have a warrior and his wife in standing posture engraved with in a single stone. As evidence that this sculpture has holding a spear in his right hand and holding a martial art weaponValari in his left hand. In this sculpture stone, a women sculpture in standing posture with Anjal hasta position. The women image engraved in small size as compare to valari veern image.

Valari Veeran Stone Sculpture at T. Kunnathur in Madurai District

A stone sculpture of Valari Veeran, dating back to the 16th century CE. is found at T. Kunnathur village, near Kallupatti in Madurai district. This place was known as Siru Kunrathur during the reign of the later Pandya kings and was later called Kunnathur. The three-story tower stone sculpture with a height of about 100 ems and a width of 65 em, in the form of a gate, with male and two female sculptures carved at the bottom. As evidence that this sculpture is of Valari Veeran, in the middle, the hero is holding a spear in his hand and holding a Valari in his left hand, his right leg is slightly bent, so that the knee is visible, and his legs are straight and his feet are covered with a cloth. On the right and left sides of this Valari Veeran, two female sculptures are standing posture with omaments and a decorated braid. I ooking at the sculpture, it may a possibility that after the death of Valari Veeran, both women climbed the Sati (Udankattai)."

Valari Hero Stone in Kolli Hills in Namakkal District

Two hero valari stones sculptures located in front of the Anapaleeswarar Temple of the Kolli Hills in Namakkal district of Tamilnadu. The first sculpture installed a standing posture with Anjali hasta position and holding a Valari in his hip. The second sculpture, a man with valari at backside of the neck and a griff holding with both corner by hands.

Community Used the South Indian Boomerangs

Homell, J. writes in Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute regarding Indian Boomerangs weapon study, the Maravans and Kallans or Kallars Vellelas, Valliyans, Nadars in Madurai, parts of Tanjore, Pudukkottai, Ramnad and Tirunelveli and Pudukkottai were used Indian boomerangs for hunting and weapons of war. Now, it has only remembered the ceremonial value and are made of ivory or steel. The Kallars (the man of strength) are mentioned in the Sangam classics as a fearless people described in the Sangam literature Akananooru." The Kallan literally means a professional thieves and robber and they are usually armed with vallari thadis or boomerangs and small knives. Maravar (the man of valour) were good hunters and warriors, they found mostly in the Madura and Ramnad districts of Tamilnadu. The land and they inhabited is called in old Tamil references as Palai land which means a land drier and sandier land (desert) land.

Kallar (Colleries inhabitant of Government of Tondiman in c.1785 C.E.) and Maravar community of inhabitant of from Tiruchirappalli to Cape Commorin of Tamilnadu and they used the Valari weapon." The British were called as Collery Sticks which was thrown by skillful man a distance from within 100 yards.

Valari in Marriage Vows

In the Tamil community, there is a traditional custom practice; they exchange betel leaves. gourds, coconuts, bananas, sharees, dhotis, sarees, shirts, saffron and jasmine in plates when they get married. But the Ezhukilai Kallar Nattars (Seven Branches Kallar) willfully used to exchange the Valari during the marriage engagement the both families' vows. The tradition has transformed the landscape into a symbol of their culture, Generally, the Maravar use proverb by "send the valari and bring the bride" During the marriage of the Kallars caste, a traditional boomerang (Valari sticks) was exchanged between the bride and the bridegroom family members. 18-19 Martanda Bhairava Tondaiman (1886-1928) was the ruler of the princely state of Pudukkottai. He was married with an Australian socialite Miss E. Molly Fink on 10th August, 1915 in Sydney, Australia, 2021 The line of Tondaiman rulers belong to the Ambunadu endogamous section of Kallars." During the marriage, the Kallars traditional Valari was exchanged between the bride and the bridegroom of royal marriage.

Eri Padai

An ancient Tamil inscription of the Pandya's and the Chera's mentioned Valari use in warfare. Indian boomerangs are good weapon for charioteers and foot soldiers." Warriors would keep a Valari inserted into their hair. When in a dangerous situation, they needed to attack; they quickly swung the Valari and threw it towards the target of enemy. Some inscriptions of the Cholas say that they have a Valari throwing troop "Eri Padai" in their Army." Princely State of Pudukottai Maharaja always kept a stock in weapon store and has a Valari troop in his Army.

Valari Throwing Festival in Pudukkottai Princely State

On the official visit by the Governor of Madras. Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant Duff, from 2nd to 4th February 1886 C.E. to the Pudukkottai Princely State. In the occasion, a special "Valari Throwing Festival" was showcased his army troops by Raja Ramachandra Thondaiman, the ruler of the Pudukkottai Princely State, in the presence of the family members, officers, distinguished personages of the town and other elites of the princely state. 2"

Ramnad and Sivaganga Rulers Experts in the Valari Art

In 18th Century, in South Indian, the famous Tamil benevolent ruler, great warrior, able general eminent first Queen freedom fighter of Ramnad Kingdom, Velunachiyar (1730-1796 C.E) was trained in the skills of by using the martial art weapon of Valari and who fought Freedom struggle against the British. The Poligar of Sivaganga (in preset-day Tamilnadu), the Marudhu brothers (Periya Marudhu and Chinna Marudhu) (1748-1801 C.E.) were experts in the art of throwing and craftsmanship of the Valari and it was used in wars against the British East India Company in freedom struggle of the country. 28-29 Colonel James Welsh was a British Army officer of the Madras Army of the Honourable East India Company from 1790-1848 C.E. He wrote a book, "Military Reminiscences" in two volumes. Colonel James Welsh recalls his Military experience in the first volume of the book. He proudly pointed out in February 1795; he went met Chinna Marudhu at his residence located in an open place of Siruvayal in Sivaganga District. Chinna Marudhu trained Colonel James Welsh to throw the javelin and the Valari or colliery stick. A colliery stick could be thrown by a skillful man around 100 yards. Tradition states that the instrument played a considerable part in the Poligar wars of the 19th century."

Ban of Valari by the British Raj

During the Poligar rebellion and independence movement in South India in the 18th-19th century, the British East India Company sought to suppress the freedom movements and needed to control the local population's support. At the same time, the British Company army had feared the booming guerrilla warfare of the local martial art weapon of Valari after the South Indian rebellion movement. Because, the local

Maravar, Kallar and other communities have excellent potential in valari throwing art in warfare. With the support of this technique, the local poligars strongly defended on the battlefield against the British troops. So, the British authorities want to destroy the localities' traditional cultural art weapon of valari throwing art from Tiruchirappalli to Kanniyakumari, from the local people's memory of the Tamil people. So, they implemented 1801, the Weapons Ban Act.

According to that, Valari, possession, manufacturing, and routine usage in people's lives were bannedfrom social life. The local people have been compelled to submit valari to the British company authorities. The British company has collected a total of 15,000 to 20.000 valaries from local people and destroyed the marvelous weapons. Also, destroy it manufacturing art and kill the future survival of the weapon. The collected precious weapon some samples were sent to British museum for display. However, the non-submitted valari weapon by the local people a have fear in mind of British punishments. So, they hand over these traditional weapons into the local temple in safe custody

Perungamanallur Massacre and Valari Usage

The British introduced the Criminal Tribes Act in 1871 in 12th October. 1871 in Bengal in India. It was introduced in Madras Presidency in 1911. Finally, after various amendment (in 1924, VI Amendment) the act was finally implemented throughout British India. According to the CT Act, it enforced on Piramalai kallars in Tamilnadu who above 18 years all the men must put their fingerprints in the local police station. And they sometime compelled to stayed at night in police station under police overlook. So, the British administration officers went to Perungamanallur villages in Sedapatti Panchayat union of Peraiyur Taluk of Madurai district for registration. But the local people protested the British, the verbal confrontation turned violent and the British police opened fire killed 16 village people including a woman (on spot 11 dead and 5 died later due to fatal injuries) on 3 April 1920. The incident was called as Perungamanallur massacre otherwise called as South Indian Jallianwallabagh in Tamilnadu. In the struggle against British, it was registered in some documents that the local people used the most powerful weapon the "Valari.

Present Position of the Valari Weapon

Now, the instrument relaxes peacefully in the households of the Kallar and Maravan community who, preserved as a sacred relic of a chivalric past, along with other antiquity of family weapons in their prayer room. It was brought out and scraped and cleaned on occasions like the Ayudha puja day and restored to its place of rest immediately afterwards. In Pattasamy temple located at the Kovilankulam village of Usilampatti Tehsil in Madurai District. Every year, iron and brass metal Valari the martial art weapon has been gifted as an offering at the Pattasamy temple. In Valari Throwing Festival in Pudukkottai Princely State

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Valari Exhibited in Government Museum, Chennai

In Chennai Government Museum., Tamilnadu has collected a total of 34 South Indian boomerangs, ie 3 from Thanjavur Armory, 4 from Pudukottai Museum and 26 from Mr. Naidu of Sivakasi. Out of these source only 10 South Indian Valari showcased in Ethnology Gallery of the museum. In Government Museum in Tirunelveli have displayed 2 x Iron Valari (Museum Register Number AR 6-1/60 and 6-2/60) and a wooden Valari. Ramanathapuram Government Palace have more than 10 Iron Valaris are displaced in show case.

Valari Exhibited in Rest of Indian Museum

The British Museum on the ground floor in room number 33 has an iron-made incised Valari (Iron war missile) collected from Madurai in South India. It contains a spherical handle with a cross-hatched pattern at one end. The flat end of the blade is supported by a narrow metal plate with a denticulate edge. The valari (Museum Registration Number As.8969) weighs around 219 grams and measured 34x5.5 its length and width. It was denoted by Morton John Walhouse (the then Indian Civil Servant of the Madras Presidency, ca. 1842-73) on 27 November 1873 C.E." In the same museum, have a brown wood carved Valari made by the Maravar ethnic group, which was collected from Thanjavur in Tamilnadu. It contains a flattened, round handle. Blade curves round and widens towards the tip, culminating in a flat end. The collected non-displayed valari (Museum Registration Number As,+1105) weighs around 207 grams and is 49.50 x 6.20 its length and width. It was denoted by Arthur Coke Burnell (the then English Civil Servant of the Madras Presidency, 1840-1882) on 8 November 1879 C.E. The Victoria & Albert Museum in London. United Kingdom holds a variety of valari collections made in wood, silver, iron, and ivory from the Marava region of Madurai and Tirunelveli in Tamilnadu. A forged steel Valari (ser Number 2830) located in museum. British Queen Victoria's eldest son, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII the United Kingdom toured India in 1875. The Pudukkottai princely state king Ramachandra Thondaiman and Sivaganga Queen Kathamma Nachiyar gifted some wood, silver, gold, and ivory valairs. The valuable South Indian art and cultural heritage valaris was showcased in the Royal Collection Trust in London." Pitt Riverd Museum in England displayed a wooden crescent-shaped Valai Tade (Valari Thadi) registered number 1954.3.15. It was collected by the ethnographical object's collector Harry Geoffrey Beasley in 1928 and it was given to the Pitt Riverd Museum by his wife Irene Marguerite Beasley in 1954."

Conclusion

South Indian boomerang was used by the ancient Pandya country people. The usage of Valari was mentioned in Sangam literature. 'V' and 'U' type valaris are made from wood, metal and ivory.It was commonly used by the Maravans, Kallars Vellelas, Valliyans, Nadars in Madurai, parts of Tanjore, Pudukkottai, Ramnad and Tirunelveli and Pudukkottai were used Indian boomerangs for hunting and weapons of war. Wooden valari used for protecting cattle from predators and used to hunt hare, deer, pig, and large birds. The metal valari's are used in warfare. The Cholas have a Valari throwing troop "Eri Padai" in their Army and Princely State of Pudukottai Maharaja was a Valari troop in his Army. The Ramnad, Pudukottai, Shivaganga, and Tirunelveli region Poligars used Valaris in warfare. Valaris, if it hits the target, it was non-returnable because it was thrown in the airat a dizzying speed, the lethal weapon knocked down the enemies or prey in one stroke. If the valari does not hit the target its returnable variety. Some Valari veeran hero stones identified in Madurai region. Three Valari veeran discovered in Keezhakuilgudi in the Madurai south Tehsil; a hero stone at E.Kottipatti in Usilampatti Taluk and a stone sculpture at T. Kunnathur in Madurai District. Also, two Valari hero stones identified by local researchers in Kolli Hills in Namakkal District. During the marriage Valari sticks were exchanged between the bride and thebridegroom family members. When Raja Marthanda Bairava Tondaiman of Pudukottai married an Australian socialite Molly Fink at the time they used to exchange Valari. Now, the instrument relaxes in the households of the Kallar and Maravan community and is preserved as a sacred relic of a chivalric past, along with other antiquity of family weapons in their prayer room. In Pattasamy temple of Kovilankulam village in Madurai District more than 100 valaris are presented to the deity Pattasamy and preserving the weapon's sacred position in local culture. Many valaris are displayed in various states of Indian museums and foreign museums. However, it is displayed in static museum locations only. But it should be displayed in a movable (in transport) museum within Tamilnadu schools and colleges, it may create a great awareness in student life about the traditional cultural heritage weapon valari. Also, the state government should allow in school and college level games competition regarding the valari throwing competition to recover ancient martial art in modern society.

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Role of Unsung Heroes of Tamil Nadu in India's Freedom Struggle

Dr. J. Renugadevi[1] and A.Gokul[2]

Tamil Nadu played a critical yet often underrepresented role in India's freedom movement. While historical focus has typically rested on prominent figures, this paper brings attention to lesser-known freedom fighters from the region whose dedication and tactics were instrumental. Utilizing primary records, local histories, and oral accounts, the study delves into the motivations, strategies, and lasting impact of these forgotten contributors. It advocates for a broader historical lens that acknowledges their role and proposes actionable steps to preserve their legacy through education, commemoration, and cultural initiatives.

Improbable Ingredients in the Indian Constitution

Dr. K.I.N. Deiva Akandan Paraman Iyavul[3]

The Indian Constitution boasts certain features like, Sovereignty, Democracy, Socialism, Secularism, Republic, Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, with the good intention to make it look like other major world constitutions which have humanism as their basic philosophy. The Hinduism which has its own cults, sects, cultures, Dharmas, history, ambition, ego is eroding these lofty ideals and values slowly, steadily, silently, stealthily to suit its own sectarian interest of Brahmins. This paper presents this conclusion to the learnt community of Scholars, professors, intellectuals.

All opposition parties of India are crying foul that ruling BJP party is destroying the Indian Constitution, forgetting the fact that the foundation for destruction was laid during the rule of Congress Party, even during the formation and evolution of the Indian Constitution. The research analyses this truth of demolition of the Indian Constitution and its damning, demeaning demonic causes.

Accompplishments, and Social Transfornmation of the Dravidian Movement (1925-1987) A Overview

B. Tamilanban[4]

The Dravidian Movement arose as a significant socio-political force in South India, especially in Tamil Nadu. Emerging from a need for social justice and self-esteem, it aimed to confront Brahminical dominance and caste prejudice, which were widespread during the colonial and post colonial eras. Over time, the movement had many modifications, transitioning from a cultural and social reform initiative into a formidable political entity. The Dravidian Movement, spanning from the 1920s until the late 1980s, generated significant social, political, and economic transformations in Tamil Nadu, reshaping the region's political landscape and contributing substantially to the democratization of power structures.

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Education and Empowerment of Women in Chennai District (1919-2025) - A Historical Study

K Applerajan and G. Punithavathi

Chennai, which was called Madras until 1996, has been a bellwether for social change in southern India for a long time. The city's public institutions, civic culture, and associational life have all had an impact on women's hopes and dreams. These include missionary schools from the colonial era, early women's colleges, modern IT corridors, and metro-rail commutes. This study examines women's education and empowerment in the Chennai district through six phases: late colonial reform (1919–1937), nationalist consolidation and transition (1937–1947), early postcolonial state-building (1947–1970), welfare expansion and urbanization (1970–1990), liberalization and the knowledge economy (1990–2010), and rights-based, tech-enabled inclusion (2010–2025). It consistently emphasizes the interaction of policy, institutions, social movements, and the lived realities of caste, class, and urban environments.

Medical Practices and Healthcare in Thondaiman Era Pudukkottai

Dr.K.Krishnamoorthy[1] & G. Rajadurai[2]

This study examines the evolution of public health systems in the Kingdom of Pudukkottai under the Tondaiman rulers, focusing on the period from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Geographically located in southern India, Pudukkottai was notable among the princely states of the Madras Presidency for its administrative initiatives in healthcare. The paper highlights the introduction of vital statistics for births and deaths, despite challenges of underreporting, and the establishment of significant medical institutions such as H.H. The Rajah's Hospital (1857) and Ranee's Women and Children Hospital (1920). Epidemic management formed a critical aspect of the state's health measures, with effective responses to repeated outbreaks of cholera and smallpox through quarantine, sanitation, and vaccination programs. Although public resistance initially hampered vaccination efforts, gradual improvements, including the establishment of a vaccine depot in 1910, significantly reduced mortality rates. The role of trained medical staff, municipal initiatives, and royal patronage contributed to a structured public health framework. The findings suggest that Pudukkottai's healthcare system, though modest compared to neighboring British districts, marked a significant step in integrating traditional practices with modern medical administration. These efforts not only mitigated epidemic threats but also laid a foundation for the region's medical heritage and its later integration into modern Tamil Nadu's healthcare structure.

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The Role of Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy in Transforming the Status of Women in Tamilnadu

Akalya.N.A[1]

This study explores the pioneering role of Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy in transforming the Social, Educational and Political Status of Women in Tamil Nadu. At a time when women faced systematic restrictions and patriarchial barriers, she emerged as a Reformer, Educator, Legislator and Social Activist who championed gender equality. Her leadership in abolishing the Devadasi system, marked a turning point in safeguarding women's dignity. Equally significant were her efforts to expand educational opportunities for girls, thereby opening pathways for women to enter professional and public life. In healthcare, her establishment of the Adayar Cancer Institute reflected her commitment to social welfare and women's health. By breaking barriers in politics as the first women Legislator in India, she redefined women's participation in Governance. This study highlights the multifaceted contributions, positioning her as a transformative figure whose legacy continues to inspire movements for women empowerment and social justice in the study of women.

Perur Pateeshwarar Temple: A Historical Monument

Dr. S. Sangeetha Suresh[2] **and Dr. S. Seethalakshmi**[3]

In the pre historic period the Puranas had been the only evidence of the existence of sacred places where famous temples worshipped by sages and devoted kings. As for the sacred temple at Perur, the sage Sri Vyasa once proclaimed that the Vedas extolled only the lord Vishnu as the ultimate.

This had happened in Kasi Viswanath temple. As Sri Vyasa's words were not the truth, lord Vishnu directed the sage to Perur and to worship Lord Siva there and attain enlightenment. Accordingly, the sage Vyasa after taking a dip at the sacred river Kanchimandadhi (now river Noyal) worshipped Lord Patteeswarar.

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கரூர் மாவட்டத்தில் உள்ள நடுகல் -ஓர் ஆய்வு

ச.செந்தில்குமார்[1]

ஆய்வு சுருக்கம்

நடுகல் பற்றிய ஆய்வு அண்மைக்காலத்தில் அதிகரித்து வருகின்றன. தமிழகத்தில் நடைபெற்ற நடுகல் ஆய்வுகளில் சங்க இலக்கியம், தமிழ் இலக்கணம் ஆகியவற்றுடன் நடுகல் கல்வெட்டுக்களை இணைத்து பார்க்கும் போக்கே பரவலாக இருந்தது. போர்களத்தில் வீரன் உயிர் நீத்தால் அவன் வீரத்தைப் போற்றுவதற்காகவும். அவனை நினைவு கூர்வதற்காகவும் நடுகல் என்னும் வீரக்கல் நட்டு வாழ்த்தி வழிபாடு செய்தனர். சங்க இலக்கண நூலான தொல்காப்பியத்தில் நடுகல் அமைக்கும் ஆறுவகை முறைகளை தொல்காப்பியர் கூறுகிறார்

சங்க இலக்கியங்களான புறநானூறு, அகநானூறு, பதிற்றுப்பத்து, பட்டினப்பாளை, மலைபடுகடாம். திருக்குறள் மற்றும் தொல்காப்பியத்தில் நடுகற்கள் பற்றிய குறிப்புகள் உள்ளன. மேலும் சிலப்பதிகாரம் புறப்பொருள் வெண்பாமாலை நூல்களில் நடுகல் பற்றிய குறிப்புகள் காணப்படுகின்றன.

The Sambuvarayar Dynasty and the Temple Architecture of Padavedu: A Study of Political, Religious, and Artistic Transformations in 13th and 14th Century Tondaimandalam

S. Kulasekaran[2] and M. Udhayakumar[3]

This research paper studies the intricate relationship between political power, religious patronage, and architectural innovation during the Sambuvarayardynastys rule in Tondaimandalam, with particular focus on the temple complexes of Padavedu. The study analyzes the transformation of temple architecture from the 13th to 14th centuries, demonstrating how the Sambuvarayar rulers utilized religious architecture as a means of legitimizing their political authority while fostering cultural continuity in medieval Tamil Nadu. Through archaeological evidence, epigraphical analysis, and architectural survey, this paper reveals the unique synthesis of Chola, Pandya, and Vijayanagara architectural elements that characterizes the Padavedu temple complex.

[1]முழுநேர முனைவர் பட்ட ஆய்வாளர் முதுகலை மற்றும் ஆராய்ச்சி வரலாற்றுத்துறை, அரசு கலைக் கல்லூரி (தன்னாட்சி), (பாரதிதாசன் பல்கலைகழகம், இணைவுப் பெற்றது), கரூர்

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