

HISTORICAL DICTIONARY
of the



Tamils

VIJAYA RAMASWAMY

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Jon Woronoff, Series Editor

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Historical Dictionary of the Tamils

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For my guru, Sri Bharati Theertha Swamigal

And also for:

Amma, who at 82 still proofreads
my manuscripts and hones them

Krish for coming into my life
as husband, friend, and helpmate

My baby, Vijay Krishna Ram,
the sweetest Tamil I know

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Cattle fair at Devanur, 20 kilometers from Tiruvannamalai.



Madurai Veeran—folk deity at Tiruvannamalai outskirts.



Traditional folk dance: Karaga Attam—dancing with pots.



Nagore - Tamil Nadu - India

Nagore Dargah, A Muslim pilgrimage center housing the tomb of the Sufi saint Hazrat Saiyed Shahul Hameedi Qadir Gunjasavoy, 14th century, who protected ships and sailors on the seas.



Rameswaram - Tamil Nadu - India

*The Thousand Pillared hall at the Rameswaram Shiva temple—
a unique architectural creation.*



Suchindram - Tamil Nadu - India

*Suchindram Temple of Sthanunathar (Shiva) around
ten kilometers from Kanyakumari, the southern tip of India.*



Tiruchendur - Tamil Nadu - India

Hindus take a holy dip in the Bay of Bengal at Tiruchendur.



Velankanni - Tamil Nadu - India

*Velankanni Church of Mother Mary visited by
Christians and non-Christians alike.*



MGR and Jayalalitha in the film Mugarasi, produced by Chinappa Devar in 1966. Both the actors went on to become chief ministers of Tamil Nadu.

Editor's Foreword

The Tamils, like most other peoples in this series, do not occupy a specific country of their own, although they do inhabit one of the larger states in India, Tamil Nadu. This state, however, also includes persons who would not regard themselves particularly as Tamil, while many who do live in other parts of India or, indeed, abroad in a huge diaspora spread about Asia and also much farther afield, regard themselves as Tamil to one extent or another. Depending on the definition—and none is really adequate—there may be 70 or 80 million Tamils, since the feeling of being Tamil is more cultural than political to date, and, unlike many other peoples, they do not share the same religion. Thus, the Tamil language looms large in defining them, and music, art, and literature are other precious links. They also share a distinct history, reaching back some 2,000 years, much further than most peoples can trace their ancestors.

This explains the thrust of the *Historical Dictionary of the Tamils*. Obviously, it must deal with Tamil history, which is long and intricate, with many significant events. This is done first, and most cogently, in a comprehensive chronology of events. The introduction then defines the Tamil country without constraining it and shows how the people were shaped by their history and how they fashioned it and turned it into something unique. The dictionary section goes into further detail on the various religions that exist within the collective Tamil community and on their exceedingly rich culture, with ample discussions on not only music, art, and literature but also—and perhaps foremost—Tamil cinema, which oddly enough plays into Tamil politics. Naturally, many of these entries describe important figures of earlier and current periods as well as the organizations, cultural circles, and political parties that they founded. The bibliography directs the interested reader or researcher toward further reading.

This latest addition to the Peoples and Cultures series was written by Vijaya Ramaswamy, a professor at the Centre for Historical Studies in the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She is a specialist in the socioeconomic history of Ancient and Medieval India with a particular interest in Sanskrit, women's studies, and the Tamils. She has written extensively in all of these fields, including work on South Indian folklore and religion. At present, she is preparing two books, one on South Indian crafts and craftsmen and the other on Tamil myths and legends. So this present volume on the Tamil people ties in very closely with her research and writing, past and present, as well as with her own personal interests. That she is very well versed in Tamil history, culture and religion will be obvious from reading a reference work that, far from being dull or dry as many are, conveys a flavor and feel for this vibrant community which seems to be faring quite well even without a country of its own.

Jon Woronoff
Series Editor

Acknowledgments

This historical dictionary of the Tamils—completed over a period of four years—has been a labor of love. It has brought me into closer contact with Tamil, both well known and less known, who have contributed either to Tamil culture *per se* or to the mapping of the cultural contours and cultural frontiers of the Tamils. To use a cliché, “this book could not have been written but for them.” Acknowledgments—like charity—should begin at home, and let me begin by acknowledging my debt to my grandparents and my parents, Sethu and Ramaswamy, who retained, almost fiercely, their Tamil roots, despite settling down in Delhi, where I was born. This was reflected, among other things, in a music master coming to our home to teach us the rudiments of Carnatic music! My knowledge of Tamil folklore—especially tales and religious anecdotes—comes to me from my maternal grandmother, K. Anandammal. It is interesting that the women of her generation did not adopt the surname either of their father or their husband but prefixed their names with their grandmother’s name, in this case “Krishnambal.” My insight into the caste and community lore of the Tamils was provided by Kavignar N. Kandasami of Rasipuram, scholar poet and freedom fighter who died in poverty without receiving either recognition/reward or monetary help from the State.

I wish to place on record my gratitude to the Tamil Nadu tourism department for their generosity in providing many of the photographs that have been used in this book. I am also deeply grateful to Film News Anandan for giving me the still photographs from old MGR-Jayalalita films. Dr. Shiv Narain rendered invaluable help with the maps. To him, my thanks. I wish to acknowledge my deep debt of gratitude to the staff of the Sahitya Academy, New Delhi, especially the librarian Vijayalakshmi and Mr. Padmanabhan for all their cooperation. I also warmly thank Ms. Parvati and my friends at the International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai.

I wish to thank C. N. Subramanian and K. R. Shankaran, the two young scholars who have critiqued and shaped my ideas. My special thanks to Mr. Muthu, Lecturer in a Chennai college, who helped me generously and spontaneously with ideas and books on oral tradition. Alas, I do not even know his full name but hope he will read this. Professor Nagaswamy and Mr. P. A. Krishnan pointed out sins of omission and commission in my manuscript. I promise them that whatever is still left out will find inclusion in the second edition. My thanks to our students—Gunasekharan, Pragyan Chowdhury, and Savita Jha—for their generous help with the bibliography. To A. Gangadharan, I owe a debt of gratitude for the brilliant insights on cultural nationalism that he had provided in his doctoral thesis. My warm thanks to my friend Indira Menon who graciously and readily helped with all references relating to musicians. To Kumkum Roy, my grateful thanks for being there for me.

A line in gratitude to Surjit Mansingh, my teacher during my graduate years, and to Professor Narayanai Gupta for putting me on to this dictionary.

To the saints who have given me spiritual solace and wisdom—my guru, Sri Bharati Theertha Swamigal, C. N. Adishesha Iyer, Andavan Pichchi Amma, Gomati Rajangam, and Mathioli Saraswati—I offer my grateful salutations.

Acknowledgments need to stop at some point, although I will always recall with gratitude the help of these and many others. But one final word of thanks is entirely in order. Jon Woronoff, the series editor, who I have never had the good fortune to meet, comes forth professionally as a most remarkable man. With his exacting standards of excellence, he sets targets that one is constantly straining to achieve, at least to win his approval. If readers find this dictionary useful and absorbing, its success owes much to Jon. So, thank you! Thanks also to Kim Tabor for those charming e-mail notes.

This is not just my book. It is as much Amma's and Krish's book. Krish has done everything he could to make the text error-free and lick it into shape. My baby, Ram, was a delightful source of distraction throughout. To them, I dedicate this book.

Vijaya Ramaswamy

Reader's Note

This dictionary reaches out to a wide range of readership—from Tamils throughout the world who wish to touch base with their historic and cultural roots, to curious laymen and research-oriented Indian and foreign scholars, and also to the broader public. As a consequence, I have attempted to keep this dictionary as “reader friendly” as possible. In the pronunciation of names and words in Tamil, the effort has been to keep as close as possible to the modern English/American usage because a very strict transliteration of native words may pose problems to the lay readers. However, where it was unavoidable, the usual system of Romanization has been followed. While “c” in Tamil would represent the palatal “ch,” I have used “ch” wherever possible so that the reader does not have to struggle with the pronunciation. Similarly, in those words that have an anglicized spelling and a Tamil one, I have used the former rather than the latter—as in writing the word *Tamil* in preference to the indigenous pronunciation that would make it *Tamizh* or the word *Alvar* rather than *Azhwar*. However, where an alternative form is not in use, I have written the word as “zh,” as in *Chekkizhar*. The use of double *e* or double *o* has been avoided where long or double vowels occur. For instance, in writing *Ottakkuttar*, “u” has been used rather than the double “o.” Similarly, for place names in contemporary usage and for the names of deities, institutions, and individuals, I have followed the commonly understood and recognized Anglicized form.

I have, however, retained the “Tamil” way in writing some entries, and hence a note to my readers becomes necessary. The first clarification is regarding the usage of terms *Kaikkola*, *Saliya*, *Kammala*, *Vellala*, *Vanniya*, etc. Three kinds of usages will be found in this dictionary. For example *Kaikkolan* refers to weavers in the singular and *Kaikkolar* to the community in the collective. Wherever there is a general reference to this community, *Kaikkola* would be used. Thus, the terms *Kaikkola*

weavers, the *Kaikkolan Kannan Arasu*, and the *Kaikkolar* of the *Kamakshiamman* temple in Kanchipuram would figure in the text as and when appropriate.

Among the Tamils, the practice of using a surname does not exist. However, these days, some people have begun to do so—taking on either their father's name or the name of their native village as a part of their name. The village name comes as a prefix as for instance Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar or Palakkad Mani Iyer. *Iyer*, once again, is not a surname but the caste name, in this case representing the Brahmin caste. The father's name is also used as a suffix, as, for instance, Vijaya Ramaswamy. This usually happens with Anglicization. The more common practice is to use initials before a name, the initials once again representing the native village and the father's name or sometimes the mother's name. For example the name of the celebrated woman singer M. S. Subbalakshmi can be expanded as Madurai Shanmugavadivu Subbalakshmi, the first being her place of origin and the middle name constituting her mother's name. Due to the variety of practices in use among the Tamils arising out of what could be termed "cultural pastiche," I have also been compelled to use different norms. By and large, I have placed the personality entries under their surname where possible or under their caste names, which happens in a majority of cases. This has, however, not been done in those instances where the seeming surname is merely an honorific or title as in the case of "Bhagavatar" or "Shastri." In such cases, the personality would be placed according to his or her first name or the name by which he or she is known. The term "Thiru" in the Tamil country would be the equivalent of the English "Mr.," except that it is used not habitually but as an honorary. For instance, the scholar Thiru V. Kalyanasundaranar would be found under "K." I have done my best to standardize the names, and the readers must bear with the unavoidable variations.

Finally, I wish to add a word about the absence of an entry on "Hinduism." I have given the entry Hinduism and said see Bhagavata movement, Vishnu, Siva, Pillaiyar, Murugan, Amman, Iyer, Iyengar, etc. This was done after much thought. The term Hinduism is a colonial construct, and it is a term that does not exist in the Tamil language. Therefore, an entry on the term would have been an anomaly. Instead, there are sectarian movements in the context of the religious history of the Tamils, and these have been dealt with at length in this dictionary.

Winds of change have swept through the political scenario in Tamil Nadu. When I began writing this dictionary, Jayalalitha had just been swept into power in the state, and Karunanidhi was in political wilderness. The tables had turned by the time I began working on the final version. I have done my best to record many of these changes, but if traces of the old regime still remain, I hope my readers will bear with me.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIADMK	All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
ASSOCHAM	Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry
APTMK	Anna Puratchi Tamizhar Munnetra Kazhagam
BCE	Before Common Era
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
CE	Common Era
DMK	Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
DRDO	Defense Research and Development Organisation
ELCOT	Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu
EPW	Economic and Political Weekly
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
IESHR	Indian Economic and Social History Review
IRDA	Insurance Regulatory Development Authority
ISRO	Indian Space Research Organization
JAS	Journal of Asian Studies
JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MBC	Most Backward Castes
MCCI	Madras Chamber of Commerce and Industry
MDMK	Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
MGRAIADMK	M.G. Ramachandran All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
MGR	Marudur Gopala Ramachandran
MMS	Madras Mahajana Sabha
MNA	Madras Native Association
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NDA	National Democratic Alliance

OBC	Other Backward Castes
PMK	Pattali Makkal Katchi
PTI	Press Trust of India
SC	Scheduled Castes
SDP	State Domestic Product
SGDP	State Gross Domestic Product
SPIC	Southern Petrochemical Industries Corporation Limited
SLV	Satellite Launch Vehicle
ST	Scheduled Tribes
TCS	Tata Consultancy Services
TIDCO	Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited
TMC	Tamil Maanila Congress
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
WPR	Workers Participation Rate

Chronology

Before 8000 BCE Paleolithic: The excavated site of Parikulam (Poondi, Tiruvallur districts) has yielded samples of Paleolithic and microlithic tools as also Neyveli Kudiyam and Athirampakkam.

7000–800 BCE Neolithic (New Stone Age): Tailamalai, Togarapalli, Mullikadu (in Dharmapuri district) Paiyampalli and Appukal (in North Arcot and Ambedkar districts).

ca. 800 BCE–300 CE Iron Age: Megalithic Culture. Tamil society characterized in the early period by black and redware polished pottery; agro-pastoralism leading toward settled agriculture. Some major sites are Amritamangalam, Anaimalai, Kodumanal, Sular, Adichchanallur and Korkai.

4th century BCE Mauryan Period. Megasthenes the Greek chronicler in his *Indica* refers to the Pandyan dynasty. Kautilya, in his text *Arthashastra*, refers to the Pandya kings for the first time.

First half of 3rd century BCE Major rock edicts 2 and 13 of Ashoka, the Mauryan King, found at Yeragudi in Andhra Pradesh and at Brahmagiri in Karnataka. Earliest references to the Chera, Chola Pandya Kings of the Sangam Age.

ca. 200 BCE–5th century CE Early Historic Period overlapping with the beginnings of the Tamil-Brahmi Script and the use of iron age and Sangam Age coinage. Major sites: Uraiyur and Karur (in the district Tiruchirappalli), Arikamedu, Pondicherry, Paiyampalli, Kunnattur and Kanchipuram in Chingleput district, etc.

288 BCE The Tamil Confederacy (Sangam) was formed.

ca. 3rd century BCE–3rd century CE Period of the Sangam Polities of Chera, Chola, Pandya CE kingdoms and minor chieftaincies like those of Kari, Ori, Nannan, Pari, Pekan Anji, etc.

Early 2nd century BCE Karikala Cholan and the two battles at Venni. His conquest of Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

ca. 3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE Sangam of Tamil scholars at Madurai Sangam literature *Pathupattu*, *Ettuthogai* and the *Kizhkanakku* literature.

ca. 2nd century CE Late Sangam. Composition of the Epics *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai*.

ca. 2nd–3rd century onward Late or post–Sangam Jain texts. Didactic Jain and Buddhist texts like *Naladiyar*, *Maduraikkanchi*, and the *Tirukkural* composed by Tiruvalluvar.

4th–6th centuries Kalabhra Interregnum. Tamil country overrun by tribal invaders who may have been from the Andhra region. They were predominantly Buddhists. The best known king was Achyuta Vikranta.

ca. 6th–ca. 10th century Pallava Dynasty. The period marks the beginnings of State formation in the Thondaimandalam region of the Tamil country. Simhavarman (ca. 550–560) is believed to be the founder. Kampavarman (870–912) is the last-recorded Pallava king after which period, the Thondaimandalam region came under the Cholas.

ca. 6th century 560–590 Pandya dynasty. The rule of Kadungon who is said to have defeated the Kalabhra chiefs. Beginning of the First Empire of the Pandyas.

ca. 7th to 8th century Period of the Great Pallava rulers, authors of stone and copper charters Mahendra I—(590–630); Narasimha I—(630–668); Mahendra II—(668–670); and Narasimha II, called Rajasimha—(700–728).

600–630 Mahendrarvarman I. Beginning of cave temples in the Tamil country. Kudimiyamalai music inscription—the age of Appar, the Nayanar saint of Andal and Vishnuchittar (Periyalvar). Beginning of the Bhagavata devotional movement.

630–668 Reign of Narasimha I, Defeat of the Chalukyan king Pulakesin II, and the sack of the capital Vatapi. To him is credited the con-

struction of the shore temple at Mahabalipuram and the foundations of the craft town Mamallapuram. The construction of the Kailasanathasvami temple at Kanchipuram. Yuan Chwang, the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, visited the Pallava court. Dandin, the famous Sanskrit poet, wrote the *Avantisundari Katha* and the *Dashakumara Charitra* in Kanchipuram.

650–700 Pandyan period. Arikesari Parankusa Maravarman.

730–765 Pandyan period. Maravarman Rajasimha, the great conqueror.

765–815 Pandyan period. Jatilaparantaka Nedunchadaiyan, the author of the Velvikkudi copper plate inscription.

Late 8th century Chera period. Shankara, the great votary of monism or Vedantic philosophy and author of the *Brahmasutra Bhasya* flourished in the Kerala country.

815–838 Varaguna Pandya I. Contemporary of Pallava Jatavarman Dantivarman, whom he defeated at Karur. He also annexed parts of Cholamandalam. The Saivite saint, Manikkavachagar, was his minister.

835–862 Srimara Srivallabha Pandya, also known as Sadaiyan Maran. His defeat at the hands of Pallava Nandivarman III at Tellaru was the beginning of the decline of the Pandyas of the First Empire.

824 Chera Period. The Kollam era begins.

ca. 8th–9th century Later Pallavas. The period of Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (731–795), Dantivarman (795–845), and Nandivarman III (844–866) were important in the development of the Pallava State.

8th century Nandivarman II. Pallavamalla built the Vaikuntanatha Perumal temple in Kanchipuram. The saint Tirumangai Alvar lived during his reign. Also the age of Nammalvar and Sundaramurti Nayanar.

9th century Nandivarman III. Victory over the combined forces of the Srivallabha Pandya and the Telugu Choda King Srikanta at Tellaru. Expansion into South East Asia. Construction of a Vishnu temple at Siam attested to by the Takua-Pa inscription.

912 Kampavarman. The defeat of Aparajita Pallava by the Chola King Aditya I was followed by the annexation of the Pallava kingdom by the Chola in 912 and the beginning of the Vijayalaya line.

860–905 Pandya. Parantaka Viranarayana known for issuing the Dalavaypuram and Sinnamannur copper plates that are important in the reconstruction of social history as they refer to Brahmadeya settlements, construction of temples and tanks, etc.

850–871 Cholas. Beginning of the Chola line of kings with Vijayalaya followed by Aditya I (871–907). The great temple building era begins with Aditya Chola.

907–955 Parantaka Chola I. Battle of Takkolam in 949, at which the Rashtrakuta King Krishna III, in alliance with the Ganga King Butuga II, defeated the Chola forces, killing the crown prince Rajaditya. The famous Tamil Vaishnavite text, *Nalayira Divyaprabhandam*, is said to have been compiled by Nathamuni during his period. The Tamil Saivite text, *Tevaram*, was also compiled by Nambiandar Nambi during this period.

919 and 921 Parantaka Chola I. Inscriptions issued by Maduraikonda (the conqueror of Madurai) Koperunkesari Verman, detail the rules and regulations governing the democratic functioning of the Brahmin *sabha* (local assembly) of Uttiramerur.

957–973 Sundara Chola. This period is known as the Parantaka II Sembiyanmadevi period of bronze. The greatest of the Chola bronzes were produced under this queen's patronage.

973–985 Uttama Chola. The minting of Chola coins is seen for the first time during his reign. The set of inscriptions known today as "The Madras Museum Copper Plates" constitute an important source of Chola administrative and social history. His queens, Panchavanmadevi, Svarnamadevi and Arooran Ambalattadigal are renowned as temple donors and patrons of art.

985–1016 Rajaraja Chola I. Regarded as the greatest king of the Chola dynasty, the 30 years of his rule constitute the formative years of Chola imperialist expansion. Apart from his military victories over the Pandyas, Cheras, Western Chalukyas, and Ceylon (modern Sri Lanka), he is known as the codifier of the *Tevaram* hymns.

1009–1010 Rajaraja Chola I. Construction of the famous Brahadisvara temple at Tanjavur.

1012–1044 Rajendra Chola I. Decisive victory over Sri Lanka and the capture, exile, and death of its King Mahindra V. Pandya and Chera

kingdoms became satellite states of the Cholas, governed by a Chola viceroy. Defeat of the Western Chalukyan King Jayasimha II and acceptance of Tungabhadra as the line of control. Defeat of the maritime kingdom of Sri Vijaya (modern States of Java, Sumatra, and Borneo) in 1025–1026. Creation of a “Greater Chola” state stretching beyond Cholamandalam. His armies are said to have gone up to the Ganges, hence his title “Gangaikonda Cholan.” He built the city of Gangaikonda Cholapuram in commemoration.

ca. 1070 Chola Parakesari Adi Rajendra. The line of Imperial Cholas concluded with him. Known for his persecution of Ramanuja, the Vaishnavite saint who founded the philosophy of Visishta Advaita. The persecutor of Ramanuja may also have been his successor, Kulottunga I.

1080–1122 Kulottunga I. The first of the latter Chola kings. He was also the ruler of the Eastern Chalukya kingdom with its capital at Vengi. His claim lay in his being the great grandson of Rajaraja I. His long reign was one of great prosperity. The *Kalingattuparani* of Jayamkondar describes his achievements.

Late 11th–Early 12th century Period of Ramanuja, Vaishnavite saint and founder of Visishta Advaita philosophy.

1133–1150 Kulottunga Chola II. It was during his reign that the saint–poet Chekkizhar wrote the *Periyapuranam*. The Tamil poet Ottakkuttar flourished in his court.

1166 Pandyas. Civil war in the Pandyan kingdom between Parakrama Pandya and Kulasekhara Pandya with the active intervention of the Sri Lankan troops in taking the side of Vira Pandya (the son of the murdered Parakrama Pandya). The Chola King Kulottunga III put Kulasekhara on the throne. Out of the ashes of this conflict rose the powerful kingdom of the Later Pandyas, and Chola suzerainty came to an end.

1178–1217 Kulottunga Chola III. The last great Chola ruler. Poet Kambar lived in his court and wrote the celebrated *Kamba Ramayana*. The Chola line ended with Rajaraja III.

1190– Jatavarman Kulasekhara Pandya. With the elevation of Vikrama Pandya by the Chola King Kulottunga to the throne, followed by Kulasekhara, marked the beginning of the Second Pandyan Empire.

1251–1268 Jatavarman Sundara Pandya. Regarded as the greatest of the Later Pandyas. The Pandyan Empire extended to Nellore, confining the Hoysalas to the Mysore plateau. Pandyan suzerainty prevailed over both the Kerala country and Ceylon, while Kanchipuram, the erstwhile capital of the Pallavas, became virtually the second capital of the Pandyas.

13th century Meykandar wrote the philosophical text *Sivajnanabhodam*.

1292–1293 Pandyan Region. Visit of Marco Polo to Peninsular India, including the Tamil country. His account contains descriptions of the bustling port town of Kayal, the pearl fisheries and commerce in Pandyamandalam, some prevailing practices regarding trade, especially the export of spices, and other matters.

1310 Pandyas. Civil war between Vira Pandya and Sundara Pandya, the sons of Kulasekhara Pandya. Sundara Pandya appealed to the Delhi Sultanate for aid.

1310–1311 Pandyan region is referred to as “Maabar” by Muslim chroniclers. Malik Kafur invaded the Pandyan country, ostensibly on the appeal of Sundara Pandya, but was forced to retreat by his uncle Vikrama Pandya. Large parts of the country were sacked and looted by the Sultanate forces, including the great temples of Kanchipuram.

1333–1334 Pandyan Region. Establishment of the Maabar (Madurai) Sultanate under Jalaluddin Ahasan Shah. He had been appointed to the governorship of the region by the Delhi Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq but revolted and founded an independent Sultanate.

1336 Founding of the kingdom of Vijayanagar by Harihara and Bukka. There were four major dynasties—Sangama, Tuluva, Saluva, and Aravidu. The Vijayanagar were of Telugu origin, but the Vijayanagar Empire in its heyday extended over virtually the entire Peninsular India with the exception of a few surviving regimes like that of the Pandyas.

1347 Founding of the Bahmani Sultanate in North Deccan.

1498–1580 With the landing of Vasco da Gama at Calicut, the history of the Portuguese in Peninsular India began. Armed with the sword and

the bible, the Portuguese became a formidable power, lending their help to one or the other of the warring South Indian kings and thereby gaining trading concessions. Major political-cum-commercial treaties were signed by the Vijayanagar King Devaraya II in the first half of the 15th century. The Portuguese held Goa (until the 1960s), Daman and Diu on the Malabar coast, and Nagapattinam and San Thome in the Tamil country.

1529 Vijayanagar Period. Achyuta Deva Raya laid the foundation for the Nayaka kingdom at Tanjavur. The Nayaka kingdom in Madurai was founded under Viswanath Nayaka (1529–1564). Nayaka rule lasted in Madurai till 1736.

1532–1580 Sevappa Nayak of Tanjavur had close matrimonial links with Vijayanagar.

1565 Battle of Talikota. The victory of the combined forces of the Sultans of Golkonda, Bijapur, and Ahmadnagar over Ramaraya, the king of Vijayanagar. The beginning of the decline of Vijayanagar.

1585–1642 The kings of Vellore. The history of the later part of the Vijayanagar Empire was played out essentially in the Tamil country as the emperors of Vijayanagar became confined to the tiny principality of Vellore and the immediate surrounding region. Venkata II (reigned 1585–1614) tried to maintain a balance of power between the Sultans, the Nayaka kingdoms and his own tiny state.

1600–1634 Raghunatha Nayak is regarded as the greatest of the Tanjavur Nayaks.

1623 Tirumalai Nayak ascended the throne in Madurai.

1623–1635 Kuttan Sethupathi ruled over the Marava kingdom (largely the Pudukkottai State).

1635–1645 Dalavay Sethupathi ruled over the Marava region.

1634–1673 The line of Tanjavur Nayaks ended with Vijayaraghava Nayak.

1689–1706 Madurai Nayaks—The celebrated queen Rani Mangamma ruled as regent on behalf of her infant grandson, Vijayaranga Chokkanatha.

1601 The Nayakas of Madurai, Tanjavur, and Ginji jointly attacked Venkata II but were beaten back.

1605 The Dutch ship *Delft* landed in Peninsular India at Masulipatnam and Nizamapatam in Northern Coromandel and Tegnapatam (Fort St. David) and Pulicat (Fort St. Geldria) in the Tamil country, heralding the beginning of the imperial struggle by the East India Companies of the English and the Dutch (followed by the French, Danish, and others) to dominate the Coromandel spices and cloth trade.

1611 The beginning of the English East India Company. The English ship *Globe* brought the first traders to Nizamapatam.

1619 The English entered into a partnership with the Dutch at Pulicat, about 30 kilometers out of Madras (present-day Chennai), which broke down within the year.

1620s The Danes secured trading rights in the Tamil country from the Nayak of Tanjavur and built a fort (Porto Novo) and warehouse at Tranquebar called Tarangampadi by the Tamils.

1626 The English established themselves at Armagaon (near Madras).

1640 The English East India Co. established itself in Madras and constructed Fort St. George, where the English built the White Town while the weavers, craftsmen, and indigenous merchants lived in Chennapatnam, called the Black Town.

1690–1691 The English bought Fort St. David from the Maratha ruler Rama Raja.

1725 The French East India Company established itself in Mahe and Pondicherry in the Tamil country.

1732–1739 Meenakshi, wife of Vijayaranga Chokkanatha, is the last ruler of the Madurai Nayakas.

1746–1763 Carnatic Wars between the English and the French in the Tamil country. At the end of it, the English emerged the sole overlords of India while the Mughals exercised power in a few pockets of Peninsular India and Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan held out in Mysore.

1678–1800 Tanjavur Marattas. Maratta rule was established in Tanjavur under Venkaji and lasted till the period of Shivaji II, who died

childless in 1855. Lord Dalhousie, the British viceroy, annexed Tanjavur under the theory of “The Doctrine of Lapse.”

1798–1833 Tanjavur Marattas. The reign of Sarfoji who was a patron of arts and letters and founded the Saraswati Mahal Library at Tanjavur.

1799–1801 First freedom struggle. The Palayakkarar (local chieftains referred to in Company records as Poligars) of Panjalankurichi. (Vira Pandya Kattabomman and his brother Oomai Thurai, Gopal Nayak of Virupakshi, Lakshmi Nayak of Manaparai and Poojari Nayak of Deodanapatti, along with the Dindigal league under the Marava chieftains, the Marudu brothers, the chiefs of Tirunelveli, Ramnad, and Dindigal met in Kallarnadu. The support of the Kallar provided the military base for the operation of the rebels. The southern confederacy had the support of the Mysore ruler, Tippu Sultan. Despite their valiant stand at the battle of Annamalai, the rebellion was crushed and the poligars were hanged.

1806 Vellore Mutiny. This was one of the earliest organized rebellions by the Indian regiments against the British and is therefore seen by the Tamils as the precursor of the Great Rebellion of 1857. On 10 May 1806, the 23rd Regiment launched a sudden attack on the European forces based in Vellore fort. The mutineers declared Futteh Hyder, Tippu’s second son, as their ruler and hoisted the tiger-striped flag atop Vellore fort. The mutiny was crushed with great cruelty.

1852 Foundation of the Madras Native Association led by Lakshmanarasu Chetty, a Komati merchant dealing in textiles and indigo, P. Appasamy Pillai and P. Veeraperumal Pillai, both partners in an agency firm, and landed magnates, such as Yegambaram Mudaliyar.

1857 University of Madras founded by an act of the Legislature.

1884 The annual conference at Adayar in Madras of the Theosophical Society mooted the idea of a National Organization, which eventually took shape as the Indian National Congress in Bombay in 1885.

1887 Third Session of the Indian National Congress presided over by Badruddin Tyabji at the Thousand Lights area (near Mylapur) in Chennai.

1894 Indian National Congress met once again in Chennai. Marked by the domination of Annie Besant and the idea of Home Rule.

1906 V. U. Chidambaranar (also known as Chidambaram Pillai or VOC) of Tutukkudi starts a Svadeshi Navigation Company to break the monopoly of the British Steam Navigation Company.

1906 Indian National Congress splits into Moderates and Extremists, and the bipolarity is reflected in the Madras delegation. L. A. Govindaragava Iyer opposes the strategy of “Boycott” while Subramania Bharati and V. U. Chidambaranar support it. The latter formed the nucleus of Extremist movement in Tamil Nadu.

1908 Founding of the Chennai Jana Sangam (reflective of the Jana Sangh renamed Bharatiya Janata Party of the North) with Rightist ideology. The leaders were C. Chakkarai Chetti, Varadaraja Sharma, C. S. Bharati, and K. Venkat Rao.

1911 Beginning of revolutionary terrorism in Tamil politics. The conspiracy and assassination of the Tirunelveli collector, E. W. D. Ashe, on 17 June 1911 by Vanchi Iyer of Krishnapuram in Trinelveli district.

1916 Foundation of the South Indian Federal Liberation Front or the Justice Party. Its leaders were P. Thyagaraya Chetty, T. M. Nair, and later E. V. Ramaswami Naicker, who came to be known as Periyar.

1925 E. V. Ramaswami Naicker started the Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam or the Self-Respect Movement, which focused on the devolution of power to the Tamils and was anti-Sanskritic, anti-Brahmanical, and anti-Congress.

1930 The Justice Party won the majority in the legislative assembly elections and formed the government under the dyarchy system devised by the British. The Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha was conceived along the same lines as the Dandi March of Mahatma Gandhi in Gujarat. The Salt March was organized by C. Rajagopalachari from Tiruchirapalli to the coast of Vedaranyam on 13 April 1930. Hundreds of Tamil freedom fighters collected salt at Agastyanpalli and courted arrest, including Rajaji himself, followed by K. Santhanam, K. Venkatarama Iyer, and K. Subramanya Iyer.

1937 Elections held in Tamil Nadu were won by the Congress Party, and C. Rajagopalachari formed the ministry.

1938 Chennai station of the All India Radio was officially launched.

- 1945** The birth of the Tamil Nadu Congress (TNC) at Nagercoil.
- 1946** Following the end of World War II, elections were held all throughout India and the Congress Party came to power in Tamil Nadu. T. Prakasam became the first chief minister.
- 1947** India gained its freedom. C. Rajagopalachari became the first governor general of independent India. New ministry was formed under O. E. S. Rameswami.
- 1949** The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) was founded by C. N. Annadurai.
- 1948–1953** Struggle for Linguistic States led by T. Prakasam, N. G. Ranga, and others. Potti Sitaramulu began an indefinite fast for an Andhra State and sacrificed his life on 19 October 1952; Andhra Pradesh was separated from Madras on 1 October 1953.
- 1952** Following the general elections, C. Rajagopalachari became chief minister.
- 1954** K. Kamaraj, who belonged to the Nadar community, became chief minister of Tamil Nadu, a post he retained until 1963.
- 1957** The Congress Party was victorious in Tamil Nadu. K. Kamaraj once again became chief minister.
- 1959** C. Rajagopalachari founded the Swatantra Party.
- 1962** The Congress Party was victorious in the general elections in 1962. K. Kamaraj became chief minister for the third term.
- 1963** Kamaraj resigns as chief minister, Bhaktavatsalam assumes the reins of government. Launching of the Kamaraj Plan for the development of Tamil Nadu.
- 1968** Congress won in the general elections. Bhaktavatsalam became the chief minister.
- 1960s to 1970s** Beginning of the anti-Hindi agitations. In 1963, the DMK burned the Constitution; in 1964, a party worker, Chinnaasami, immolated himself in Tiruchchi to show the deep-seated hatred of the Tamils for the imposition of Hindi. On 26 January 1965, when Hindi was made the official language in Tamil Nadu by the Central Government, the

DMK observed a day of mourning. In Chennai, Tiruchirapalli, Tanjavur, and Pondicherry (to name only the main centers) armed clashes took place between the agitating Tamils and the police. It was its role in the anti-Hindi agitation that eventually catapulted the DMK into power in the 1967 elections.

1967 C. N. Annadurai became chief minister of Tamil Nadu.

1968 The Second World Tamil Conference was held in Madras.

1969 Following the sudden demise of C. N. Annadurai, his close associate M. Karunanidhi took over as chief minister.

1972 Marudur Gopala Ramachandran made a dramatic break with the DMK to launch his own party, the Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK).

1975 15 August: Chennai Television Station began broadcasting.

1977 The DMK lost power in Tamil Nadu in the General Elections and the AIADMK under the charismatic leadership of M. G. Ramachandran came to power.

1977–1987 M. G. Ramachandran (MGR) remained the chief minister of Tamil Nadu for three consecutive terms.

1981 The Fifth World Tamil Conference was held in Madurai.

1987 Death of chief minister M. G. Ramachandran.

1988 Janaki Ramachandran, the wife of MGR, stepped in to fill the gap caused by her husband's death but survived as chief minister for only a month.

1988–1991 The DMK, under M. Karunanidhi's leadership, assumed power in Tamil Nadu until President's Rule was imposed on the State under Section 356 by Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar.

1990s Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) became a major regional Political Party under the leadership of Dr. Anbumani Ramdoss.

1991–1996 The All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kayzhagam (AIADMK) swept to power in the Tamil Nadu elections on a sympathy wave, and J. Jayalalitha took over as chief minister for the five-year term.

1994 The Makkal Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, a splinter group of the DMK, was established as a regional party by “Vaiko” V. Gopalaswamy.

1997 14 July: Tamil Nadu celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of its Legislative Assembly.

1995 The Eighth World Tamil Conference was held in Tanjavur under the leadership of chief minister J. Jayalalitha.

1996 The DMK returned to power in Tamil Nadu in the Assembly elections. The main political plank of the party was opposition to the corruption of the Jayalalitha regime, precisely the same charge that the AIADMK had brought against them in the previous elections. The victory of the DMK was followed by the institution of a number of committees to look into the corruption charges against Jayalalitha and her close associate, Shashikala. The DMK also fought the elections as a leading member of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and assumed charge of important ministries as NDA’s alliance partner.

2001 The DMK was defeated in the Assembly elections and routed at the Centre. The AIADMK under Jayalalitha once again assumed power in the State. She has been cleared by the courts of most of the corruption charges. Jayalalitha had formed a part of the NDA alliance but subsequently allied herself with the Congress I.

2004 The Congress I–led United Progressive Alliance with DMK, Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK), PMK, and other Dravidian Parties sweep the polls. The Jayalalitha-led AIADMK suffered a humiliating set back in the general elections when it failed to win a single seat in the Parliament, the Lok Sabha.

A massive tsunami hit the Tamil Nadu coast on 26 December, leaving thousands dead and several hundred thousand homeless. Tens of thousands of boats and homes were destroyed.

2005 Jayalalitha entered the last year of her five-year term as chief minister of Tamil Nadu. Both the DMK and the AIADMK prepared for a bitter electoral battle in 2006.

2006 AIADMK lost the Assembly elections to DMK-led Democratic Alliance. M. Karunanidhi assumed office as chief minister for the sixth term.

75 **TAMIL NADU** 77

(Districts and Talukas)

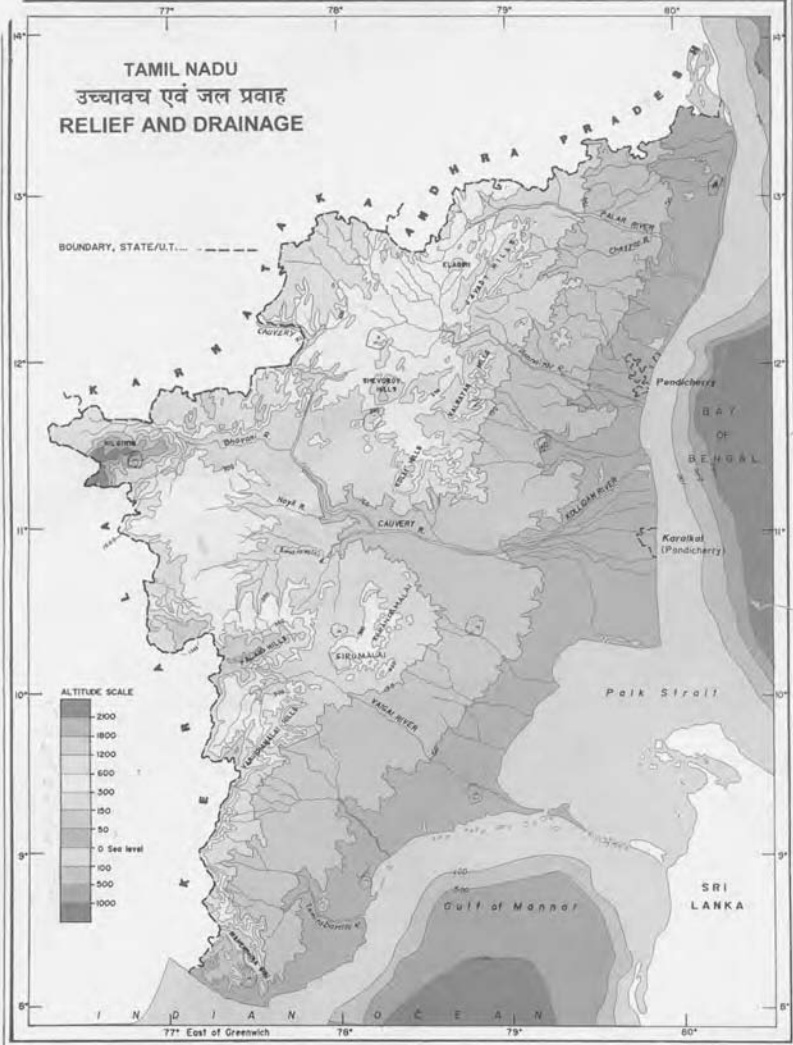
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INDIAN OCEAN

TAMIL NADU उच्चावच एवं जल प्रवाह RELIEF AND DRAINAGE



Introduction

The Tamils have an unbroken history of more than 2,000 years. Tamil, the language they speak, is one of the oldest living languages in the world. The only people comparable to the Tamils in terms of their hoary past and vibrant present would be the Jews—with one marked difference. The Tamils have always had their homeland *Tamilaham* (alternately pronounced and spelled *Tamizhaham*) known today as Tamil Nadu, which to them represents their mother and is called by them as *Tamizh Tai*, literally “Tamil Mother.” This is in striking contrast to the Jews, who have passed through a long and arduous struggle to gain their homeland.

TAMILAHAM: THE GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The Vindhya, a chain of mountains that roughly runs along the Tropic of Cancer, mark the dividing line between northern and southern India. In India’s distant past, the entire region south of the Vindhya was known as *Tamilaham* and was dominated by Tamil culture. From ancient times down to about the 9th or 10th century CE the Tamil-speaking people occupied a somewhat wider area than they do now; Malayalam did not yet exist as a separate language, and Kannada and Telugu were much nearer to Tamil in structure and vocabulary than they are today. Tolkappiyar, the Sangam poet (ca. third century BCE) states that the present Tirumalai-Tirupati hills formed the northern boundary of Tamil Nadu. Cape Comorin defines its southern boundary, and the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea form its eastern and western limits.

The hill of Vengadam—the recognized limit of the Tamil country in the north—included the western coastal strip, which is now Kerala and a good part of what now forms the Mysore State. Jutting into the Indian

Ocean right in the center of the monsoon area, it commanded a favorable situation for trade with lands both to the west and east. The Eastern Ghats—striking southwestward about the latitude of Nellore to form the edge of the Mysore plateau and meet the Western Ghats in the Nilgiris (Blue Mountain)—and the southern half of the Western Ghats themselves, which reach heights of over 2,400 meters in Doddabetta and the Anaimalai, together with their offshoots, form the chief mountain features. The Palghat gap, which is 32 kilometers wide from north to south, forms the only considerable break in the western chain and affords easy communication between the broad Carnatic plain and the narrow coastal strip of Malabar. The much narrower Shencottah and Aramboli Passes farther south facilitate intercourse between the Tirunelveli District and the south Travancore area. The Western Ghats are heavily forested and are rich in teak and other valuable products such as bamboo, rosewood, and ironwood; and as the name Anaimalai indicates, elephants abound in their forests.

These Ghats lie on the course of the southwest monsoon. The monsoons bring about a striking difference in rainfall between the regions on either side of them; the western side receives the bulk of the moisture carried by the monsoon, while to the east on the leeward side is the rain shadow region where rainfall is not only scant but highly variable. This difference is naturally reflected in the vegetation. The copious rainfall of the coastal plain and the windward slopes of the Ghats cloth them with dense vegetation of the tropical evergreen forest type; the shore is skirted with coconuts, and the villages are surrounded with groves of betel nut palm, and tapioca; cassia and cardamom flourish wild in the jungles, and the fact that pepper can be cultivated without the screens used in other parts of India to preserve the humidity conveys an idea of how naturally moist the coastal region is.

The inlets and backwaters of the west coast facilitate internal communication in the north-south and east-west directions and add to the natural beauty of the coast. The relative political isolation of this coast is in striking contrast to its active contact by sea with the nations of the outside world, maintained from very early times, and it was here that the Europeans made their first significant contact with the East in modern times. The Periyar is the only important river on this coastal strip.

The Palar, Pennar, Kaveri, Vaigai, and Tambraparni—from north to south—are the principal rivers of the wider Carnatic plain, all flowing

into the Bay of Bengal, and the country irrigated by these rivers is the real old India of the south, the land of historic kingdoms and their capitals, of numberless temples, and of indigenous arts of almost prehistoric antiquity. The Kaveri River is also known as Ponnai, the Lady of Gold, celebrated in song and legend by the grateful poets and people of the land, which owes all of its prosperity to her waters; artificial irrigation in the Kaveri valley is perhaps as old as agriculture itself. In its course, the Kaveri forks thrice into two streams, only to reunite a few kilometers farther on, forming two islands—Seringapatam (Srirangapatnam) and Srirangam. The celebrated falls of Sivasamudram in between have been harnessed to supply electrical power to the Kolar gold fields in the State of Karnataka, over 150 kilometers distant.

SITUATING THE TAMILS

The geographical extent of Tamil Nadu today is 1,30,058 km². The 1991 census showed the State's population as 55.9 million. In the 2001 census, Tamil Nadu's population had risen to 62.11 million. The sex ratio according to the 2001 census is 986 females to 1,000 males as compared to 974 in 1991 and 977 in 1981. As against the All India decadal growth rate of population of 21.34% during 1991–2001, in Tamil Nadu this had slipped to 11.19% from 15.39% during 1981–1991. The density of population in the State in 2001 was 478 persons per square kilometer. The literacy rate in the State has shown remarkable improvement, having increased to 73.47% compared to 62.66% 10 years earlier during the 1991 census. Today, Tamil Nadu is the most urbanized State in the country with 42% of its population living in urban areas. Unfortunately, more than 30% of these urban dwellers in Chennai live in slums with practically no sanitation and extremely inadequate supply of water.

Since the Tamils are of Dravidian stock, they take pride today in referring to themselves as “Adi Dravida.” Like natives in the Western world, who use the term “First Nations,” the Tamils believe themselves to be the earliest inhabitants of India. The term “Adi Dravida” is specifically used at present to designate the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Tamil Nadu. It is interesting to note that the Tamils' claim to an ancient land is supported by geological theories that consider this region to be the

oldest part of the Indian subcontinent, inhabited at one time by lemurs and thus called the lost continent of Lemuria. (The Australian continent as well as Madagascar in Africa is said to have been included in this.) This mythical lost continent has been termed Lemuria by some geologists and Tamilophiles, and renowned pioneering Tamil scholars, like K. P. Aravanan, have discussed the links between ancient *Tamilaham* and the African continent based on the elusive concept of Lemuria, which the Tamils refer to as *Kumarikandam*. Aravanan wrote *Dravidians and Africans* in 1977. It is believed that the first two Sangams or literary conferences were held in the ancient *Kumarikandam* and that the prolific literary output of these early poets was lost when the land (or continent as some believed) sank into the sea. A special film on Lemuria/*Kumarikandam* was screened at the Second International Tamil Conference in 1968. What is interesting is that the El Dorado that is Lemuria continues to exercise the intellectual imagination of modern Tamils located in the First World. An example is the book by Sumati Ramaswamy, an associate professor of history at the University of Michigan, entitled *Lost Land of Lemuria: Fabulous Geographies, Catastrophic Histories*, published in 2004. A parallel account of Lemuria was written 2005 by a Tamil geologist, Christopher Jayakaran. Despite its chimerical quality (which accounts for an absence of an entry on Lemuria in this dictionary), the notion undeniably has a definite place in the hearts of the Tamils.

Tamil appears to be the oldest language in the Indian subcontinent. The written script must have existed before the third century BCE since Tamil literary tradition itself starts around this time in the *Tolkappiyam*, a primary work on grammar composed by Tolkappiyar. It is only after the sixth century CE that the other Dravidian languages in southern India such as Kannada, Telugu, and Malayalam, emerged. The antiquity of the Tamils and of their language can be gauged by the fact that it has only a minimum number of letters, around 16, compared to Devanagari, which has 33.

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE TAMILS

The discovery of ancient *Tamilaham* and the unearthing of its archaeological sites, especially those of the megalithic cultures, began with colonial Indologists. Robert Bruce Foote, the first to uncover the site of

Adichchanallur on the banks of the river Tamraparani, is regarded as the “Father of Tamil Archaeology.” Another major site excavated by him was the Paleolithic site, Pallavaram (in Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu). Alexander Rea became assistant superintendent in the Madras Archaeological Survey and brought out the *Catalogue of Prehistoric Antiquities from Adichchanallur and Perumbair* in 1915. Sir Mortimer Wheeler excavated the site of Arikamedu near Pondicherry, revealing the extensive nature of the Tamil–Roman maritime trade. Apart from aromatic spices, Tamil cloth found its way into Greece and Rome. The balance of trade, which was in favor of the Tamils, seems to have given rise to the story (probably apocryphal) about Pliny lamenting that the “cottons of India were draining away the gold of Rome.” Extensive hoards of Roman coins have also been found at the ancient ports of Muziris (Cranganore of the colonial period) and Kaveripumpattinam in Tanjavur, which, like the ancient city of Atlantis, was submerged under the sea. The excavation of Kaveripumpattinam was undertaken by K. V. Raman in the 1960s. In more recent times, the Tamil University at Tanjavur has brought to life the old world of the Tamils through identification of things forgotten, at sites like Kodumanal.

The most distinctive feature of ancient Tamilaham were the megaliths, a term meaning “huge stones.” The megalithic culture, for the most part, ran in tandem with the period known as the Sangam age lasting roughly from the third century BCE to the third century CE. Megaliths define the culture of the ancient Tamils, marked by huge stone burials. This culture coincided with the use of iron in the region that was more characteristic of the ancient Tamil culture than bronze cultures, although sites like Adichchanallur have yielded extensive bronze artifacts. Four or five varieties of megalithic stone burials are discernible—the cist, the dolmen, stone circles, subterranean excavations or pits, and the commemorative or part-sepulchral edifices such as menhirs, referred to as *topikal*. The Chingleput district was dominated by dolmen, while Coimbatore, Salem, and Tiruchirapalli megaliths were cist-based. Megalithic sites in Tamil Nadu have yielded black and red ware pottery, bronze and gold objects such as bangles, decorative vases, etc., as well as iron tools like hoes, tridents, axes, and spades. Adichchanallur in Tirunelveli has revealed traces of cloth, paddy husk, and remains of millets showing that both weaving and agriculture flourished in the area. Some of the beads and precious

stones found at Korkai are evidence of long distance trade with other bronze age and iron age civilizations.

TAMIL POLITY: THE SANGAM AGE

The earliest historical block that characterized Tamil polity was the Sangam age, which roughly covered the historical period from the third century BCE to the third century CE. The early political dynasties of the region were Chola, Pandya, and Chera. The earliest mention of these three chieftaincies in outside sources is the reference to the three kingdoms in the edicts of Emperor Ashoka. War and romance distinguished the Sangam Tamils, and the entire corpus of its literature falls within the two modes of the *Puram* (exterior represented by wars and secular concerns) and *Aham* (interior represented by romantic as well as spiritual love). The Pandya kingdom had its capital at Madurai, and it was here that the first three Sangams, that is, the conclave of Tamil scholars, was held. The Chera kingdom had its capital at Vanji, located near the mouth of the Periyar River. On the site of this once flourishing cultural capital of the Tamils is today a tiny village called Tiru Karur, 45 kilometers north of the now prominent port of Cochin in Kerala. In antiquity, the two major ports of the region were Thondi (identified with a place close to modern Quilon or Kollam) and Muziris (identified with the colonial Dutch port city of Cranganore). Ptolomy refers to the commercial importance of both. A Sangam poet named Erukkaddur Thyankannanar gives a picturesque description of the bustling harbor of Muziris in poem 148 in the *Ahananuru*. The poetic lines are worth quoting: “The thriving town of Muchiri (i. e., Muziris) where the beautiful large ships of the Yavanas [the nomenclature given to the Greco-Roman traders by the Tamils] bringing gold, come splashing white foam on the waters of the Periyar, which belongs to the Chera, and return laden with pepper.” The Chola State may have had its capital at Uraiyur. Its harbor town, Kaveripumpattinam, is the setting of two great Tamil epics—*Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai*.

The Chera, Chola, and Pandya kings had under them innumerable petty chieftaincies that owed allegiance to one or the other. The extensive information about the politics of the Sangam age comes from the compositions of the bards who enjoyed royal patronage and in return

sang about the many virtues and achievements of their patrons. These panegyrics form a part of Sangam anthologies. Some outstanding names in the Pandya dynasty were Ilampperu Vazhuti, Nalvazhutti, Perum Kadungon, Bhuta Pandiyan, and Arivudai Nambi. The later kings were also renowned as poet-composers. Karikalan, Nalluruttiram, and Kanaikkal Irumporai are some well-known Chola kings. The name of Karikala is associated with the construction of the Grand Anicut, which was built around the second century CE and remains one of the most impressive examples of water management. The most celebrated Chera king was Chera Senguttavan who figures toward the conclusion of the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram*. Among the lesser chieftains, seven have been singled out for praise in the Sangam anthologies, namely Kari, Pari, Pekan, Ay, Adigaman, Ori, and Nalli.

Medieval Tamil Polities

The period of the Sangam chieftaincies was followed by a period that Tamil historians chose to describe as the “Kalabra Interregnum” or the dark ages of Tamil history. It is not unlikely that the Western models of the “dark ages in Europe” inspired pioneering Tamil scholars such as Nilakanta Sastri to describe the post-Sangam period (roughly from the fourth century CE to the sixth century CE) as the “dark ages of the Kalabra Invaders.” The Kalabra were probably warrior tribes from Andhra. Buddhist sources state that they were Buddhists, and the best-known Kalabra king, Achyuta Vikranta, is believed to have made generous endowments to Buddha Viharas. The Kalabra were eventually defeated by Simhavishnu of the Pallava dynasty and Kadungon of the Pandya dynasty.

The credit for early state formation in South India is given to the Pallava dynasty, occupying the Thondaimandalam region essentially comprising the present areas of Chennai, Kanchipuram, and Chingleput districts primarily but including portions of North Arcot. The origin and chronology of the Pallavas is steeped in mystery, but their period can be roughly defined from the fourth century CE to the late ninth century CE. It is likely that the Pallava kings began their political career as subordinate chieftains of the Satavahana dynasty of Andhra. The early Pallavas are mentioned in Prakrit records, which speak of King Vishnugopa who was defeated and then restored to his kingdom by Samudra Gupta. The Pallava State emerged sometime around the sixth century CE under

Simhavishnu, who is said to have defeated the Kalabras. The major part of the Pallava era is a chronicle of the bitter struggle with the Western Chalukyas. The Pallavas had a strong navy, and their rule is marked by moments of both friendship (reflected in the embassies between the court of Sri Lanka and the Pallava kingdom) and intense conflict and rivalry with their neighbors across the Palk Strait. Narasimhavarman is celebrated for his naval victory against Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) around 643 CE.

The importance of the Pallavas to state formation in early medieval Tamil Nadu lies in their gradual transformation from a tribal chieftaincy to a powerful state bolstered by the religious sanction of the Brahmins and marked by the construction of temples. The deity of the Kailasanathasvami temple or the Ekambaresvarar temple seemed to provide splendor and ritual authority to the Pallava rule. The system of land grants to Brahmins began in the Tamil country with the Pallavas around the seventh century CE and was adopted as a means of legitimizing political power by the Cholas and the Pandyas. The Pallava State derived its authority from the sacred ceremony of coronation called *Rajyabhishekam*, performed sacrifices like the *Ashwamedha* (the Horse Sacrifice that occupied a special place in ancient Indian cultural ethos reflected especially in the Ramayana epic), the *Rajasuya*, and the *Vajapeya*. These ceremonials also marked the entry of the Sanskritic-Brahmanical influence in the Tamil polities. The script of the Pallavas changed from the early Tamil *vattezhuthu* to a curious mixture of Sanskrit and Tamil letters and phrases.

The greatest of the Pallava rulers were Mahendravarman and Narasimha Pallavan Mamallan, after whom the ancient craft town of Mahabalipuram (a great tourist attraction today) came to be called Mamallapuram. Today, these amazingly carved cave temples of the Pallavas are mute but powerful texts of Pallava aesthetics and religious/mythological belief systems. Mahendravarman and his latter-day successor Rajasimhan (the builder of the Kailasanathasvami temple) were known for their introduction of elaborately carved cubical pillars, circular designs, and double arches. The celebrated Chinese Buddhist monk Hiuen Tsang visited Kanchipuram, the Pallava capital, during the period of Narasimhavarman I (ca. 630–668). The Pallava dynasty was eventually eclipsed by the Cholas, one-time feudatories of the Pallavas, and around 880 Thondaimandalam, the land of the Pallavas,

passed into the hands of the Chola kings and was renamed Jayankondacholamandalam (meaning literally “the land victoriously absorbed into the Chola country”).

The early Cholas go back to the Sangam age, but it is not clear whether there was any connection between the Sangam chieftains and the medieval Cholas. Such a connection has, however, been logically postulated by historians. The legendary King Karikalan was the common ancestor through whom Deccan and Andhra families called Chola or Choda claimed a connection with the Uraiyur family. The medieval Chola dynasty originated in the rich (Kaveri) valley. Uraiyur (now Tiruchirappalli) was the capital of the Chola kings. The Chola country (Coromandel) stretched from River Vellaru in the south to Tondaimandalam, the capital of which was Kanchi (Kanchipuram) in the north. Much of Tamil classical literature and Tamil architectural monuments belong to the Chola period, which also saw a revival of Saivism (worship of Shiva) and the development of Vaishnavism (worship of Vishnu). Revenue administration and irrigation were highly organized under the Cholas. The Cholas also provided the best examples of “democratic” local government exemplified in the Uttiramerur inscriptions of Parantaka Chola belonging to the 10th century. The inscriptions are an amazing record of elections to the local assembly, functioning of day-to-day administration through local committees, and the debarment of corrupt officers from holding any political posts!

Chola kings and emperors bore the titles Parakesarivarman Rajakesarivarman, alternately. Their chronology is difficult though not as uncertain as that of the Pandya kings. Vijayalaya (reigned ca. 850–870) began the occupation of the territory of the Pallavas, which was extended under Aditya I (ca. 870–907). Parantaka I (ca. 907–955), known as the destroyer of Madurai (the capital city of the Pandyas), defeated the kings of Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka) and united the lands of the Cholas and the Pandyas between 926 and 942. Parantaka also came into conflict with the Rashtrakutas. He took Nellore from them in around 940, but their king, Krishna III, seized Tondaimandalam. Rajaraja I is regarded as the greatest king of the Chola dynasty. He conquered the land of the Chera kings (the present-day State of Kerala) and occupied northern parts of Ceylon. Rajaraja also occupied the Gangavadi territories (located in the present-day State of Karnataka) by defeating the Western Ganga kings. By 1014, Rajaraja had acquired the Laccadive

(now Lakshadweep) and the Maldivian islands. During the period of Rajaraja, the South Asian and Southeast Asian regions came under the influence of Tamils, militarily, commercially, and culturally. Thus was created the notion of “a greater Tamilaham.” It is worth noting here that the Diasporic Tamils of Sri Lanka are in such a majority that they have staked a claim for their own homeland, called the Tamil Eelam. Angkor Vat in Cambodia, Java, and Sumatra all bear strong evidence of Tamil culture in terms of their architecture, religion, and mythology and even in language and attire. Tamil is today one of the national languages of Singapore and is widely spoken in the neighboring country of Malaysia. Rajaraja’s son Rajendra extended the Chola Empire even farther, completing the conquest of Sri Lanka and annexing large portions of the Malay Archipelago. According to oral tradition, he brought the Ganges River to the Tamil region and commemorated the event by naming his capital Gangaikonda Cholapuram (literally the city having the river Ganga). Gangaikonda Cholapuram—despite its grandiose beginnings—never became a real city. By this time, the Cholas had also become rulers of the Eastern Chalukyan Empire. Kulottunga I of the Cholamandalam also reigned as Rajendra II of the Eastern Chalukyan kingdom. Following the reign of Kulottunga, the Chola dynasty began to decline and finally ended in 1279 when large parts of Chola territory had again passed into the hands of the Pandyas.

The Pandyas were the third major line of kings to dominate the Tamil polity in the medieval period until around the 14th century. The Pandyan dynasty had its capital at Madurai. The Pandyas ruled the region defined as Pandyamandalam, comprising the districts of Madurai, Tirunelveli, and Ramanathapuram, apart from the many new districts that have been carved out of the older, larger districts. One of the earliest known historical texts that refer to the Pandyan kingdom is the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya that enumerates the pearls of the Pandyan kingdom and specifically describes the cotton textiles of Madurai. Sangam texts like *Pattinappalai* refer to Muziris, Korkai, and Tondai, ancient port towns of the Pandyamandalam, while the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram* focuses on the commercial town of Madurai.

The capital city of the Pandya kings, ancient Madurai, can be traced back to the Sangam period. What distinguished Madurai from other towns in the Tamil country were the high towers over the four gates of the fort called *koodal* in Tamil. Therefore, Madurai was also called

Koodal. The *Kalittogai*, one of the Sangam texts, addresses the Pandya king as “Lord of the fortified city, whose walls knew of no siege by any other enemy but the waters of river Vaigai when it is in spate.”

Life in Madurai revolved around the Meenakshi temple. In fact, the Pandyan kings sought and gained political legitimacy by associating themselves with the sacred presence of the goddess Meenakshi, who is regarded as the divine ruler of Madurai born of a mythical Pandyan king called Malayadwaja. True to its character as a temple town, every street in Madurai radiated from and toward the temple. Despite the passage of centuries, this basic character is preserved even now.

Madurai was also the seat of Tamil learning, and the last Sangam is said to have met in Madurai. The Tamils of Pandyamandalam are said to speak pure Tamil, called *chentamil* in contrast to the Tamil spoken in other regions, which is rough in its accent and hence called *kodumtamil*.

The chronology of the medieval Pandyas is shrouded in mystery. The reason for this is said to be the repetitious pattern of Pandya names that were prefixed either by the name Jatavarman or Maravarman. What is a historical fact is that the Pandya dynasty continued well into the medieval period and faded out sometime around the 14th century. Maravarman Sundara Pandya’s accession in 1216 marked the beginning of what is known as the Second Pandyan Empire. His successor, Jatavarman Sundara Pandya, who came to the throne in 1251, initiated the most glorious period of the Pandya dynasties with multiple political victories over the Cholas and the Cheras. The decline and fall of the medieval Pandyas began with the murder of Kulasekhara Pandya in 1310 and the bitter civil war between his sons, Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya, with the former seeking the help of the Delhi Sultan Alauddin Khalji. Khalji’s general Malik Kafur invaded the Pandyan kingdom in 1310, and with the Muslim conquest of the region, the Pandyan dynasty came to a virtual close.

To sum up the distinctive features of the history of medieval Tamilaham, the Tamil polity was shaped by the strong Sanskritic-Brahmanical influence that entered the south during the late-Sangam or post-Sangam epoch. Kings patronized the Brahmins, and they in turn provided the South Indian States with ritual legitimacy. This was also the age of temple building in the Tamil country, with temples serving as talismans of royal power and splendor. The more powerful the king, the more imposing would be the temple and the richer the deity residing in it.

Kanchipuram, Madurai, and Tanjavur emerged as nodal points of Tamil sovereignty, culture, and religion, a role that the temple of Tirupati (located technically in Andhra Pradesh but on the threshold of the Tamil country) played in the later medieval period.

The Vijayanagar Empire and Nayaka Kingdoms

The rise of the Vijayanagar Empire eclipsed the Tamil dynasties as the Telugu warrior kings overran virtually the whole of South India including large parts of the Tamil country, with the exception of the Chera and Pandya kingdoms. The kingdom of Vijayanagar was established in 1336 on the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab on the site of Hampi (historical site of Anegondi). Despite its Telugu roots, the Vijayanagar Empire became central to the history of the Tamil country as well for a period of 300 years.

Founded in 1336, in the wake of the rebellions against Tughluq rule in the Deccan, the Vijayanagar Empire lasted for more than two centuries as the dominant power in South India. Its history and fortunes were shaped by the increasing militarization of peninsular politics after the Muslim invasions and the commercialization that made South India a major participant in the trade network linking Europe and East Asia. Urbanization and monetization of the economy were the two other significant developments of the period that drove all of the peninsular kingdoms into highly competitive political and military activities in the race for supremacy.

The city and its first dynasty were founded in 1336 by five sons of Sangama, of whom Harihara and Bukka became the city's first kings. In time, Vijayanagar became the greatest empire of southern India. By serving as a barrier against invasion by the Muslim sultanates of the north, it fostered the reconstruction of Hindu life and administration after the disorders and disunities of the 12th and 13th centuries. At the same time, contact with the Muslims stimulated new thought and creative productivity, especially through the Islamic influence on peninsular architecture and crafts. The Vijayanagar period witnessed great economic and commercial prosperity until about the 16th century. Sanskrit was encouraged as the language of classical literature while regional literatures in Telugu and Tamil thrived. Behind its frontiers, the country flourished in unparalleled peace and prosperity.

The first dynasty (the Sangama) lasted until about 1485, when at a time of pressure from the Bahmani sultan and the Raja of Orissa-Narasimha of the Saluva family usurped power. By 1503, the Saluva dynasty had been supplanted by the Tuluva dynasty. The outstanding Tuluva king was Krsna Deva Raya. During his reign (1509–1529), the land between the Tungabhadra and Krishna Rivers (the Raichur *doab*) was acquired (1512), the Orissa Hindus were subdued by the capture of Udayagiri (1514) and other towns, and severe defeats were inflicted on the Bijapur sultan (1520). Krishnadeva Raya's successors, however, allowed their enemies to combine against them. In 1565, Rama Raya, the chief minister of Vijayanagar, led the empire into the fatal battle at Rakasa-Tangadi (also known as Talikota), in which its army was routed by the combined forces of the Muslim States of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, and Golconda, and the city of Vijayanagar was destroyed. Aravidu was the last dynasty to govern Vijayanagar. Tirumala, brother of Rama Raya, then seized control of the empire and founded the Aravidu dynasty, which established a new capital at Penukonda and kept the empire intact for a time. Internal dissensions and the intrigues of the sultans of Bijapur and Golconda, however, led to the final collapse of the empire about 1614.

The Vijayanagar Empire, in its later years, played out its political role not in the Telugu country but in the Tamil country. Venkata II (1585–1614), through his ability and constant activity, combined with a reduced interference by the Muslim Sultanates, prevented the further disintegration of centralized authority over the next 20 years by using the Tamil country as his base. A series of wars between 1580 and 1589 resulted in the reacquisition of some of the territory that had been lost to Golconda in the east and the eventual restoration of the Krishna River as Vijayanagar's northern boundary, but Venkata spent most of his time attempting to retain his hold over his rebellious chieftains and nobles. Most of the east and the Tamil south was in a state of rebellion at one time or another, the most serious threat occurring in 1601 when the Nayakas of Madura, Tanjore, and Jinji came to the aid of the rebellious Lingama Nayaka of Vellore. Venkata defeated the Nayakas and later made Vellore his capital, but his authority was not restored in the far south. The process of decentralization, although halted for a time, could not be reversed. By the beginning of the 17th century Vijayanagar remained a political power only in the Tamil country, and even there

Venkata's hold was precarious. His successor, Sriranga II, ruled for four months. He was murdered, along with all but one of the members of his family, by one of the two contending parties of nobles. A long civil war resulted and finally degenerated into a series of smaller wars among a number of contending parties. The surviving member of the dynasty, Rama Deva Raya, finally ascended the throne in 1617. His reign was marked by factional warfare and the constant struggle to maintain a much-truncated kingdom along the eastern coast. Although some chieftains continued to recognize his nominal suzerainty and that of his successor, Venkata III (1630–1642), real political power resided with the Nayakas or provincial governors and the Palayakkarar (the British used the term “Poligar”), who were carving out their own principalities. The fourth Vijayanagar dynasty had become little more than another competing provincial power. By now, the power of the erstwhile king of Vijayanagar was confined to Vellore and its surrounding region in the Tamil country. Interestingly, it was Venkata III who granted the Madraspatnam (Chennapatnam) fort to the English as the site for a factory. In 1642, an expedition from Golconda drove the king from his capital at Vellore. Hearing that his uncle was dying, Sriranga deserted Bijapur and crowned himself. Although he was able to play off Bijapur and Golconda against each other for a time, he could not gain control over the provincial Nayakas, who were by then virtually independent; and when Bijapur and Golconda finally struck at the same time, Sriranga and the handful of chieftains who came to his aid were powerless to stop them. A last appeal to his Nayakas to come to the defense of Hinduism resulted instead in his defeat by their combined forces in 1645. Meanwhile, Bijapur and Golconda advanced, with the blessings of the Mughal emperor at Delhi, who had suggested that they should partition the Carnatic between themselves. The Nayakas realized the danger too late, and by 1652 the Muslim Sultans had completed their conquest of the Carnatic. Sriranga retired to Mysore where he kept an exile court until his death in 1672.

In the wake of the political vacuum left behind by the Vijayanagar Empire, the Nayakas and Poligars (chieftains of small principalities subordinate to the Nayaka kingdoms) held sway over the Tamil country. It must be pointed out that to a large extent the Tamil Nayaka kingdoms, like those of Madurai and Tanjavur, were merely “cloned” images of the splendor that was Vijayanagar.

It is perhaps an irony that it was the Vijayanagar kings, the so-called guardians of Hindu religion and culture, who provided European companies their entry points into the Tamil ports and hinterlands, eventually resulting in the colonization of India by the British and the conversion of large parts of the Tamil population, especially the depressed classes and untouchable caste groups, to Christianity.

Colonial Tamil Nadu

Colonial Tamil Nadu underwent the same repression that was felt in the other parts of colonial India. The Tamil handlooms and handicrafts were either destroyed or completely subordinated to the needs of the imperial metropolis. Weavers began to work on the basis of advances, and produced their cloth according to musters provided to them by the English East India Company agents. As the textile manufacturing lobbies of Manchester and Lancashire began to protest the entry of Coromandel calico, the East India Company switched its policy in Fort St. George from one of getting Indian craftsmen to make cloth suitable for the European markets to one of discouraging cloth production and encouraging the production of raw cotton and dyes like indigo. The commercial landscape of Tamil Nadu began to be marked by names like Simpsons, Parry's, and Spencers, and transporters like Cox and King.

Colonial administration in Tamil Nadu can be divided into two phases—the rule of the English East India Company (from 1761–1857) and governance under the British crown (from 1857 until India's independence in 1947). The Company interests were obviously commercial, and political control was designed to facilitate trade. The Company administration was based on three pillars—the army, the civil service, and the police. Lord Cornwallis, who became governor general of India in 1786, laid the foundation of the administrative service. The army employed Indians on a large scale since British soldiers demanded a much higher pay. However, no Tamil could hope to rise beyond the mid-level rank of *Subedar*. The police force utilized the existing system of local justice by harnessing the services of the village watchman while developing a hierarchy of civil and military courts. A major reform in the sphere of land revenue administration was the introduction of the Ryotwari system in the Madras Presidency, by which the imperial state negotiated directly with the peasants thus ensuring the steady flow of revenue to the exchequer. The system

made the tiller of the soil responsible for tax payments, and consequently, even in adverse times such as famine years or crop failures, the peasants were burdened by the heavy taxes. This system was aimed at eliminating the intermediate tier of landlords who cut into the usufruct.

In 1858, the governance of India was transferred to the crown. While in the northern India, this event had major implications in terms of administrative policy, the impact in Madras was minimal. The region was, however, going through a terrible economic crisis occasioned by the famine that swept the Tamil country between 1876 and 1878. Nearly four million Tamils died, and the disaster management measures cost the State over 80 million rupees. Problems of criminality and insurgency following socio-economic hardships were partially addressed by the legislation of 1861—the act by which a High Court was created effectively replacing the local *sadr* and *faujdari* (civil and criminal) courts. A new department of agriculture was set up in 1882 in order to reform the Ryotwari settlement that had encountered complications. While in the earlier phase the imperial regime had emphasized that what was being extracted from the peasant was more in the nature of rent than land revenue, now the Board of Revenue was anxious to clarify that “subject to the payment of a stated proportion of the produce . . . the proprietary right of the ryot in the soil of his holding is absolute and complete.”¹ In 1855, the land revenue stood at 50% on wet (fertile) lands and 33% on dry land. John Sullivan, president of the Madras Board of Revenue, admitted, “Our system acts very much like a sponge, drawing up all the good things from the banks of the Ganges and squeezing them down on the banks of the Thames.”²

FROM IMPERIAL BONDAGE TO FREEDOM

Some of the earliest instances of resistance to colonial rule in the Tamil country came from local chieftains like the Palayakkarar. The protests were scattered, and there were as many chieftains anxious to prove their loyalty to the British regime as there were recalcitrant chiefs like Virapandya Kattabomman and the Marudu brothers who refused to pay taxes and tributes to the British. Interestingly, the challenge to the East India Company regime by the famed Muslim ruler Tippu Sultan of Mysore made him the rallying point for many of these early revolts. The

first attempt at presenting a united front against the British was made around 1800 by the Grand South Indian Confederacy. In fact, one of the earliest concerted rebellions against the British in the Tamil country began in 1800 with the grand federation formed by the Palayakkarar (called Poligars by the British) led by Kattabomman of Panjalakurichi and Marudu Pandyan of Sivagangai and lasted till 1806. This can justly be regarded as a precursor to the grand rebellion in 1857.

During the first phase of colonial rule in the Madras presidency, roughly from 1800 to 1870, “politics” was largely localized, and no significant state-level political organizations had emerged, nor had state-level mobilizations taken place. The presidency earned for itself the sobriquet “benighted Madras,” a politically loaded term that resulted in the marginalization of Tamil Nadu in the historiography of the Indian nationalist movement. The term could have multiple meanings. “Night” has been interpreted by nationalist historians of the North as reflecting the “ignorance” or political apathy of Tamil Nadu. The presence of a strong comprador class, which had succeeded in winning numerous “titles” especially knighthood from the British queen, may also have resulted in this dubious sobriquet. However, historians are now gradually recovering the history of the Tamils’ role in the freedom struggle.

By the turn of the 20th century, the morphology of a freedom struggle was gradually beginning to emerge on the Tamil scenario. Some urbanization had occurred, and this, together with the ongoing commercialization of the economy, the print revolution, and expansion of the governmental apparatus, had created certain avenues for economic and social advancement, especially among the educated middle class. This provided the setting for significant political developments between 1880 and 1914 in which the Tamil intelligentsia played a leading role.

With the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 and its evolution into a nationalist movement, came the *Swadeshi* struggle of 1905–1908. Patriots such as V. U. Chidambaranar (Chidambaram Pillai) and Subramania Siva played an important part in this struggle, which also saw militant action by the emerging working class. However, with the split in the Congress between moderates and extremists, the nationalist movement subsided for a brief time. To stem the rising tide of the freedom struggle, the colonial rulers systematically resorted to a policy of divide and rule. In the context of Tamil Nadu, they were greatly assisted in this by the failure of the Congress leadership, represented in

the Tamil country largely by the Brahmin elite, to resolve the question of caste oppression and social inequalities imposed by a rigid caste system. The growth, by 1900–1910, of an urban non-Brahmin upper caste elite largely located in Madras city, and their strong resentment of the near-monopoly of professional and public status enjoyed by a small coterie of elite Brahmins in the city, provided fertile soil for the colonial rulers to play their game. Motivated European scholarship and the colonial rulers consciously fostered the concept of a pure Dravidian movement and a Dravidian language struggling against “Aryan” domination. In 1916, the South Indian Liberal Federation (popularly known as the Justice Party) was formed, ostensibly to uphold the non-Brahmin cause. Aside from using the caste card, the colonial masters also effectively used the communal card in pursuing a policy of divide and rule.

Initially, the political struggle in Tamil Nadu went in tandem with the nationalist struggle and the role of the Indian National Congress in anti-imperialist movements such as *svadeshi* and boycott. The Madras Native Association (MNA) was formed before the inception of the Indian National Congress under A. O. Hume’s leadership in 1885. The third session of the Indian National Congress was held in 1887, presided over by Badruddin Tyabji. The Madras delegation included stalwarts from the MNA like A. Svaminatha Iyer, S. Subramanya Iyer, P. Somasundaram Chetty, C. Vijayaraghava Achariyar, Sabapati Mudaliyar, Rangaiah Naidu, and G. Subramanya Iyer, the founder of the *Swadeshamithran* and *The Hindu*. The demands put forth were typical of “moderate” demands elsewhere in India—participation in legislative councils, separation of the judiciary from the executive, opening of a military academy and institutions for the technical education of Indians, reduction in public expenditure by the government, and protection of the Indian handloom sector that was facing the onslaught of mill cloth from England. The repressive policies of the British and the harsh prison terms meted out to the Tamil patriots resulted in the rise of extremism in Tamil politics. V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, Subramanya Siva, and Subramanya Bharati wrote and spoke out against the colonial regime. Patriotic Tamil newspapers and periodicals like *Nava Shakti*, *Swadeshmithiran*, and others began to mushroom. At the same time, enterprising Tamils started their own businesses such as Subramanya Siva’s Indian Steam Navigation Company, which tried to break the British monopoly over trade. At the Congress session in 1906, Bipan Chandra Pal made an eloquent appeal for boycott as a concomitant of the *Swadeshi* movement.

The Theosophical Society founded at Adayar, Madras, used English and the tools of Western liberalism to press for political and social reforms in Tamil Nadu. One such issue was the Age of Consent Bill (legislation enacted in 1889 to raise the age of consent for marriage from 10 to 12). The other was the Devadasi bill (introduced in the 1930s), which sought to end prostitution, traditionally practiced by the *Devadasis* in South India. The Brahmin domination of the Madras Native Association and the Madras Mahajana Sabha was offset by the non-Brahmin movement in Tamil Nadu. Toward the end of 1916, a new party called the South Indian Liberal Federation or the Justice Party, emerged in the Madras presidency. Its leaders were P. Thyagaraya Chetty, T. M. Nair, and later E. V. Ramaswami Naicker, who came to be known as *Periyar* (“respected one” or “elder”). The journal *Non-Brahmin* became its mouthpiece. Later Periyar started *Kudi Arasu* and *Viduthalai*, which carried forward the Non-Brahmin ideology. In the 1930s, the Justice Party got the majority and formed the government under the diarchy system devised by the British. The Justice Party, however, lost much ground in the subsequent years because it was perceived as a collaborator of the colonial regime. Periyar started the Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam (Self-Respect Movement) and went on to found his own party, the Dravida Kazhagam. The Tamil Separatist movement also started under Periyar’s leadership, and it is noteworthy that during the transitional years of India’s freedom, notable leaders of Tamil Nadu like Periyar E. V. Ramaswami Naicker were asking for an independent “Dravidisthan.”

The inhuman treatment of extremist patriots by the British colonial regime led to the emergence of revolutionary terrorism in Tamil politics. The conspiracy and assassination of the Tirunelveli collector, E. W. D. Ashe, on 17 June 1911 by Vanji Iyer (originally from Krishnapuram but settled in Chenkottai) and 14 others was a milestone in the evolution of revolutionary terrorism in the State. In the 1930s, Gandhian Civil Disobedience and revolutionary terrorism went in tandem in Tamil Nadu. Disobedience predominantly took the form of the salt *satyagraha* protest, which was a mass protest against the unfair tax on salt by the colonial regime. Led by C. Rajagopalachari, T. S. S. Rajan, and Rukmini Lakshmi pati, the protest against the tax launched the agitation in Vedaranyam in Tiruchirapalli district. Madras city (now Chennai), Tiruppur, Vellore, Salem, Tiruchirapalli, Tirunelveli (especially Krishnapuram), and Kallikottai in Tamil Nadu became hotbeds of revolutionary activity. It is ironic that the British regime used the Malabar police to *lathi*

charge or shoot the patriots. Another direction of patriotic protest was to remove the British flag and hoist the Congress flag atop important official buildings. A revolutionary youth, Tiruppur Kumaran, died defending the Congress flag.

Under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919, the system of diarchy was introduced and elections were held for the legislature under a limited franchise. The Congress did not participate in these elections because of the non-cooperation movement. The Justice Party came to power and formed ministries in 1920 and 1923 under the Raja of Panagal. These were followed by the formation of an “Independent Ministry” in 1926 under Dr. P. Subbaroyan. The Government of India Act of 1935 opened up a new era in the history of India’s freedom struggle. In Tamil Nadu following the elections of 1937, Congress came to power, and C. Rajagopalachari formed the ministry. The Quit India movement saw violence in Tamil Nadu as elsewhere in the country. Following the end of World War II in 1945, elections were held in India in 1946 and a Congress ministry was formed in Tamil Nadu under T. Prakasam. India became independent on the 15 August 1947. Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, was made the first governor-general of independent India and he handed over office to C. Rajagopalachari in June 1948. Rajagopalachari was the last to hold this office.

The Dravida Kazhagam (DK) led by Periyar made an important contribution to the struggle against caste and gender inequality. However, it failed to recognize the political significance of the struggle for freedom and the winning of independence. The emergence of movements of linguistic nationalities in the Kannada, Telugu, and Malayalam-speaking territories also undermined the concept of “Dravidanadu,” which found no response in those neighboring areas. It was against this background that the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), led by Thiru Annadurai (affectionately known as Anna), was formed in 1949.

POLITICS SINCE INDEPENDENCE

With the restoration of popular ministries in the postwar period, three cabinets, all under the Congress, held office in Madras State between 1946 and the holding of the first general elections under the Constitution of India in 1952. The successive chief ministers in this period were T. Prakasam

(1946–1947), Omandur Ramaswamy Reddiar (1947–1949), and P. S. Kumaraswamy Raja (1949–1952). The Congress was returned to power in the general elections of 1952, 1957, and 1962. The 15 years of Congress rule in this period took place under cabinets headed by C. R. Rajagopalachari (1952–1954), K. Kamaraj (1954–1963), and M. Bhaktavatsalam (1962–1966). In the general elections of 1967, the DMK was swept into power, winning 138 seats in the 234-member Assembly, having led the anti-Hindi agitation of 1965. C. N. Annadurai formed the first DMK Ministry. In 1968, Bhaktavatsalam once again became chief minister, but the Congress Party lost to the DMK in the following elections. With Annadurai's passing away in 1969, M. Karunanidhi became the chief minister. The DMK was again elected to power with an improved majority in the general elections of 1971, but the party went through a major split in 1973 with the formation of the Anna DMK (ADMK, later All-India Anna DMK or AIADMK) under the leadership of M. G. Ramachandran. The DMK-led Karunanidhi Ministry continued until January 1976 when it was dismissed by the Central Government and President's Rule was imposed.

In 1975, the Government at the center, led by Indira Gandhi, imposed an Internal Emergency during which political opposition was ruthlessly quelled. Leaders of the opposition were thrown into prison, and the press was completely muzzled. Tamil Nadu during these years went into a period of President's Rule, which lasted until the general elections in mid-1977. In these elections, the AIADMK won a comfortable majority, which it retained in the elections of 1980 and 1985, with M. G. Ramachandran continuing as chief minister from 1977 except for a brief interlude of President's Rule in 1980. The 1990s witnessed the return of the DMK, but in 2001 it was the Jayalalitha-led AIADMK government that held office in Tamil Nadu. In 2006, power reverted back to the DMK once again.

It is also important to note that with the weakening of its All-India base, the Congress has looked to the regional parties for support in elections, both at the State level and to Parliament. This has been reflected in alliances of convenience in successive elections: Congress-AIADMK in 1977 and 1985 and Congress-DMK in 1980, the AIADMK-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led National Democratic Alliance in the 1990s, and the DMK-Congress I alliance in the present political landscape.

Thus, in the five decades since Independence, the two regional parties—DMK and AIADMK—have held power in equal measure, and the latter

continually in the last two decades. Regional political parties are thus entrenched in Tamil Nadu. Regionalism has been inspired by, and has in turn reinforced, a strong sense of cultural and linguistic separateness and pride. The Dravidian movement, on which regional politics have been based, has led to the upliftment of hitherto depressed castes and communities. It has not, however, led to a broader transformation toward a reasonably egalitarian economy or polity, probably because the system of affirmative justice or Reservations, which is the highest in Tamil Nadu, has further sharpened caste schisms instead of leading to a secular society.

CURRENT POLITICAL TRENDS

Tamil politics is governed by personality cults. Political parties are formed around the personalities of their leaders and not by strong ideological differences. Party politics is less about Center-State relations and differences over program and policy implementation, and more about personal charisma. By and large, they share the common plank of idolizing Tamil and upholding the Dravidian identity vis-à-vis the “northern parties” like the Congress and the BJP.

Another interesting feature of Tamil politics is the heavy dramatization of events and people. Most politicians of Tamil Nadu have their origins either in the world of Tamil theater or cinema. Both M. G. Ramachandran (popularly known as MGR) and M. Karunanidhi were rivals on screen before they went on to found their individual political parties—known as AIADMK and DMK. Apart from her romantic linking, on and off screen with MGR, the present supremo of Tamil Nadu, Jayalalitha and her party, the AIADMK, has personal and ideological loyalties toward MGR. In 2006, political power in Tamil Nadu has once again changed hands, and the DMK is back in the saddle with Karunanidhi as chief minister.

A strong sense of Tamil identity as distinct from an Indian identity has been responsible for one of the major problems confronting the Indian Union. Separatist tendencies have been manifest in Tamil history and politics for over a century. The best example of this was the *Tani Tamizh Iyakkam*, literally Tamil Separatist Movement, started in the 1920s by Maraimalai Adigal and his daughter Neelambikai Ammaiyar. Modern reflections of Tamil identity assertions are the anti-Hindi agita-

tions, which shook the country in the 1960s and 1970s, and the covert and overt sympathies expressed in Tamil Nadu for the Sri Lanka-based Liberation Tigers for Tamil Eelam (LTTE) fighters. Certain political parties in Tamil Nadu have clearly shown their partiality for the concept of a broad-based “Tamilaham.” Dr. A. Ramdoss’s party, the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) and Vaiko’s (acronym of V. Gopalasamy) Party the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) have been known for their public stance on the Sri Lankan Tamils Liberation movement that has been perceived as “Tamil jingoism” by the Indian government. Vaiko was, in fact, arrested and kept in prison for many months under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) by the government of Tamil Nadu for his inflammatory speeches in support of the “Tamil Tigers” of Sri Lanka.

ECONOMIC MAPPING

While Tamil politics oscillates between the DMK and the AIADMK, with cinematic histrionics playing a major share in political and electoral battles, the economy has maintained a steady upward curve. Any assessment of the economic performance of Tamil Nadu since independence must necessarily keep in mind the colonial legacy that has set the parameters of the subsequent developments in the economy. Pure exploitation of the colonial economy characterized the period up to the 1870s, ending with the devastating famine of 1876–1878. The heavy land revenues imposed on the farmers also caused the famines, apart from the natural phenomenon of crop failures. The period from 1880 to the end of World War I was marked by encouragement offered for production of raw cotton and indigo and the beginnings of sugarcane, coffee, and other plantations under British control and supervision. The period from 1919 to independence, chiefly marked by the impact of the Great Depression and World War II, was also characterized by native responses to the colonial domination. V. O. Chidambaram Pillai began a native shipping company that competed with the British shipping companies in order to reclaim the carrying trade. The native intelligentsia took special interest in the print media and a number of newspapers in English and in Tamil, controlled by educated Indians, partially replaced the voice of the colonial print media.

The economy of the Tamils in the post independence era has witnessed quantum leaps in commercial and industrial growth. Development has been particularly marked in the last two decades in the areas of automobile industry and information technology. In 2001, the total volume of trade in India was estimated at Rs.2007 billion, out of which 35% of the products are manufactured in Tamil Nadu. The State also exports 19% of the country's total exports, and its export earnings are around US\$3.10 billion. Tamil Nadu is one of the fastest growing economies in the Union of India with a growth rate of 6.4% and this is expected to rise to 8% in the near future. This is the highest growth rate over a period of 37 years from 1960 to 1998. Tamil Nadu also has the third largest State Domestic Product (SDP) among the Indian States and is the only southern state with a growth rate of 6.4%.

Two major factors behind Tamil Nadu's success story are the information technology revolution and the growth in vehicular production ranging from "bicycles to battle tanks," earning for Chennai the title of the "Detroit of India." This can be tabulated as follows.

In the last five years, Ford Motors, Hyundai Motors, Hindustan Motors, and Mitsubishi Motors have established their manufacturing base in Chennai, lending further credence to the statement that Chennai has emerged as the Detroit of India. In a complementary tone, John Parker, CEO of Ford India, wrote a piece, *Why Ford Chose Chennai?* Some of the arguments he presented were that the proximity to the port as well as infrastructural facilities enabled easy access to imports and exports. The international airport in Chennai connected India to the major industrial capitals of the world. Another major factor for the choice of Chennai as the headquarters of multinationals like Ford and Hyundai besides Ashok Leyland (specialists in Jeep manufacture) was its potential to grow in the future unlike some other Indian states that are already saturated. Perhaps the most attractive feature was the supportive attitude of the Tamil Nadu governments, cutting across party lines, for foreign investment and the reduction of bureaucratic red tape.

The other major sector that has brought Tamil Nadu into the Indian economic map in a prominent manner is its growth in the information technology industry. IT, as it is widely known today, is clearly the largest growing industry today. IT has been identified as a core area of development by the Tamil Nadu government. It has capitalized on the inherent strengths of the State—a large fund of IT skills, low cost of liv-

ing, better than average infrastructure, and investor-friendly public policies. Software exports brought in earnings of over US\$2.43 billion in 2005. For the hardware sector, Tamil Nadu had projected an earning of US\$1.25 billion in 2005, which has been more or less achieved. It can be estimated that the contribution of Tamil Nadu to the IT sector will represent about 30% of India's entire hardware production. Currently, the State is a close competitor to Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Delhi, and is projecting itself to become the "Cyber Capital of India."

THE CULTURAL FABRIC

There is an uneasy coexistence of popular religiosity with political atheism in the Tamil culture of today. As one's aircraft zooms toward the Chennai airport one can observe the pinnacles or *gopurams* of the innumerable temples that dot the skyline of the Tamil country. What do Tamils do on an evening? Couples and their children (the coiffure of the women invariably adorned by flowers) usually head for the local temple—not just to pray but to meet people and very often to listen to the free music concerts that are held there. This is an inexpensive and enjoyable way of spending one's leisure hours. Most Tamil homes will have a "Rani Muthu" (brand name of a calendar company) calendar that serves as an almanac for identifying important festival days of all faiths as well as ritually important days like the new moon and full moon days.

The contrary pressures of the DMK ideology characterized by political atheism (despite social accommodations) became a part of the Tamil masculinity. This is not to state that Tamil men are atheists and the women are theists but to point out the operation of the twin attractions of religion and politics in Tamil society that seem to be embedded in some sort of a gender base.

Where religiosity seems to be absent, its place is taken by an equally committed—even fanatical zeal—for Tamil cinema and its actors. An aerial survey of the Tamil landscape will not only highlight temple spires but also probably mammoth posters of film stars and politicians or rather film stars turned politicians. A journalist made the snide remark that this gargantuan cutout reflected the cutout bhakti (the term used for devotion) of the Tamils, substituting worship of gods with devotion to their favorite actors and leaders. Charismatic cinema actors

can make or mar political parties, and elections are often fought out on the silver screen and through the sensitive media of audience responses to the films.

Tamil cinema has been in existence for nearly 85 years. One can even perceive it as the microcosm of the world of the Tamils. It reflects the cross currents that went into movements like the freedom struggle, Tamil separatism, and other movements that were either anti-caste or anti-class and emanated from Tamil society near the close of the last millennium. The dialogues, written by C. N. Annadurai and M. Karunanidhi, set the tone for the Dravidian movement in the Tamil country. Every film made by the DMK in its early years began with the party emblem of the rising sun.

Since 1947, the year of India's independence, Tamil cinema has become even more closely intertwined with Tamil Nadu politics. It is revealing of the extent to which cinema has been a major cultural preoccupation of the Tamils that four of its chief ministers have been key figures in Tamil cinema: C. N. Annadurai, M. G. Ramachandran (MGR), M. Karunanidhi, and J. Jayalalitha. The phenomenon of star politicians, although not unknown elsewhere, is ubiquitous in Tamil Nadu, with films being used as tools of conflicting political ideologies.

As with all traditional cultures, music is an important signifier of Tamil identity. However, it was precisely in the domain of music that the question arose as to whether there is such a thing as a monolithic representation of Tamil identity. Political, social, and aesthetic battles were fought over the question of what constitutes the quintessential Tamil culture. Does the music, arts, and Sanskritic literature of the Brahmins represent Tamil culture as much as the folk music, folk arts, and Tamil literature of the non-Brahmins who believe themselves to be the sole custodians of "pure" Tamil culture? The Sangam Tamils were equally engaged with "Iyal, Isai, and Natakam." That is to say, all of the performing arts such as music, dance, and drama have a long history in the Tamil country. The chief protagonist of the Tamil epic, *Silappadikaram*, the dancer Manimekalai (who belonged to the ancient profession of "dancing girls" and usually took to prostitution), was also said to have been a proficient singer and skilled in playing the musical instrument called *veenai*. The origins of some of the melodic patterns in music called *raga* and rhythmic patterns called *tala* are to be found as early as the beginnings of the Christian era in Sangam texts such as the

Silappadikaram, written by Ilango Adigal. Since this epic centered around the theme of dancing and music, it explicated in great detail forms of Tamil music, especially the melodic form known as *pan*, their rhythmic base and instrumental accompaniments.

The past is embedded in the present, and the twin traditions of Brahmanical music (reflected in Bharatamuni's *Natyashastra*) and the Dravidian tradition of music exemplified in Sangam texts like the *Silappadikaram* continue to find their echoes in latter day cultural politics.

The foundation of the Madras Music Academy was a direct consequence of the 42nd session of the Indian National Congress at Madras in 1927. A musical concert was held on the occasion to celebrate Tamil culture. The Brahmin lobby in the Tamil country founded the Madras Music Academy in 1928. Music and politics intertwined as nationalist leaders like Sathyamurthy and E. Krishna Iyer involved themselves with the Academy. Despite its Brahmanical base, the Academy patronized dancers like Balasaraswati, who belonged to the Devadasi community.

The Madras Music Academy came under fire during the height of the anti-Brahmin movement in Tamil Nadu. At the political level, Periyar reflected this in the foundation of the *Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam*, while at the cultural level, anti-Brahmanism led to the foundation of the *Tamil Isai Sangam* in 1940. The Madras Music Academy, founded in 1928 by the Brahmin elements within Tamil culture, was greatly resented by those who regarded themselves as the representatives of Tamil Dravidian culture. One facet of the anti-Brahmanical struggle that commenced in the 1920s was the opposition to Brahmanical-Sanskritic hold over the realm of music. As a result of this gradually built-up opposition, the great Tamil scholar and patron, Raja Annamalai Chettiar, started the *Tamil Isai Sangam* (which can be broadly translated as Tamil Music Academy) in 1942 at the Annamalai University, founded by him. Annamalai University continued to function as the hub of the *Tamil Isai Sangam* for many years. The Sangam emphasized the importance of promoting composers in Tamil and musicians with a non-Brahmin background in contra-distinction to the Madras Music Academy, which was dominated by the Sanskritic compositions of Muthusvami Dikshitar and Shyama Shastri or the Telugu compositions of Thyagaraja. It is noteworthy that it was the *Tamil Isai Sangam* who patronized traditional musical instruments like the *nadasvaram* while the Brahmin *sabhas* or

gatherings used violins (originating in the West) as accompaniments to the Carnatic classical vocalists. The Academy revived the practice of singing the compositions of Ananda Bharati, Kavikunchala Bharati, Gopala Krishna Bharati, and Arunachala Kavirayar, who all wrote devotional music only in the Tamil language. The politics of music becomes clear when it is seen that Periyar E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker organized nine concerts dominated entirely by Tamil music as a part of the conference proceedings of the *Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam* (Self-Respect Movement) in 1930 at Erode.

Both schools of music continue into the present time. Madras Music Academy continues even today as one of the most prestigious institutions in Chennai, and the title of “Sangeetha Kalanidhi,” conferred by the Academy, is still the “Grammy” of the Carnatic musician. At the same time “Tamil Isai” finds affluent non-Brahmin sponsors, many of them industrial houses, in Tamil Nadu and among the NRT (non-resident Tamils) settled in the United States or in England or nearer home in countries like Malaysia and Singapore. An interesting phenomenon to be observed in the world of Carnatic music today is that musicians have a double-barreled repertoire of compositions in Sanskrit and Tamil music and sing suitably, depending on the source of patronage!

The extent to which a particular society is progressive can usually be gauged by the position of women in that society. The ubiquitous presence of patriarchy in traditional societies makes this exercise almost inevitable. Separate entries on “Women” in books written within the patriarchal paradigm are often perceived by some feminists as a kind of tokenism by a structure dominated by male concerns and perspectives. However, it seems necessary to foreground this historical dictionary of the Tamils with a longish profile of Tamil women as a separate entry—although in the text women are present throughout under various themes such as “freedom struggle,” “Tamil cinema,” “women in business,” etc.—in order to reiterate their presence and participation in all mainstream human endeavors.

BY WAY OF CONCLUDING THE BEGINNING

This cultural-scape of the Tamils would be incomplete without some reference to their cultural predilections in terms of food, colors, and even omens. Just as American food culture has been tersely described

as one of “hot dogs and hamburgers,” it can be said of the Tamils that *idli*, *dosa*, and *vada* dominate any representation of their cuisine before the outside world. Vegetarianism dominates the Tamil cuisine in that rice and vegetables constitute the staple diet. This is not to say that there are no meat-eating groups among the Tamils. It is only the Brahmin community and certain social groups like the Saiva Pillai and the Saiva Vellalar who wholly abstain from meat. Other social groups are not averse to the consumption of meat. The Chettinad (region comprising essentially Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram districts) cuisine is in fact known for its meat and chicken preparations. However, meat curries are added on to enhance the flavor of a meal that is largely rice based. This would be in contradistinction to the West, where the diet is largely meat-based and vegetarianism and salad meals are seen as “oriental” solutions to obesity or other health-related problems.

The Tamil male may today prefer to wear the corporate “uniform” of a three-piece suit to work, but traditionally men wore an unstitched cloth of two and a half yards (roughly 1.90 meters) called “veshti.” Most men went bare chested (this is compulsory while visiting temples!), but it was customary to wear an upper cloth that could just be a plain towel. Women wore and still wear a six-yard piece called “saree.” Young girls who have attained puberty, i. e., around 12 years of age onward, would wear a long skirt called *pavadai*, blouse, and a half saree called “davani.” References to these dresses can be found in very early epigraphical records from the Tamil country. Tamil women continue to wear sarees, but young girls have given up the *pavadai-davani* in favor of the Western jeans and tops. The traditional Tamilian attire of women shows a tendency toward bright colors like red, blue, green, orange, and peacock blue. Even men tend to wear brightly designed “lungi” (similar to the “veshti”) as casual wear.

Finally, a few words about the cultural predilections of the Tamils, their superstitions, and their beliefs. One of the most distinctive features of Tamil culture is the *kolam*, which decorates the threshold of every home. These are geometrical and floral designs made of rice flour. The designs are meant only to last the day, and the *kolam* produced so lovingly and artistically each day is erased the next morning to make way for the new one. It is, therefore, called “threshold art.” The *kolam* is made only by girls and women. *Pongal*, a harvest festival of the Tamils, is an occasion for a *kolam* competition. It is a measure of the importance

of the *kolam* concept that even today buildings and hutments in Tamil Nadu ranging from the humble thatched cottage to the five-star hotels will have a *kolam* on the threshold because *kolam* is considered auspicious. The clanging of a bell is considered an auspicious omen among the Tamils. So is the clicking sound made by the lizard and the braying of the donkey. The cawing of the crow means unexpected guests. The hooting of the owl is very inauspicious, and seeing an owl portends death. Apart from audio-omens, there are also visual omens. Seeing a single Brahmin or a widow is considered highly inauspicious. To their own existing superstitions, the Tamils have added a few more from their colonial masters. A Tamil starting out will abandon his enterprise and return to his home if a black cat crosses his path.

A major superstition arises from the influence of the almanac and the identification of a particular span of time every day in the week as *Rahu Kalam*—literally the “time of the Serpent Rahu.” *Rahu* in Hindu mythology represented a demon who swallowed the nectar of immortality meant for the gods. Like the notion of anti-Christ in Christian theology, *Rahu* enjoys an eternal place in the Hindu cosmological and astrological charts. The time span of *Rahu* is one and a half hours and is regarded as extremely inauspicious for any worthwhile activity. The Tamils will not have weddings or any social functions during *Rahu Kalam*, and those orthodox Tamils who move in the public domain, such as the corporate world, may not fix business meetings during this “black hour.”

Will the young Tamils of today, say in their teens or early twenties, still listen to the voice of the lizard or avoid arranging meetings with clients of the “corporate world” during *Rahu Kalam*? Most of them, perhaps, could not care less. The corporate world does not give you the time or the space to practice these whimsical observances. Many of these young Tamils are, nevertheless, caught between tradition and modernity, between the Tamil practice of arranged marriages and the increasingly popular paradigm of “boy meets girl” liberated from the stern parental eye. Educated women and working women especially are caught in this bind of patriarchal controls and economic freedom.

Poised to take off as a major industrial and commercial state, especially in the sectors of information technology and automobile production, Tamil Nadu still maintains an uneasy balance between caste poli-

tics, political showmanship, cinematic glitz, and the firm road to all-around economic development and prosperity.

NOTES

1. Government Orders, 1008, Rev, 21 September 1882.
2. Cited in Bipan Chandra, *Modern India: A History Textbook for Class XII*. New Delhi, National Council of Educational Research and Training, 1996.

The Dictionary

– A –

AAPPAM. The *Silappadikaram* refers to a woman selling aappam in the streets of **Madurai**. *Aappam* is a kind of steamed pancake prepared from rice and coconut batter, which is usually eaten with hot coconut chutney. *Aappam* continues to be a popular tiffin (breakfast or high tea item of food) in Kerala and in Tamil Nadu. *See also* CUISINE.

ABDUL KALAM A. P. J., DR. (1931–). A. P. J. Abdul Kalam is the current president of the Indian Republic. His autobiography, *Wings of Fire*, is the story of the journey of a poor Muslim boy from the backwoods of the Tamil country who became a leading scientist and now holds the highest office in the land—the post of President of the Indian Republic. Described as “200% Indian” by his colleagues and acquaintances, “India’s Missile Man,” Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam has done the country proud on many fronts. Abdul Kalam was born on 15 October 1931 at Dhanushkodi in the Rameswaram district of Tamil Nadu; his father had to rent his boats out to fishermen to pay the boy’s school fees. He received secondary education at the Schwartz School, a missionary institute in Ramanathapuram, and later joined the St. Joseph’s College at **Tiruchirapalli**, where he graduated with a bachelor of science degree. Abdul Kalam went on to study aeronautical engineering at the Madras Institute of Technology (currently **Anna University**). A strong advocate of self-reliance, he distributed newspapers at a young age to help with household expenses. Thoroughly Indian, the only brief exposure that he got abroad was in 1963–1964 when he was invited by the U. S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to spend four months in the United

States at the Wallops Island Rocketry Center and the Langley Research Center.

Abdul Kalam joined the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) in 1958, and in his 40-year career as a scientist, he achieved many milestones. He joined the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), where he succeeded in putting the 35-kg Rohini-I satellite on a low-earth orbit with the help of the SLV-III (Satellite Launch Vehicle). After spending 19 fruitful years in ISRO, he returned to DRDO to head the country's Integrated Missile Development Program, which culminated in the successful launch of the *Agni* and *Prithvi* missiles.

A great humanitarian, he extended his knowledge of space technology and mechanisms to help disabled children, replacing their 3-kg metal braces supporters with much lighter braces made of carbon, which weigh just 300 grams. Even though he is a devout **Muslim**, his favorite pastimes include reading Hindu scriptures like the *Bhagvad Gita*, playing the *Veenai*, and writing poetry in **Tamil**, his mother tongue. A vegetarian and an abstainer from alcohol, Abdul Kalam recites the *Quran* and the *Bhagvad Gita* with equal ease. A bachelor, his modesty is evident from the fact that he gives all the credit for his various successes to his colleagues. He burst into the limelight after the underground nuclear explosions at Pokhran in 1998. He has received many national awards, including the Padmabhushan in 1981, the Padma Vibhushan in 1990, and the HK Firodia Award for Excellence in Science and Technology in 1996. More recently, he was honored with the Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award in India, in 1998. His term as President of India comes to an end this year.

ABHISHIKTANANDA. *See* LE SOUX, DOM HENRI.

ACADEMY OF TAMIL MUSIC. *See* TAMIL ISAI SANGAM.

ADAHAMADAM (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM). This was an important cultural center in ancient Tamilaham (now falling within Kerala State). The *Silappadikaram*, a late-Sangam text, mentions a temple dedicated to Tirumal, another name for **Vishnu**, at Adahamadam. The socio-cultural life of the place revolved around the Padmanabha Svami temple, which may be the Vishnu temple referred to in the text.

Padmanabha Svami temple is associated with a major political event of colonial India—the takeover of the Indian princely states under the theory of the “Doctrine of Lapse” according to which any Indian State without an heir would lapse to the English **East India Company**. The king of Travancore, known as **Cheraman** Perumal, dedicated the entire state to Padmanabha Svami and declared himself to be *Padmanabha Dasa*, “the slave of Lord Vishnu.” By this clever move, he avoided the annexation of the State of Travancore by the British.

ADAI. An ancient Tamil food, it consists of dough prepared from mixed pulses and rice. This paste is finely ground with salt and other condiments like asafetida. *Adai* resemble pancakes and is made by spreading the dough on a hot pan either by hand or with a ladle. *Adai*, traditionally eaten with jaggery or with spinach, is an excellent source of protein. *See also* CUISINE.

ADAYAR LIBRARY. The Adayar Library forms a part of the **Theosophical Society**. Situated south of the Adayar River in **Chennai**, the library is a major center for the promotion of the study of South Indian culture and philosophy. The library has more than 17,300 palm leaf manuscripts and some very rare books going back to the early print era. The library also runs a quarterly journal, *Brahmavidya*. *See also* DEVANAYA PAVANAR; IYER, SWAMINATHA U. V.; SARASWATI MAHAL LIBRARY.

ADICHCHANALLUR. This is a prehistoric site in Tirunelveli district that shares many features with **megalithic** sites but is distinctive in terms of its bronze artifacts. The site is roughly datable to the second-first century BCE. It has yielded black and red ware pottery and iron implements like razors and spearheads, characteristic of megalithic sites. In addition, there is clear evidence of rice cultivation. The chief archaeologist, Alexander Rea, also unearthed bronze objects like bowls, highly ornamental cylindrical jars, pots with bell mouth, anklets with bells, and a remarkable vase decorated with four rams with long horns that radiated from the center of the vase base. The bronze objects had figures like antelopes, buffaloes, dogs, cocks, and tigers carved on them. A special feature of Adichchanallur bronze was its malleability since it had an unusually high tin content of 23%.

The evidence from Adichchanallur also suggests the worship of **Murugan** or *Velan*, so closely associated with Tamil culture that he is known as the “Tamil God.” The presence of a lance (called *vel*) with a representation of the wild peafowl, which are his weapon and emblem, at this site, may indicate the antiquity of Murugan worship. *See also* KORKAI; MUZIRIS; SALIYUR; VALLIMALAI.

ADI DRAVIDA. Considered depressed **castes** and treated as untouchables in the recent past, the Adi Dravida are found in the South Indian states. While they are known as Adi Dravida in the Tamil country they are called Adi Andhra and Adi Kannadiga in Andhra and Karnataka states. Castes like the **Pallar** and the **Parayar**, which occupy the lowest positions in the social hierarchy and are regarded as ritually polluting castes, trace their origins to the ancient inhabitants of the Tamil country known as “Dravida.” The Adi Dravida basically constitutes landless **agricultural labor**.

The political movement among the depressed castes in the Tamil country during the early part of the 20th century at the time of the freedom struggle led to the evolution of an exclusive identity called “Panchamas.” They distrusted equally both the **Brahmins** and the forward castes among the **non-Brahmins**. In order to seek social justice for the lowest social castes in Tamil society, they formed associations called Adi Dravida Jana Sabha and Pariah Mahajana Sabha. Initially, the Adi Dravidas tried to work within the ideological framework of the non-Brahmin movement during the nationalist struggle but eventually split from the upper caste non-Brahmins because their interests were not being taken into consideration. This was especially true of the *Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam* (Self-Respect Movement) of **E. V. Ramaswami Naicker** and of the **Justice Party**, which was perceived as being predominantly composed of the intermediate upper caste non-Brahmins.

The Adi Dravida have continued to agitate for their rights and for corrective justice in the post-independence period. The Mandal Commission, which was asked to list the socially deprived castes, published its landmark report in 1971. It classified most of the Adi Dravida among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and sought for them affirmative action in the form of political and economic **reservations**. *See also* PMK; VANNIYAR.

ADISESHAIAH, MALCOLM, S. (1910–1994). Well-known Indian economist and educationist, Malcolm Adiseshaiah is today best remembered as the founder of the Madras Institute of Development Studies, which he established in 1971. Adiseshaiah had his education at the prestigious London School of Economics and King’s College, Cambridge. He was the first professor of economics at the Madras **Christian** College. Between 1948 and 1970, he served in UNESCO and retired as the deputy director general of its cultural wing. As an educator, he took a special interest in the literacy of the common people. *See also* EDUCATION.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANUALS. During the colonial regime in Tamil Nadu the need was felt to prepare manuals for all the nine districts of the Tamil country. This task was undertaken between 1865 and 1890. Today, these constitute a valuable source for those researching on the Tamils. Prominent among these were J. H. Nelson’s four-volume *Manual of Madurai Country* (1868); *Manual of the Administration of Tinnevely District*, and that of North Arcot District by H. A. Stuart in two volumes (1879 and 1895), *Manual of the Administration of Chingleput District* by C. B. Crole; *A Manual of the Coimbatore District* by F. A. Nicholson (1887), and *A Manual of the Administration of the Salem District* by F. Lefano in three volumes (1883). For the colonial administrators, these manuals served their agenda since the detailed analysis of **castes** and their social behavior aided the colonial authorities to categorize the subject population for administrative purposes. For example J. H. Nelson’s report led to the classification of the **Kallar** as a criminal community whose fingerprints and personal details were recorded in all the police stations.

AGRICULTURAL CASTES/COMMUNITIES. Communities like the **Vellalar**, **Vanniyar**, and Gounder are looked upon as traditional farming communities in Tamil Nadu, somewhat similar to the **Khatris** and **Bhoomihars** of the North. The Kongu Vellalar are sometimes identified with the Gounder of the Salem-Dharmapuri region and sometimes differentiated from them. The landless agricultural castes are many, the predominant being the **Pallar** and the **Paraiyar**. The Pallis who are also landless workers describe themselves as “Vanniyakula Kshathriyas.” This socially assertive community

held a national convention at **Madras** in 1888 in order to establish its high status. Some of them are now either full-fledged small-time landlords or tenant cultivators, while the bulk of them continue to be landless. In recent years, migrant communities like the Gajula Baliyas—called Gavarai in the Tamil country—have joined the agricultural workforce, giving up their traditional profession as bangle sellers. *See also* AGRICULTURAL LABOR; AGRICULTURE.

AGRICULTURAL CROPPING PATTERN. Tamil Nadu has done extremely well in irrigated **agriculture** particularly in **rice**, sugarcane, and groundnut, the major crops of the state. Foodgrains production registered a growth rate of 2.31% beginning green revolution period until 1980s, thereafter it rose further to 3.71% until 1990s, much ahead of population growth during the above period. Among the cereals, production of maize jumped in the 1990s as compared to 1980s since demand for poultry and other livestock feed products pushed the demand for maize. A sharp decline in rice area from the peak of 2.8 million hectares to less than 2 million hectares is mainly caused by Cauvery water dispute and it is the main reason for slowing down in growth of food grains production. Lesser profitability of sorghum, kambu, and ragi (millet varieties) due to poor demand for these grains, as the underlying factor, caused the significant decline in the area of these crops. However, impressive performance in yield rates of food grains has more than compensated the fall in area. As a result, production of foodgrains increased over the period. Technology, expansion in **irrigation**, and market development paved the way for perceptible growth in yields of rice, sugarcane, and groundnut. In pulses also, the productivity growth is high in Tamil Nadu. At present Tamil Nadu is competing with Punjab in rice productivity, where there is perennial source of irrigation. The State has made remarkable progress in achieving higher productivity of sugarcane and groundnut on par with the all India productivity levels. The productivity of these crops has been stabilized in the irrigated areas.

The state supports 7% of the country's population, but it has only 4% of the land area and 3% water resources of the country. Of the total gross cropped area, only 50% of the area is irrigated in Tamil Nadu. Similarly, of the total area under food grains, only 60% of the area is irrigated. Nearly 52% of area is under dry farming conditions

in Tamil Nadu apart from stable cropping intensity, which is hovering around 120% over the period.

Cotton production in the state declined at the rate of 2.38% per annum during the last two decades mainly due to decline in area by 2.57%. Productivity growth of cotton is marginal (0.20%) and average productivity of cotton in the state is lesser than the national average particularly due to large-scale cultivation under rain-fed condition. Major oilseeds such as groundnut and gingely exhibited declining tendency in terms of area and production. The area under fallow lands has increased over the years due to various reasons. The current fallows are on the increase from 1.202 million hectares in 1970s (9.2%) to 1.503 million hectares in 2002–2003 (11.6%); area sown more than once tended to decrease from 1.321 million hectares in 1970s to 601 thousand hectares in 2002–2003. The gross cropped area, which reached the maximum in 1970s with 7.456 million hectares, sharply fell to 5.191 million hectares in 2002–2003. The gross cropped area declined to 5.316 million hectares during 2003–2004, from the average normal coverage of 6.3 million hectares leaving about 980,000 hectares under fallow. There is reduction under gross cropped area to the tune of around 400,000 hectares between 1990–1991 and 2001–2002.

Tamil Nadu state continues to occupy top place in India in terms of the productivity of major crops such as rice, sorghum, bajra, oilseeds, groundnuts, and sugarcane. Paddy, groundnut, rye, maize, different varieties of millets (varagu, kambu), together with cotton and sugarcane, account for close to 85% of the gross cropped area in Tamil Nadu. Out of these, paddy alone is grown in 2.261 million hectares out of a total of 5.4 million hectares of sown area, which is roughly 50%. There have been no dramatic changes in the cropping pattern over the past couple of decades. There has been a fall in the share of cotton and varagu and a marginal increase in the case of paddy and sugarcane, but the pattern has remained stable for most other crops.

The districts differ considerably in their cropping patterns and show distinct patterns of change as well. The share of paddy ranges from below 10% in the **Nilgiris** to above 70% in **Tanjavur** and **Chingleput**. There were hardly any millets in **Kanyakumari**, whereas in **Salem-Dharmapuri** millets accounted for over 50% in 1961 and

above 40% in 2001. In 2004–2005, the total area under food grain production was 3.986 million hectares, recording an increase over 1996–1997 when it was 3.558 million hectares. This addition of 11.2% to the cropped area is to be seen in tandem with the significant increase in yield, which went up from 6.930 million tons during 1996–1997 to 8.788 million tons in 2004–2005, a net addition of 1.858 million tons to the food grain production.

AGRICULTURAL LABOR. According to the 1991 economic survey 7.8 million have been recorded under the category of landless labor in Tamil Nadu. In 2001, this figure went up marginally. It must, however, be pointed out that the quantification of this data on the basis of census reports has led to a lot of problems. The 1961 census was worked out by asking every individual Tamilian whether he/she was engaged in (a.) cultivation, (b.) agricultural labor, (c.) household industry, or (d.) any other. Many returned themselves as both cultivators and agricultural laborers if they happened to have even a tiny piece of land but were dependent for their livelihood on farm work. As a result, the census recorded an inflated number of farm workers. In 1971, the holders of very tiny farms were recorded exclusively as agricultural labor: 1,373,000 males and 289,000 females were classified as agricultural workers. Some of these problems are also inbuilt into the latest surveys. For instance, some of the labor was occupied entirely in the tertiary sector such as livestock breeding, fishing, forestry, and plantation. It can, however, be stated that the increase in agricultural labor largely occurred in areas like Kanyakumari, **Coimbatore**, and **Madurai**, where there has been some expansion of agriculture. The number of cultivators remained more or less constant around 5.6 million during 1981 and 1991, but their proportion to total workers (24.194 million) had declined from 27.5% to 23.4%. The number of agricultural labor during the same period had increased significantly from 29.9% to 32.6%.

The overall figure of Worker Participation Rate (WPR) for the rural sector in Tamil Nadu was 48.49% in 1991 (recording an increase of roughly 2% over the 1981 figure of 46.48%). In 2001, this figure went up to 50.39% with the male WPR at 41.33% and the female WPR at 50.39%. In terms of the precise percentage of agricultural labor, the figures have steadily grown from 1961 (which may be used

as the base year) to 2001, which provides the latest figures. In 1961, cultivators were 42.0% (6.46 million) while 18.4% constituted agricultural labor (2.83 million). In 2001, the percentage of cultivators was 18.4% (5.11million) and the labor constituted 31.1% (8.67 million). *See also* AGRICULTURE; ECONOMY.

AGRICULTURE. More than 70% of the Tamil Nadu population is engaged in agriculture or in agro-farming. The Tamil Nadu **economy** depends largely on the agricultural sector. According to the statistical survey conducted in 1991, the State has 5.6 million farmers and 7.8 million recorded as landless **agricultural laborers**. Some 46,000 are involved in agro-industries.

Evidence for agriculture in the Tamil country goes back to the age of the **megalithic** culture. Excavations at **Adichchanallur** (bronze site archaeologically datable to the second or first century BCE) have yielded traces of both paddy and millets while granaries have been found at Tirukampuliyur, another archaeological site. Iron sickles, hoes, and plow tips made of iron have also been found at many megalithic sites, such as Adichchanallur.

Rice is the principal crop of the land. According to a survey undertaken in 1997–1998, the area under rice was approximately 2.261 million hectares, an annual increase of roughly 4 to 5% over the previous year in which 2.174 million hectares was under paddy cultivation. Agriculture is primarily rain fed. Rainwater is conserved in ponds, pools, and other types of underground storage systems so that it would be readily available during times of water stress. Rainwater harvesting is apparently an ancient system of water conservation practiced by the Tamils. Even improvement in crop yields is linked to the distribution of rainfall. However, **irrigation** has also been a major concern of administrations over the centuries thereby converting dry zones into arable land.

The first Indian Rice Research Institute was founded in 1913 at **Coimbatore** (also known as Kovai) followed by one at Tirurkuppam. The Coimbatore Institute developed a variety known as GEB 24, which resulted in a quantum leap in rice production. In post-independence India, production went up from 1.8 million tons in 1950 to 3.5 million tons in 1960. The “Green Revolution” in Tamil Nadu that took place in the 1960s and 1970s owed a lot to the initiatives of **C. Subramaniam** and

the renowned agriculture scientist **M. S. Swaminathan**. The *Indica-Japanica* hybridization program resulted in new varieties, such as ADT-27, evolved at the Aduturai breeding station. Other well-known rice varieties are Chamba K 25, Ambai 5, TKM 6, and K 29. As a result of the technological innovations, Tamil Nadu's rice production in 1970–1971 grew to 5.3 million tons, representing one-eighth of the country's rice production.

Other crops grown in Tamil Nadu consist of maize, pearl millets, pulses, such as grams and bean varieties called *avarai* and *tuvarai*. Food crops consumed by common people such as *tinai* (Italian millet), *varagu*, *kezhvaragu*, *chamai*, *mochchai*, *kollu* (horse gram), and *panivaragu* (panicum) are also produced in large quantities and supplement the rice diet. Wheat is only now entering into the dietary regimes of the Tamils and therefore wheat is a marginal crop in the region. It is noteworthy that although the Tamil-born M. S. Swaminathan spearheaded the wheat revolution in India in 1964 by breeding the Mexican dwarf wheat using Norin genes provided by Norman E. Borlaug, it had only a peripheral impact on Tamil Nadu. In 2003–2004, the gross cropped area was 5.316 million hectares, leaving 980,000 hectares fallow.

Important commercial crops that are grown in the State are sugarcane, groundnut, cotton, sesame, sunflower, castor, chilies, coconut, and cashew. Tamil Nadu also has coffee, tea and rubber plantations and produces plenty of mangoes and bananas that are also exported. *See also* AGRICULTURAL CASTES; AGRICULTURAL CROPPING PATTERN.

AHAM NANURU. This poetic anthology, consisting of 400 poems by different authors, is one of the best known of the **Sangam** anthologies. In terms of its literary mood, it reflects “the landscape of the interior” consisting of human relationships, of love and separation and of domestic strife and re-unions. The collection was put together by **Urithiran Kannanar** (the renowned composer of the texts *Pattinapalai* and *Malaippadukadam*) and **Perundevanar** composed the invocation to the anthology. An extraordinary piece of historical information in this work is the system of electing members of the local administrative bodies through a lot system called *kudaivolai*. (This democratic functioning is best elaborated in the 10th-century inscriptions from **Uttiramerur**). *See also* LITERATURE.

AIYANAR. Aiyandar is the most important of the male deities representing the popular or folk religion of the Tamil country. He is regarded as so important that he always has two attendants—**Madurai Viran** and **Muniandi**—to both of whom worship is offered. Aiyandar, like the various forms of Ellai **Amman** is usually placed in the open, the image itself having a height of some two and a half to three meters. The imposing figure of Aiyandar is surrounded by images of horses, elephants, tigers, dogs, and some minor warriors called “Virar.” Reverend Henry Whitehead, in his landmark book *Village Gods of South India*, published in 1921, expresses his belief that the animal sacrifice is usually offered to the minor warriors while the deity himself is placated with fruits. This assumption is belied by the powerful and unconcealed presence of the Aiyandar at these bloody sacrifices. The sacrificial victim is brought before the deity along with pots of country liquor and hemp or opium. The priest duly decapitates the goat or fowl after offering worship to it. The major annual festival for Aiyandar falls in the months of April-May.

ALAGARMALAI. Located in **Madurai** district, the site belonging to the early historic period. The place has many natural caverns that were once inhabited by Jain monks. Alagarmalai is also an important pilgrimage center for **Hindus**. It is associated with the worship of Lord **Murugan** and is referred to in the Sangam text *Tirumurugatrupadai* as Pazhamudir Solai. The place is equally associated with the worship of Tirumal, another name for **Vishnu**, and has a temple dedicated to him. The site is also important for the discovery of some early Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions.

ALARMELVALLI (1957–). Alarmelvalli is a foremost exponent of the Pandanallur tradition in **Bharatanatyam**. Her Gurus were Chokkalingam Pillai and Subbraraya Pillai. At the age of 16 she was invited to perform at the International **Dance** Festival at Paris. She received special training in the performance of *javalis* and *padams* from T. Mutkta, the niece of **Veenai Dhanammal**. She has won laurels several times in the major festivals in India and in almost all of the cultural capitals of the world. She received the Padmashri from the government of India in 1991 and the Sangeet Natak Academy Award in 2001. She has founded the School called Deepshikha for Performing Arts. *See also*

ARUNDALE, RUKMINI; BALASARASWATI, T. S.; DEVARADIYAR; KRISHNAMURTHI, YAMINI; MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; MANSINGH, SONAL; SARABHAI, MALLIKA; SARABHAI, MRINALINI; SARUKKAI, MALAVIKA; SUBRAMANIAM, PADMA; VIJAYANTIMALA; VISHVESWARAN, CHITRA.

ALLI. Alli or Alli Rani (literally queen Alli) represents one of the most famous legends of the Tamil country. Alli ruled over an “Amazonian” land, where all administration was in the hands of **women**, and men were completely subservient to Alli Rani and her women advisors. The army was in the hands of women. It is likely that the legend of Alli Rani dates back to the **Sangam** age during which society may have been matrilocal with women enjoying considerable freedom in all walks of life and patriarchy had not yet made strong inroads into Tamil society. The legend of Alli eventually became integrated into the “Greater Tradition” of the Sanskrit Mahabharata myth. Alli, in the course of mythological transformations and transmutations, lost her “virgin power” and became co-opted into being one of the wives of Arjuna, the virile Mahabharat hero. The patriarchal taming of Alli has been one of the most popular themes of Tamil entertainment media, ranging from folk **theater** to the classical stage drama and subsequently the cinematic mode.

ALL INDIA ANNA DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM (AIADMK) (ANNA DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM, ADMK). The party was founded in 1972 by M. G. Ramachandran a veteran star of the **Tamil cinema**, and a popular politician, as a break-away outfit from the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** led by **M. Karunanidhi**. Born Marudur Gopala Menon Ramachandran, he became a Prince of Hearts for the Tamils as MGR. He was with the DMK from 1953 to 1970 and played a major role in projecting the party ideology in his films. MGR was a member of the Legislative Assembly in 1967 riding on the DMK popularity wave.

In 1970, he made a dramatic break with the DMK to launch his own party, the Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK). The AIADMK Party came to power when the government led by DMK, was dismissed by a Central promulgation, after MGR filed a petition, seeking enquiry into corruption charges. The party came to power in

1977, as an ally of the Congress I after trouncing DMK in the subsequent elections to the legislative assembly in the state and MGR became the chief minister. The tables were turned in 1980, when the government under MGR was dismissed by the Congress government at the center, which was now an ally of DMK. However, AIADMK bounced back to power in the elections that followed. MGR became chief minister in 1977 and remained in power altogether, although not consecutively, for three terms.

In 1984, even with MGR's failing health and subsequent hospitalization abroad, the party still managed to win the state elections. Many political historians consider MGR's persona and charisma at this point of time as "infallible," and a logical continuation of his on-screen "good lad" image, strengthened by a "mythical status" of a phoenix. MGR continued to enjoy popular support in his third tenure, which ended in his demise on 24 December 1987. Subsequently, MGR's wife, Janaki Ramachandran, rose to the party's leadership and led the government as the state's first **woman** chief minister followed by Jayalalitha for the rest of its tenure until 1989.

The party, in the absence of a personality of MGR's caliber, began to crumble with infighting and broke into two factions. **J. Jayalalitha**, a former Tamil actress, led the second faction. The State elections in 1989 saw DMK rising back to power with Karunanidhi at the helm. The government was dismissed in 1990, when it was accused of harboring separatist rebels especially the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Eelam (LTTE) operating in Sri Lanka. In the elections of 1991, the faction led by Jayalalitha was swept to power. Many political observers have ascribed the landslide victory to the "sympathy-wave" arising out of the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by suspected Tamil separatists. The ensuing government was accused of large-scale corruption, but Jayalalitha managed to hold on to power for a full term of five years.

But, public anger aimed at her as a result of the various corruption charges, ensured that she lost by a landslide in the next election in 1996. DMK, in a seesaw battle, was at the rewarded end, and held power until 2001, which once again saw Jayalalitha regaining the mantle. The AIADMK until recently held the reins in the State with Jayalalitha at the helm but lost in the 2006 elections to the DMK. Despite its bitter feud with the DMK, there is no great ideological divide

between these two leading political parties of Tamil Nadu but they continue to be engaged in playing a game of political hate and personal vendetta. *See also* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

ALVARS (AZHWARS). The Alvars were Vaishnavite saints who are defined as god-intoxicated mystics, the term *alvar* meaning “immersed in” the divine. Alvars are 12 in number. They constituted one of the major devotional streams of the **Bhagavata movement**, the other being the **Nayanmar**. It is said of the Alvar saints that each of them was an incarnation of one or the other morphological aspects of **Vishnu**. For example, Poygai Alvar, the first of the Alvars, was considered to be the *sangu*, that is, the conch of Vishnu while Bootha Alvar, the second of the Alvars, represented Vishnu’s *kowmodhakam* or spiritual mass. Pey Alvar, the third of this trinity, was the incarnation of the *Nandaka*, weapon of the Lord. It is noteworthy that according to the Vaishnavite tradition, none of the trinity had a natural birth but was miraculously “found,” usually on a lotus-like flower, in what seems to be Vaishnavite equivalent of the “immaculate conception” of **Christianity**.

The ecstatic outpourings of the Alvars have been compiled together in the text *Nalayira Divyaprabhandam*. The immense importance of these texts to the culture and **religion** of the Tamils earned for them the sobriquet “Dravida Vedam” meaning “The Vedas of the Dravidians.” The hagiography of the Alvar saints was written by Nathamuni in the 10th century. **Andal**, the daughter of Vishnu Chittar also known as Periyalvar, is the only woman in the saintly pantheon of Alvars. Alvar Vaishnavism believes in 108 *divya desam* or pilgrim sites as being sacred to Vishnu including Srirangam, **Kanchipuram** and Tirupati called Venkatadri. The most famous of the Alvars is **Nammalvar** whose devotional outpourings called *Tiruvaymoli* was compiled and codified by another Vaishnavite saint Madurakavi. *See also* TIRUMANGAI ALVAR; TIRUMAVISAI ALVAR.

AMALGAMATIONS. The industrial journey of the Amalgamations group began in 1938. Amalgamations brought some of the oldest companies in Tamil Nadu under its fold: **Simpsons** (established in 1840) in 1941; SRVS (founded in 1938) in 1942; Addison and Co. (founded in 1873) in 1943; Higginbothams, the celebrated book-

sellers and publishers (founded in 1844) in 1945, etc. More recently, Amalgamations has been buying up plantations such as Southern Tree Farms in 1993. The group also owns and controls United Nilgiri Tea Estates and Stanes Amalgamated Estates (which include rubber, tea, and coffee plantations). Addisons Paints and Chemicals was established in 1948. Today, the trope of Amalgamations productions includes tractors, farm equipment, and batteries. The Tamil business magnate S. Ananthkrishnan, who belongs to the Tamil **Brahmin** community, was a director in Simpsons and became one of the first directors of Amalgamations when it was formed in 1938. Amalgamations is today a mega concern with an acquisition of 23 companies and Ananthkrishnan's son A. Sivasailam holds a controlling interest in it. *See also* INDUSTRY.

AMANAN KUTTAI (VALLIMALAI). Site of the early historic period in Tamil country from North Arcot district, near the township of Vellore. The site shares the same cultural characteristics as **Vallimalai**, Armamalai near Udayendiram and Villapakkam. These were all destination points for the Digambara Jain monks coming into South India from Bihar during the late-Mauryan period. Smooth and polished rock beds were carved by their royal Satavahana patrons who also cut drip lines on the brow of these caverns to prevent water from dripping into these shelters. These waters were effectively diverted from the caverns. The site contains an important inscription of the invading Rashtrakuta king Krishna III (Kanharadeva) specifying some donations to "the temple on the hill" (presumably the Vallimalai **Murugan** temple).

AMMAN. Amman shrines by and large consist of folk representations of Parvati, the consort of **Shiva**. These are very powerful titular deities who are also usually placed at the borders of villages since it was believed that they had the power to ward off diseases and the evil eye. These are known by the generic name "Ellaiamman" literally "the mother [guarding] the border." The best example of this is Mariamma. Another important folk deity is Yellamma. The cult of sacred prostitution is associated with Yellamma. Yellamma is linked with Renuka Devi, the wife of sage Jamadagni whose head was cut off by her own son, Parushurama, at the behest of his father. It is believed

that Renuka was restored to life by having the head of a low-caste woman—Matangi—fitted onto her body. She is therefore also worshipped by lower caste Tamils like the **Pallar** and the Paraiyar as Matangi.

Another popular Amman deity is Angala Amman, called Angala Paramesvari in her Sanskritized form. Pidariamman is another manifestation of Amman, which is widely worshipped. While no animal sacrifices were offered to Mariamman or Angalamman, Pidari was worshipped with animal sacrifices. The offering is usually a male buffalo and the actual sacrifice is performed by a man of the Padayachi caste. **Kannagi**, the wronged wife of Kovalan in the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram*, is also one of the female folk deities worshipped by the Tamils.

AMRITRAJ, VIJAY (1953–). Born in **Chennai**, Vijay Amritraj was, for two decades, one of the most illustrious tennis players in India and topped the Asian charts for 14 consecutive years. Known today for his exceptional tennis commentary, Amritraj is one of the greatest tennis legends in the country. A sportsperson of great repute, his achievements form a benchmark for any player today. He played at Wimbledon for 17 straight years and made it to the quarterfinals in 1973 and 1981. He was again a quarter finalist in the 1973 and 1974 U. S. Open Tournaments. He has also led India to the 1974 and 1987 Davis Cup Finals. In his tennis-playing days, he beat stalwarts like Bjorn Borg, Jimmy Connors, Ivan Lendl, John McEnroe, and John Newcombe.

To nurture and develop young talent in tennis, he founded the Britannia Amritraj Tennis Academy in Chennai. He has been five-time president of the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) Tour Players Council. He is the only Indian to have received the Baron Pierre de Coubertin Award. He is also the recipient of the Padmashri Award from the Government of India and the Key to the City of Los Angeles. Vijay is a leading tennis commentator for Fox Sports in the United States and Star Sports in Asia. His multimedia company, First Serve Entertainment, deals with Asian-American content and has helped Disney, Turner, and ESPN enter the Indian market. While most know him for his on-court action, not many know that Vijay has dabbled in some on-screen action as well as in the James Bond film *Octopussy*. See also RAMESH KRISHNAN.

ANAIMALAI. It forms the most striking mountain ranges in South India running along the western boundary of Tamil Nadu. The higher range consists of a series of plateaus 2,100 m in elevation running up to peaks of over 2,400 m. They are covered with tropical and subtropical evergreen forests and are valued especially for teak apart from other kinds of timber. The lower ranges have an average elevation of 900 to 1,200 m and vast lands consisting of coffee plantations. A major site of **megalithic** culture where burial urns were surrounded by iron implements, spearheads, axe with ring, etc. were found. *See also* ADICHCHANALLUR.

ANANKU. The term *ananku* is seen only in the context of the cultural fabric of the Tamils. There are multiple interpretations of this term ranging from a dangerous spirit to a female force, which could be both benevolent and malevolent. The *Silappadikaram* does associate *ananku* with female power and personifies it into Ananku, the name of the youngest of seven virgin sisters “who made **Shiva dance.**” George Hart, the well-known Indologist, makes the concept of *ananku* central to the male Tamil psyche, which he says was driven by an awe of female spirituality combined with the fear of both female sexuality and female pollution. This female sexual power came to be defined as *ananku*. The woman’s *ananku*, if contained within the paradigm of a chaste wife, would be auspicious and benevolent. But outside the marital status of the **woman**, the *ananku* was a deadly and destructive power.

ANDAL (ca. seventh century CE). Andal, the bridal mystic, is the only **woman** among the 12 **Alvar** who spread the message of Vaishnavism within the **Bhagavata Movement** of the early medieval period. The life of Andal is to be found in very early Vaishnavite hagiographical works ranging from the writings of Nathamuni in the 10th century called *Nalayira Divyaprabhandam* to the *Goda Sthuthi* of **Vedanta Desika** and the *Guruparampara Prabhavam Arayirappattu* written around the 14th century by Pinpalakiya Perumal Jiyar. Another important source for the life and mystical marriage of Andal to the god Ranganathar is the *Divyasuri Charitam* of Garuda Vahana Panditar, a disciple of **Ramanujacharya** who lived in the 12th century.

Vishnuchittar, who came to be known as **Perialvar**, a **Brahmin** priest of Srivilliputtur, was the foster father of Kodai, who became famous as Andal (literally one who ruled) because of her winning the heart of the Lord Himself. The idea of “immaculate conception” is also associated with Kodai as it is with the first three Vaishnavite Alvars. It is believed that she was found near the holy basil plant by Vishnuchittar. It is said that as a young girl, Kodai fell in love with the image of Krishna in Srivilliputtur. She used to secretly wear all of the flower garlands meant for the god to fulfill her intense desire of union with him. Andal is also known in Vaishnava hagiography as “Choodikodutha Nachchiyar” literally “the maiden who gave [to the Lord] after first wearing” [the garland]. Perialvar one day suddenly came upon his daughter wearing the garland intended for the deity and admiring herself in it. When he chastised her severely for the sacrilege that she had committed, the divine voice of Ranganatha assured him that Kodai’s action was most dear to him. She henceforth came to be known as Andal, one who had won the love of God. Even today at Srivilliputtur, only the faded garland put on the image of Andal the previous day, is put for Lord **Vishnu**.

One of her most beautiful compositions is *Nachchiyar Tirumoli*, which describes her mystic marriage with Sri Ranganathar. Another famous composition of Andal is the *Tiruppavai*, which is sung in Vaishnavite temples throughout south India in the Tamil month of *Margazhi* (14 December to 13 January). According to **religious** lore, she eventually merged into the deity at Srirangam. *See also*; NAMMALVAR; RELIGION.

ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS. *See* TAMILS IN ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS.

ANDIPATTI. Located in Chengam taluka of North Arcot district, this is an important site of **megalithic** culture. Excavations yielded a horde of 125 lead coins. These are an imitation of the coins of the Satavahana dynasty of Andhra Pradesh. The coins carry inscriptions ascribing them to a chieftain named Tinnan who is described as the enemy of the chieftain Chendan. The former name occurs repeatedly in **Sangam literature**. Chengam taluka in general and Andipatti in particular is known for its *virakkal* or hero stones of which more than 50

have been found. In recent times, Andipatti shot into news because the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** supremo **J. Jayalalitha** regained the post of chief minister of Tamil Nadu by winning elections from this constituency. *See also* ADICHCHANALLUR; KORKAI; VALLIMALAI.

ANNADURAI, C. N. (1909–1967). Annadurai fondly called “Arijnar Anna” or simply “Anna” by the Tamils was the leading light of the Tamil **Dravida Kazhagam** movement. Born in **Kanchipuram** in 1909, Annadurai graduated from Pachchaiyappa College in **Chennai** and served as a school teacher for a brief period. Attracted by the speeches and writings of **E. V. Ramaswami Naicker** he joined the **Justice Party** in 1932. His primary fight was against Hindi and the domination of **Brahmins** in Tamil culture. In 1939, at a Tamil conference in Vellore (North Arcot District), he raised the slogan “Tamil country is only for Tamils,” thereby marginalizing the Tamil Brahmins within Tamil Nadu. As general secretary of the Justice Party, he spearheaded the anti-Hindi agitation. He parted ways with the Justice Party when Ramaswami Naicker disillusioned his followers by marrying a party worker, Mani Ammaiyar, 40 years younger than him.

The foundation of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** in 1949 by “Anna” was a momentous step in Tamil politics. The DMK workers and Anna courted arrest in 1965 in the anti-Hindi agitation. Anna combined his political ideology with his literary talents by scripting politically meaningful films. Fame in **cinematic** circles catapulted him into Chief Ministership in 1967. His radical social reforms were suspended midway because of his unfortunate death due to cancer in 1969. Anna is today symbolic of the Dravidian movement in Tamil Nadu. *See also* M. KARUNANIDHI; MARAN MURASOLI.

APPAM. A sweet cake made of rice flour mixed with jaggery and fried in clarified butter. *Appam* is referred to in ancient Tamil inscriptions as a part of the *prasada* or offering made to the deity in the temple. *See also* CUISINE.

APPAR (TIRUNAVUKKARASU) (fl. seventh century CE). Appar is the first of the trinity who constitutes the main votaries of Saivism in

the **Nayanar** movement. He is said to have lived between 590 and 671 CE. Appar was known as Marulneeki. According to folk tradition iconic representations of Appar show him holding a hoe, indicating he may have belonged to the cultivating caste. Appar had converted to Jainism under the monastic name of Dharmasena but was brought back into the folds of **Hinduism** through the miraculous powers of his sister Tilakavatiyar. The moving and ennobling quality of his verses and his intense devotion earned him the name “Tirunavukkarasar” literally “King of the spoken word.” His radical spirituality cut across **caste** and class distinctions. In a popular verse contained in the *Tevaram*, an anthology of Saivite spiritual poetry, he writes that he would revere a devotee of **Shiva** as god himself—even if he happened to be a “**Pulaya** who reveled in skinning the cow and eating its flesh.” This verse challenged the **Brahmins** who revere the cow and treat Pulayas (who eat beef) as untouchables. *See also* BHAGAVATA MOVEMENT; NANDANAR; RELIGION.

ARAGARU (URAIYUR). Greco-Roman name for Uraiyr in **Tiruchirappalli** district. The *Periplus of the Erithryean Sea* mentions it as a major entrepot of trade during the early centuries of the **Christian** era. Aragaru was the port at which all the pearls from the pearl fisheries of **Korkai** in Tutukudi were gathered. Uraiyr was also celebrated for its fine cotton textiles. It was the capital of the **Chola** kings. *See also* KORKAI; MUZIRIS.

ARIKAMEDU. A prehistoric site known for its **megaliths**, Arikamedu is located in **Pondicherry**. It figures in the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea as Poduca. Arikamedu can be described as a landmark in Indo-Roman relations. It seems to have been an extensive trading center where, apart from objects like dye vats and Roman pottery, hordes of Roman coins (especially of Augustus and Tiberius) have also been unearthed. The Arikamedu excavations have also yielded inscribed potsherds. *See also* ADICHCHANALLUR; ANDIPATTI.

ARIYAKKUDI RAMANUJA IYENGAR. *See* IYENGAR, RAMANUJA ARIYAKKUDI.

ARNARTTAMALAI. Located in Pugalur, this archaeological site is important because of its inscriptions. Significantly the inscription

records a dedication to Jaina ascetics by a **Chera** prince Ilamkadungo. It also mentions three generations of Chera kings who are also referred to in **Sangam literature**. This evidence made it possible for the first time to engage in dating of Sangam literature.

ARUMUGA NAVALAR (1820–1872). **Maraimalai Adigal**, the founder of the **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam**, said at a Saiva Siddhanta Conference in Kadaloor (The South Arcot district of Tamil Nadu), “if we don’t emulate the **Christian** missionary zeal in protecting our **religion** and culture, it will be corrupted by outlandish and exotic influences.” Arumuga Navalar followed this precept to perfection. Navalar who studied in a Jaffna Methodist School was instrumental in translating the Bible into Tamil in collaboration with Rev. Percival. However, in subsequent years he channeled all his energies into the propagation of **Tamil** language and religion. He wrote a number of texts expounding the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. In 1853, he started the Saiva Meygnana Prakasa Sabai (Society for the Enlightenment in Saiva Siddhanta) at Chidambaram, where people were taught to sing/recite the *Tevaram* and the *Tiruvachagam*. He is also credited with the setting up of a number of schools both in **Sri Lanka** and in Tamil Nadu to propagate Tamil language and religion. He played an active role in reviving the practice of the Oduvar community reciting from the Tamil religious texts like the *Tevaram* in **temples**.

ARUNACHALA KAVIRAYAR (1711–1778). He is regarded as a great saint composer of the **Tamils**. One of his best-known compositions is *Rama Natakam*, which inspired **Thyagaraja**’s musical compositions. Arunachala Kavirayar was born in Tillaiyadi into a Saiva **Vellala** family. Orphaned at an early age, he began residing in a monastery and it was here that he learned Sanskrit, Tamil, and Telugu. He made his living as a moneychanger, a profession that was lucrative but socially scorned. Eventually he gave up his profession and settled down in Sirkazhi when he composed his exquisite Tamil devotional songs. The best known among his works are *Sirkazhi Sthalapuranam*, *Ayomukhi Natakam*, *Hanuman Pillaitamizh*, and *Sirkazhi Kovai*. He wrote his magnum opus *Rama Natakam* at the insistence of his **Brahmin** disciples Venkataramayyar and Kodandaramayyar. He received great honors from the then **Tanjavur** ruler Tulaja Nayaka. Arunachala Kavirayar passed away in his 67th year. Today,

his compositions form a part of **dance music** as well as the Tamil devotional music tradition known as “Hari Bhajanai.”

ARUNAGIRINATHAR (ca. 15th century). It is believed that this saint composer flourished sometime in the 15th century. He was born in the sacred temple town of **Tiruvannamalai**. Folk legends narrate how he led an extremely immoral life until he was spiritually transformed by the grace of Lord **Murugan**. He is renowned for his matchless musical compositions in Tamil known as *Tiruppugazh*, literally “sacred words of praise,” composed in honor of the deity the “Tamil God” Murugan. He composed thousands of songs, which were a blend of Tamil and Sanskrit words in intricate *taalas* or rhythmic patterns. It is customary in **Carnatic music** to conclude concert recitals with a piece from Arunagirinathar’s *Tiruppugazh*. Besides *Tiruppugazh* he also composed *Kandar Anubhuti*, *Kandar Alangar*, *Kandar Andadi* and *Vel, Mayil*, and *Cheval viruththams* all the compositions being in praise of Murugan who is also called “Kandan” by the Tamils. *See also* MUSIC.

ARUNDALE, RUKMINI (1904–1986). Rukmini was the daughter of a highly unconventional **Brahmin** engineer who was opposed to child marriage and openly “inter-dined” with low **castes**; both attitudes were regarded as heterodox in those times. He became a member of the **Theosophical Society** in Adayar, where Rukmini grew up. In her 16th year, she married G. S. Arundale, a leading Theosophist. Their marriage was solemnized with the blessings of **Annie Besant**. In 1924, at the age of 20, she met Anna Pavlova, the reputed Russian ballerina. Under her influence she decided to take up the dancing profession, a daring decision in the early 1920s when **dancing** was associated only with courtesans or dancing girls. She became a disciple of Pandanallur Minakshisundaram Pillai, a veteran dance master. In 1933, Rukmini gave her first dance recital at Adayar on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the Theosophical Society. To her goes the credit of making the ancient dance form of **Bharatanatyam** “respectable.” In 1936, she founded the Kalakshetra, as an “International Academy of Arts.”

Rukmini Arundale invited Mme. Montessori to visit India and in 1939 the Montessori Children’s School was started in Madras (present-

day **Chennai**). In 1945, with the passing away of Dr. Arundale, she became president of the Theosophical **Educational** Trust. Her patronage of Tamil **literature** resulted in the entire collection of **U. V. Svaminatha Iyer** being given to the **Adayar library**.

Rukmini was a polyglot and apart from her achievements in the area of culture and the performing arts, she founded the Indian Vegetarian Congress. She was nominated to the Upper House (Rajya Sabha) of Parliament in 1952 and in 1956. In 1954, she introduced in parliament a bill for the prevention of cruelty to animals. For her contribution in this field, she received the Queen Victoria Silver Medal of the Royal Society. In 1977, she was invited to become the president of India, an honor she declined. The vibrant atmosphere of “Kalakshethra” today testifies to her indomitable spirit. *See also* BALASARASWATI, T. S.; DEVARADIYAR; KRISHNAMURTHI, YAMINI; MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; MANSINGH, SONAL; SAMSON, LEELA; SARABHAI, MALLIKA; SARABHAI, MRINALINI; SARUKKAI, MALAVIKA; SUBRAMANIAM, PADMA; VIJAYANTIMALA; VISHVESWARAN, CHITRA.

ASHOK LEYLAND. Ashok Leyland is a member of the Hinduja group of companies that command a strong presence in the **industrial** development of Tamil Nadu. Ashok Leyland is particularly visible in the road transport sector and the company manufactures trucks, buses, special vehicles and engines. Ashok Leyland was one of the first companies in India to introduce the environment friendly Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) powered buses.

ATIRAMPAKKAM. A prehistoric site located in Chingleput district. The only paleolithic site to yield human remains. The finding of the human tibia suggests that these were probably the earliest representatives of the Negrito in India.

AUSTRALIA. *See* TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA.

AUVAIYAR. The name Auvaiyar is a nomenclature given to an elderly person or wise old **woman**. This could be the nom de plume of at least four women poets who flourished in different historical periods and were of very different poetic temperaments. The **Sangam** poet

Auvaiyar belonged to the Virali caste of traditional bards. She enjoyed the patronage of **Neduman Anji Adigaman**, a petty chieftain of Tagadur. Her poems form a part of the Puram anthology and are lively in tone with strong political content. The best known Auvaiyar in terms of her prolific literary output flourished in the 12th century. Her *Athichoodi* is an amalgam of pithy sayings. Other works attributed to her are *Konraivendan*, *Achchadikkovai*, and *Nalvazhi*.

Auvaiyar is the subject of innumerable legends. She is said to have been the sister of another celebrated poet **Tiruvalluvar**, author of the didactic Jain text *Tirukkural*. She is said to have had a motherly relationship with the deity (known as the “Tamil God”) **Murugan** while Murugan’s elder brother **Pillaiyar** was her patron deity. One of the names given to Auvaiyar is “Koozhukkuppadi,” literally “One who sang for gruel.” The story goes that Chilambi, a dancing girl, requested the 12th-century **Chola** court poet **Kambar** to compose a song on her offering him 500 gold coins. Kambar thought the payment inadequate and merely wrote two lines on her. Auvaiyar, however, completed the whole poem accepting in return only a cup of gruel.

A fascinating aspect of the Auvaiyar cult as it prevails today in parts of Tamil Nadu is her worship by women in an esoteric fashion. In a temple dedicated to Auvaiyar, no males are allowed and the offering is prepared and shared by women in a naked state. The ritual perhaps has something to do with the oral tradition related to Auvaiyar that says that at a very young age she spurned marriage and achieved instant old age through prayer in order to live the life of a renunciate. *See also* SANGAM LITERATURE.

AVIYAL. This item is also referred to in ancient Tamil texts as *avithuvaiyal*. The dish is a kind of curry prepared by mixing many different vegetables. The gravy is usually made from coconut ground along with chilies and sometimes cumin seeds. This curry was usually eaten in combination with *kanji* or rice gruel by the ancient Tamils but is today found on the menu cards of most South Indian restaurants. *See also* CUISINE.

AVM FILM STUDIOS. One of the renowned Tamil studios established in 1947 by A. V. Meyappa **Chettiar**. After he produced his first film *Alli Arjuna* in 1935, he went on to build his own studios and pro-

duce memorable films. It is noteworthy that this studio produced films in all the southern languages—Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam—as well as in Hindi. Its first major Hindi film was the historical **cinema** *Babur* made in 1951, starring **Vijayantimala**. AVM studio continues to generate huge profits with its entry into the making of soap operas for **television**.

AY-EYINAN. A Sangam chieftain of the Podigai hill in the extreme south of the Tamil country, he is also called Mavel Ay. He belonged to the tribe of **Vellalar** who form the dominant **agricultural caste**. The chief town in his province was the famous Ayakkudi.

AYOTIDAS PANDITHAR (1845–1914). Ayotidas was born in **Coimbatore** district into an untouchable caste. He rose to become a foremost literary figure and an icon of the **non-Brahmin movement**. Ayotidas formed the Dravida Mahajana Sangam in 1881. In his early years, he was influenced by the ideas of the **Theosophical Society** and particularly by the thought of Colonel Alcott and **Annie Besant**. He established the Chakya Buddhist Society at Madras (present-day **Chennai**) under the influence of Buddhist philosophy. In his pamphlet *The History of Tiruvalluvar*, he stated that all the Tamils were originally Paraiyah and Buddhists. It was the impact of Brahminism that created social hierarchies in Tamil society and relegated the paraiyah to the bottom of the social ladder. Apart from his many contributions to Tamil politics and **literature**, His political and social ideology are best reflected in the weekly journal *Tamizhan*, which he ran for many years. Ayotidas Pandithar was also a patron of **music** and was especially associated with the revival of folk music.

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BALASARAWATI, T. S. (1918–1984). The legendary T. S. Balasarawati belonged to the classical **Bharatanatyam** and **Carnatic music** tradition of the **Devaradiyar**. Balasarawati was born on 13 May 1918. Her formal training started at the age of four under the late Kandappan. She inculcated in the Tamils the aesthetic awareness of Bharatanatyam not by deliberate efforts at reform in

changing attitudes toward *devadasis* but by the beauty and the eloquence of her **dancing**. For generations, her family had been a repository of the Carnatic tradition in its pristine glory. The family tree can be traced back to over 200 years. Balasaraswati's ancestor, Papammal, was a musician and a dancer at the **Tanjavur** Court in the 18th century. Papammal's daughter, Rukmini, was also a court musician at Tanjore. By the time we come to Rukmini's daughter, Kamakshi (ca. 1810–1890), the picture is clearer and more details are available. She had been taught by the great Ganapati Sastri and danced at the Tanjore court until the age of 75. Of Kamakshiammal's children, two were famous. One was her son Apparkkannu who took to the violin, at that time a newcomer to the Indian musical scene, and attained considerable mastery over it; the other was her daughter Sundarammal (1820–1888). Both were pupils of Subbaraya Sastri, himself a composer of great qualities who has perhaps not had the recognition due to him. It is on record that Subbaraya Sastri taught the well-known *kriti* (song) *Nannu brochutakau* in Todi to Ponnuswamy and Sundarammal. While learning the *kriti*, they sang the phrase Mayamma Kamakshi with such inspiration and feeling that Sastri said that the goddess Kamakshi certainly belonged to them. The family and their descendants today are thus a repository of the compositions of **Shyama Sastri** and Subbaraya Sastri and the most authentic interpreters of their works. It is also to the credit of Ponnuswamy that he persuaded his niece and Sundarammal's daughter Balasaraswati to take to dancing. It is said of Balasaraswati that she became a legend in her lifetime. Even when she was well past 60 years and did *abhinaya* (facial expressions and body movement), which was vital for Bharatanatyam, virtually in a sitting posture, the audience would flock to see her performances. *See also* ARUNDALE, RUKMINI; KRISHNAMURTHI, YAMINI; MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; MANSINGH, SONAL; SAMSON, LEELA; SARABHAI, MALLIKA; SARABHAI, MRINALINI; SARUKKAI, MALAVIKA; SUBRAMANIAM, PADMA; VIJAYANTIMALA; VISHVESWARAN, CHITRA.

BALASUBRAMANIAM, G. N. (1910–1965). Like many of the grand masters of **Carnatic music**, G. N. Balasubramanian, known popularly as GNB, also hailed from **Tanjavur**, the cradle of Carnatic **mu-**

sic. He got his BL degree from **Annamalai University** but refused to go in for a professional career in law, which was his father's ambition for him. Instead, GNB chose to learn music from Pattinam Subramanya **Iyer**. In 1928, he gave his first concert at the Kapaleesvara temple in Madras (present-day **Chennai**). Like his contemporary **M. S. Subbalakshmi**, GNB also made his debut in **Tamil cinema** because of his golden voice since that was the era of singing stars. His first film was *Bhama Vijayam* in 1932. His best-known film was *Shakuntala* in 1945, in which he was romantically paired with the singing sensation MS. In 1939, he became court musician of the Travancore State. He also served as the principal of the prestigious Swati Tirunal Music Academy in Thiruvananthapuram (also known as Trivandrum). Besides giving performances GNB also emerged as a composer in his own right. He also wrote numerous literary pieces, many of them on the theme of music.

BANKING. Tamil Nadu is one among the six Indian States where the banking network is quite extensive. India's Central Bank Reserve Bank of India makes available data on banking in the country on its website (www.rbi.org.in). As of 31 March 2005, the State of Uttar Pradesh had the largest number of bank offices at 8,510, followed by Maharashtra at 6,754 branches, Andhra Pradesh with 5,558 banks, and Tamil Nadu with 5,049 banks, the last being Karnataka with 5,148 banking offices. As of 31 March 2005, Tamil Nadu accounted for 7.1% of the total number of bank offices in the country, 6.3% of bank deposits and 9.4% of bank advances. In Tamil Nadu, the districts of Salem, Periyar, Chingleput, **Coimbatore**, and to some extent **Tiruchirapalli** record the highest averages in terms of offices, deposits, and advances. Some of the major commercial banks are State Bank of India, Indian Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Bank of Baroda, Bank of India, Corporation Bank, Syndicate Bank, Canara Bank, Punjab National Bank, and Tamilnadu Mercantile Bank. *See also* CHETTIAR.

BARGUR. Neolithic site in North Arcot district adjacent to Jolarpettai. It is a habitational site dated by the Carbon 14 method as belonging approximately to the very beginning of second millennium BCE, about 4,000 years ago. The site indicates a transition from food

hunter to food producer and the domestication of animals like buffalo, pig, deer, etc. Excavated pottery had burnished exterior slips. In its location and findings, the site is very similar to **Paiyampalli**.

BESANT, ANNIE (1847–1933). Irish by birth, Annie Besant brought with her into the Indian National Movement the concept of “Home Rule” on which the Irish freedom struggle was based. An atheist in her early days, Besant became a convert to occultism and theosophy under the influence of Madam Blavatsky after reading the book *Secret Doctrine*. In 1893, she came under the influence of C. W. Leadbeater, an American missionary, and thus began her training in the psychic realm. After the death of Henry Steele Olcott in 1907, she became president of the **Theosophical Society** of Adayar in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) and held the position until her death in 1933. The great Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurthy was personally trained by Besant during these years. She authored a number of books on **religion**, theosophy, philosophy as well as occultism and mysticism. Today, Annie Besant is remembered as a leading theosophist, a social reformer, especially in the sphere of **women’s** social role, and as a great freedom fighter. *See also* ARUNDALE, RUKMINI.

BESCHI, C. J. alias **VIRAMAMUNIVAR (1680–1747)**. Constantinus Joseph Beschi was a **Christian** missionary best known for his translation of the *Tirukkural* into Latin. Born in Italy in 1680, he came to India in 1706 as a missionary of the Society of Jesus. Having acquired a high degree of proficiency in both literary and spoken **Tamil** he wrote a Latin text titled *A Grammar of the High Dialect of Tamil Language Termed Chen Tamil*. Benjamin Guy Babington did the English translation in 1822 for the benefit of the British civil servants stationed in Madras (present-day **Chennai**). In order to bridge the enormous gap that lay between *kodun* Tamil (colloquial or spoken Tamil) and *chen* Tamil (classical or literary Tamil), he reformed the Tamil alphabet and wrote the *Tonnul Vilakkam* published by the Madras Education Society in 1840. It was perhaps because of his enormous contributions to Tamil that Beschi came to be called Viramamunivar by the local people. Viramamunivar, unlike other missionaries, such as **G. U. Pope** and **Bishop Robert Caldwell**, never

gave up trying to proselytize Tamil heathens. It is therefore ironic that he alone of the missionaries should bear a completely “Tamil” name. His masterly text, *Tembavani*, retold Christian tales in simple Tamil. Beschi was responsible for introducing lexicons in Tamil along scientific lines such as his *Chathur Agarathi*, consisting of four divisions (somewhat along the line of *Tolkappiyam*) dealing with *Peyar* (meaning of the word), *Porul* (synonyms), *tokai* (technical terms), and *todai* (alliterations).

BHAGAVATA MOVEMENT. The Bhagavata movement, also known as the Bhakti movement or devotional movement, originated in the Tamil country around the seventh century CE and remained entrenched in the region until around the 12th century CE. The devotional movement is said to have spread subsequently to other parts of the country. Its major manifestation was in the Virasaivite or Lingayat movement of Karnataka. In Maharashtra, the Bhakti movement took the form of the Warkari Panth of Pandarpur, and in Bengal it manifested itself in Gauda Vaishnavism. The various devotional streams of the Bhagavata movement, both within Tamil Nadu, had many different strands to it. These were completely disparate, such as the orthodox devotional stream of Vadagalai Vaishnavism, the comparative liberality of Tungalai Vaishnavism, the orthodox Saivism of **Shankaracharya**, as opposed to the radical non-Brahmanical Virasaivism of the Lingayat, and tantric Saivism or Shaktism, as well as variations of folk **religions**. Thus, it may be more logical to perceive the Bhagavata movement not as a monolith but as different devotional movements linked by the centrality of the notion of “Bhakti”—faith in the divine. *See also* ALVARS; NAYANARS; RAMANUJACHARYA.

BHAKTAVATSALAM, M. (1897–1987). M. Bhaktavatsalam headed the successful Congress regime in Tamil Nadu in 1962 until 1966 when the Party lost to the DMK in the 1967 elections. He became Chief Minister briefly once again in 1968. Congress rule constituted an interlude in Tamil politics, which over a long span of time, has been the preserve of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** and the **Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK)** Parties. Bhaktavatsalam, like his senior contemporary **Rajagopalachari**, was a

lawyer by profession. He entered the political arena in 1920 when protests were staged in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) against the Jalianwala Bagh massacre. He participated in the fast organized in the Mylapur Kapaleesvara temple. Like many of his contemporaries, he was deeply influenced by the anti-Hindi/Sanskrit and anti-Brahmanical movement of **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**. Bhaktavatsalam, however, functioned within the Congress Party throughout his political career. He became deputy mayor of Madras in 1936, winning a seat to the Legislative Assembly in 1937. He served in various ministries between 1946 and 1962 and finally became chief minister in 1962. In 1967, Congress suffered a rout in the elections at the hands of the DMK when both Bhaktavatsalam and **K. Kamaraj** lost in their constituencies. However Bhaktavatsalam was back in this post once again in 1968. It is noteworthy that apart from his contributions to the cause of **education** of the Tamils and to the cause of promotion of trade and commerce, Bhaktavatsalam himself authored many books including a biography of Jawaharlal Nehru. *See also* TAMIL MANILA CONGRESS; NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

BHARATANATYAM. Bharatanatyam is a classical form of **dance** of the Tamils said to originate from the Bharata's *Natya Shastra*. This dance style may have evolved from the Tamil *koothu* or *aattam*, which is referred to in the **Sangam** classics like *Tolkappiyam*, *Kurunthogai*, *Kalittogai*, and the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram*. The *koothu* was performed for **Murugan** while the *veriyattam* was performed by **women** in a state of possession. The Bharatanatyam, in its classical form, was perceived as the preserve of the **Devaradiyar** in medieval times. However, by colonial times, this was almost the exclusive preserve of the girls of the dancing community called *Devadasis* who were socially stigmatized as prostitutes. In fact, Bharatanatyam used to be alternatively known as "Dasiyattam," since they performed it.

The modern contours of Bharatanatyam developed in the 19th century due to the efforts of the **Tanjavur Quartet**—Ponnayya Pillai, Chinnayya Pillai, Sivanandam Pillai, and Vadivelu Pillai. This dance form is essentially based on *adavu*, meaning steps, and *hastamudra*, meaning hand gestures. There are 64 *adavu* divided into nine parts. The renaissance of Bharatanatyam took place under the intense ef-

forts of **Rukmini Arundale** (herself a well-known Bharatanatyam dancer) who established the Kalakshethra for the propagation of this dance form. This style contrasts sharply with that of the Tanjavur style of the Pandanallur brothers.

The performances lasting roughly two to two and a half hours begin with a rhythmic demonstration called *alarippu* followed by *jatisvaram* and then the **musical** and highly devotional *padams*. The Bharatanatyam format included not only the orthodox *varnams* and *padams* but also *javalis*, which are usually romantic numbers, and even the *kuratti* or gypsy dance, which, strictly speaking, belongs to the realm of folk dance but has found acceptance within the classical art form. **Bal-asaraswati**, the niece of **Veenai Dhanammal**, is regarded as one of the greatest exponents of Bharatanatyam. Some other well-known exponents are **Mallika Sarabai**, **Mrinalini Sarabai**, **Yamini Krishnamurthy**, Kamala Laxman, Indrani Rahman, and **Leela Samson**. Scholar artists, like **Padma Subramanyam** and **Alarmelvalli**, are known for their extensive researches on this ancient classical dance forms of the Tamils. *See also* MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; MANSINGH, SONAL; SARUKKAI, MALAVIKA; VIJAYANTIMALA; VISHVESWARAN, CHITRA.

BHARATIDASAN (1891–1964). Born Kanaka Subbaratnam, this celebrated poet, playwright, and screen scriptwriter changed his name to Bharatidasan to express his admiration for the great nationalist Tamil poet **Subramania Bharatiyar**. Starting his political life as a Gandhian, Bharatidasan joined the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** under the influence of **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker** “Periyar.” His first poetic anthology was published in 1938. He also wrote the screenplay for a number of films including *Subhadra* (1945) and *Sulochana* (1946), among others. He attained fame with his dialogues, lyrics, and story for Ellis R. Duncan’s film *Ponmudi* in 1950. As a successful director, Bharatidasan continued to make memorable films that have anti-Brahmin, iconoclastic overtones. *See also* BHARATIDASAN UNIVERSITY; NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT; TAMIL CINEMA.

BHARATIYAR, SUBRAMANIA (1882–1921). He has been hailed as the greatest modern poet of the Tamils. The son of a petty official serving the Raja of Tirunelveli, Subramaniam was intended by his father to

acquire the coveted engineering degree and learn English to perfection. The son chose instead to regale the patriotic audience of Ettaiyapuram with his soul-stirring compositions in **Tamil**. The people spontaneously conferred upon him the title “Bharati,” the name of the goddess of learning. He began to be addressed as “Bharatiyar” since the suffix “*yar*” in Tamil connotes respect.

Early in life he came under the influence of **Annie Besant** and his fiery spirit became imbued with the spirit of the **freedom struggle**. With the launching of the Swadeshi movement by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Subramania Bharati came into his own in Tamil politics. His anthology of poems *Desiya Geetangal* literally “National Songs” became a major inspirational force for patriotic Tamils. In national politics Subramania Bharatiyar identified himself with the **extremist** freedom fighters like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and revolutionaries like Arobindo Ghosh.

In 1906, after attending the Surat session of the Indian National Congress, he launched his own Tamil journal *India*. The British government issued a warrant for his arrest and so he fled to the French territory of **Pondicherry** from where the journal continued to be published in open defiance of the government ban. He was eventually arrested and kept at Cuddalore jail. This visionary poet died in 1921 at the age of 39 after being fatally attacked by a temple elephant. Bharatiyar’s poetry has continued to inspire generations of Tamils including the modern poet **Bharatidasan** literally “the Devotee/Servant of Bharati.” He was a champion not only of the country’s independence, but also of **women’s** rights. Among his works, the poem *Kuyil Pattu* (The Song of the Cuckoo, 1912) stands out as a great work of **literature**.

BHASKARAN, V. (1950–). Captain of the Indian Hockey team, which won the Moscow Olympic gold medal in 1980, V. Bhaskaran is the first Indian to have completed the Federation of International Hockey Coaches course. After a career in hockey, from 1969 to 1982, V. Bhaskaran took to coaching, initially for Southern Railway. Although involved with the junior hockey team since 1987, he took over as coach only in 1995. The former coach of the Indian senior team and the Indian junior team, his most memorable experiences as coach came when the junior team won the Silver medal at the Junior World

Cup at Milton Keynes in 1997 and when India triumphed in the four-nation hockey tournament, featuring Australia, Germany, and South Africa, at Perth, with **Dhanraj Pillai** scoring the winning goal barely a minute before the final whistle. He also coached the Indian team that won the Azlan Shah Tournament by defeating Germany. He is the recipient of the Padmashri award from the Government of India. Hockey is his passion, which is reflected in every aspect of his life. He has even named his house “Hockey House.” His home is something like a landmark for young “hockey hopefuls,” for whom he stands as a role model of inspiration.

BHODENDRA SADGURU (ca. 18th century). Bhodendra Sadguru was the 59th Jagadguru of the Kamakoti Peetham at **Kanchipuram**, which is today occupied by Jayendra Saraswati, the **Shankaracharya** of Kanchi. Bhodendra was a great saint and scholar who composed eight major works dealing with *Nama Siddanta*. He is believed to be the person who laid down the musical norms for the *hari bhajan*, which can be defined as devotional congregational singing. *See also* MUSIC; SRIDHARA AYYAVAL; THYAGARAJA.

BINNYS. John Binny bought the property of James Taylor in 1808 and thus started the saga of Binnys, regarded as a leading textile firm until it went through virtual financial bankruptcy two decades ago. In the late 19th century, along with A. Francis Lautour’s Arbuthnott and Co. and the building of Spencer and Oakshot on Mount Road, Binnys became a major center of commercial attraction. In the 1890s, the road leading up to Hotel Connemara, which was part of the **Spencers**, came to be described as Binnys Road. However, in the course of the 20th century, Binnys had gone through great vicissitudes and was finally acquired by Ramaswami Odayar. Binny silks can still be seen in Bangalore and **Chennai**, although it has lost its commercial empire. *See also* INDUSTRY.

BRAHMIN. The Tamil Brahmins are referred to in modern parlance as Tam Brams. The Constitutional Reforms Committee of 1908 recorded the percentage of Hindus as 87.9%. Interestingly, the Tamil Brahmins were a mere 3.6% of this figure. Among the Brahmins, the worshippers of **Shiva** who also accept **Vishnu** as one of the principal

deities, are called **Smartha Brahmins** while those who worship Vishnu to the exclusion of Shiva are known as Sri Vaishnavite Brahmins. The names of the followers of the former sect carry the suffix “**Iyer**” while the names of the latter carry the suffix “**Iyengar**.” Shastri, Dikshitar, Gurukkal, and even Sharma (which is routinely used by North Indian Brahmins) are some of their other surnames.

The Brahmins have patrilineal familial and lineage names, which are called *gotra*. These were exogamous divisions in that a person from Bharadwaja *gotra* could not marry within the same *gotra*. However, strict endogamy is practiced within the Brahmin *varna*. These lineages are traced to the mythological *rishis* or sages like Bharadwaja, Kaudinya, and Atri. The Smartha Brahmins are divided into four subdivisions—Vadama, Brahacharanam, Ashtasahasram, and Vathema or Chozhiya. The Smartha community usually does not encourage marriage outside its social division. For example, the Vadama (literally “Northerners” because they are supposed to have come into the Tamil country from northern India) look down upon the Brahacharanam, Ashtasahasram, and others and will not give their daughters into these families. Even within the community, the others concede the Vadama to be superior. There is a subdivision within the Vadama community who call themselves Sanketi Vadama. They are believed to be migrant Brahmins from Karnataka (mostly from the Sanskrit-speaking village of Mattur) who moved into the Tamil country in around the 14th century. Due to their migrant character the Vadama accord them an inferior position in the ritual and social hierarchy of Brahmins. **Iyengar—the Vaishnavite Brahmins**, are divided into *vadakai* (literally the northern branch) and *tenkai* (the southern branch).

The ritual superiority of the Brahmins and their economic prosperity goes back to the early medieval period when land grants called Brahmadeya were donated by kings to the Brahmin community. Now, however, the status and life styles of the Tamil Brahmins has undergone a sea change. As temples declined and Brahmins lost patronage they found new avenues for survival by acting as interpreters, literally *dubash* (from the Sanskrit term *dvi bashi*), for the commercial agents of the East India Company. Tamil Nadu in the 19th and early 20th centuries, witnessed very powerful anti-Brahmin movements such as the **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam**, Periyar’s **Svaya**

Mariyadai Iyakkam and the foundation of the **Justice Party** by Periyar **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**. The formation of **Dravida Kazhagam** and its splinter groups further reinforced the strong anti-Brahmanical sentiments in Tamil Nadu. The all-party agenda of “Reservation” spelt the doom of the Brahmin community. Today, lack of educational avenues or job opportunities within Tamil Nadu has led to the phenomenon of the Tamil Brahmin diaspora with the community becoming highly visible in the **Information Technology** sector, the medical profession and in the pastures of academia abroad. *See also* CASTE; NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

BRINDA, T. (1912–1996) and MUKTA (1914–2007). Brinda is the better known of the musical duo whose names were always mentioned together for a space of five decades. Brinda and Mukta were the daughters of Kamakshi and the granddaughters of the legendary **Veenai Dhanammal**. Coming in the great *devadasi* tradition, **music** was the natural inheritance of the sisters. At the young ages of eight and six, they were sent to learn music from **Naina Pillai** of **Kanchipuram**, who was celebrated for his musical knowledge as well as his patronage of musicians. Brinda soon outstripped her sister, although the two continued to sing together. Brinda learned the intricacies of the musical forms called *alapana*, *kalpana swara*, and *niraval* from her guru and gave her first public performance at the age of 10 in Kanchipuram. Since the family came in the *shishya parampara* (musical lineage) of **Shyama Shastri**, Brinda specialized in the rendering of his *kritis*. Brinda and Mukta also came to be known for their rendering of the *padas* or musical compositions of the saint Kshethragna and for their *javalis*, which was essentially a genre of dance music.

Brinda received the coveted “Sangeetha Kalanidhi” title from the **Madras Music Academy** in 1977. Her biographer, Indira Menon, who was also one of Brinda’s students, writes in her book, *The Madras Quartet*, that the best tribute to Brinda was the obituary in the well-known music journal *Sruti*. It said of her that she was “an outstanding musician who could wrestle down, figuratively speaking, any male musician daring to challenge her.” Mukta passed away on 12 March 2007 at the age of 93.

BUDDHISM. *See* RELIGION.

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CALDWELL, ROBERT BISHOP (1814–1891). Among the Tamils, Bishop Caldwell is respectfully addressed as Caldwell **Iyer** (Iyer is a suffix given to the Smartha community of Tamil **Brahmins**). Caldwell said, “I am Irish born and Scottish bred but lived in India as an Indian.” He came to Tamil Nadu as a **Christian** missionary and lived on in Tirunelveli for 53 years, serving the cause of **Tamil**. His account of the history of the Tirunelveli region is unsurpassed. Caldwell also undertook archaeological expeditions in the **Pandyan** country unearthing the ancient port town of **Korkai**, which was submerged in the sea. Caldwell’s contribution to Tamil language and **literature** consists of his book, *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages*. His text established the connectivity between the Dravidian languages in contradistinction to Sanskrit and linguistically proved the antiquity of Tamil as the mother of all these languages. He died in **Kodaikanal** at the age of 77, deeply mourned by the Tamils. *See also* BESCHI, C. J.; NOBILI, ROBERTO DE, POPE, G. U.; XAVIER, ST. FRANCIS; ZIEGENBALG, BARTHOLOMAEUS.

CALENDAR. The Tamil calendar follows the solar cycle rather than the lunar cycle on which the Telugu calendar is based. The Tamil New Year falls around the 13th or 14th of April in the month of *Chittirai*. Like the Gregorian calendar, the Tamil calendar also consists of twelve months although the number of days in a month could vary from one year to another. The names of the months are: *Chithirai*–April 14 to May 14; *Vaikasi*–May 14 to June 14; *Aani*–June 15 to July 15; *Aadi*–July 16 to August 16; *Aavani*–August 17 to September 16; *Purattasi*–September 17 to October 16; *Aippasi*–October 17 to November 15; *Kartigai*–November 16 to December 15; *Margazhi*–December 16 to January 13/14; *Tai*–January 14/15 to February 13; *Masi*–February 13/14 to March 13; and *Panguni*–March 14 to April 13.

The Tamil calendar has a 60-year cycle. In terms of the Roman calendar this would translate into five Jovian periods since Jupiter orbits around the sun in 12 years. Each of the years in the Tamil calendar bears a special name. It is believed by Tamil astrologers that the name of the year would provide a clue as to the trajectory the destiny of the Tamils would take in the course of the year.

The Tamils follow a seven-day week. The days of the week are named after the respective planets they represent followed by the suffix *kizhamai*, which is the Tamil term for day. Thus *Gnayiru* represents the Sun (Sunday), *Tingal* the Moon (Monday), *Chevvai* represents Mars (Tuesday), *Budhan* is for Mercury (Wednesday), *Vyazhan* for Jupiter (Thursday), *Velli* for Venus (astrologically called *Shukran*), which is Friday and *Sani* for Saturn which means Saturday.

CARNATIC MUSIC. Carnatic **music** is the classical music of southern India. It is curious that “Carnatic,” which refers to a specific region that gained prominence as a result of the Anglo–French conflicts in the region in the 18th century, should have become a generic term for all music south of the Vindhyas. The nomenclature may also have been used to distinguish south Indian music from the Hindustani tradition of music that was deeply influenced by the Mughals. It is probably in this sense that King Somesvara in the 12th-century text *Manasollasa* uses it. In pre-colonial or early modern South India, Telugu became the cultural language of the south, including the Tamil country, somewhat similar to the overwhelming dominance of French as the cultural language of modern Europe during roughly the same era. It can therefore be seen that Telugu predominates in the evolution of Carnatic music and it has been the practice to teach Telugu language in music colleges to those aspiring to become singers. The other major language to dominate the music scene in Southern India in general and the Tamil country in particular, was Sanskrit, which was the preferred mode of musical compositions among **Brahmins**. In fact, many of the compositions of **Dikshitar**, one of the musical trinity was almost entirely in Sanskrit. It was only after the movement for linguistic separatism among the Tamils and the establishment of the **Tamil Isai Sangam** that Tamil compositions became popular in musical concerts in the 1930s and 1940s. It is noteworthy that Abraham Pandithar, a leading scholar and patron of arts, the author of *Karunamritasagaram* played an important role in building up Tamil music.

The tonal scale in Indian music whether Hindustani or Carnatic consists of seven notes. To this may be added 12 semi-tones and 22 microtones. It is believed that the structure of the music is essentially derived from the *Sama Veda*. In Carnatic music, there are 72 basic scales on the octave and varieties of melodic and rhythmic patterns.

The origins of some of these melodic patterns called *raga* and rhythmic patterns called *tala* are to be found as early as the beginnings of the **Christian** era in **Sangam** texts like the *Silappadikaram* written by **Iango Adigal**. Rangaramanuja Ayyengar, in his *History of South Indian (Carnatic) Music from Vedic Time to the Present* written in 1972, points out that because this epic centered around the theme of **dancing** and music, it explicated forms of Tamil music, especially the melodic form known as *pan*, their rhythmic base and instrumental accompaniments.

CASTES. The caste system is a feature particular to Indian society. Even now casteism plays a decisive role in Indian society and politics. The policy of **reservations** is based on multiple understandings of caste structure, its mode of function, and the need for affirmative action on the part of the State to ensure social justice and equity.

The caste system is based upon four major *varna* categories—**Brahmin** or the priestly community, *Kshathriya* or ruling class, *Vaisya*, the trading groups, and *Shudra*, consisting of a conglomeration of castes constituting the service sector. The menials in society were considered to be below the four castes and were termed “untouchables” because their very touch was supposed to be polluting. In fact, early canonical texts actually mapped the degree of pollution by placing certain castes at a 3–4 m distance and others at a 7-m distance and so on. In Tamil polity, many of these low-caste/untouchable groups have been brought under the broad umbrella of **Adi Dravida**.

While castes, casteism, and caste politics are inextricable features of Tamil Nadu today it can be argued that the caste system was a late-comer to the Tamil country. The indigenous social structure of the **Sangam** age does not reflect caste hierarchies or social differentiations although economic differentiations were clearly present. Society was based on the notion of *kudi* meaning a collective of communities. Sociologists and historians have also interpreted *kudi* clan on the premise that early Tamil society was a tribal society. The word for caste, “jati,” is of Sanskrit origin and it occurs in the *Marabiyal* of the *Tolkappiyam* only once in the sense of a bio-physical category and not in the sense of caste. Even though the **Pulayar** and the **Parayar** were associated with death related rituals, neither the concept of pollution nor of untouchability was attached to them during the early

phase of the Sangam age (until around the second century CE). There was social interaction and even dining among the various groups within the *kudi*. **Auvaiyar**'s celebrated poems testify to the fact that the Panar and the Viraliyar who were nomadic bards and would be termed "low caste" within the Brahmanical discourse, freely shared liquor and meat with the Sangam chieftains.

Caste stratification became a clear marker of Tamil society when Brahmanism became entrenched in the Tamil country under the **Pallavas**, **Cholas**, and **Pandyas**. Under these States Brahmins became recipients of land grants called Brahmadeyas. Control and subordination was an inevitable concomitant of a land system that had non-cultivating proprietors like the Brahmins. The landless **agricultural castes**, like the Pallar, Pulayar, and the Parayar, became ritually and socially distanced from the Brahmins and the **Vellalas**. These so-called polluting castes, polluting because of their association with death and funerary rites, were pushed below the four *varnas* or generic caste divisions and were castigated as "untouchables." The terms "Paraya" and "Chandala" became descriptive terms for all untouchables. Thus castes, which were seminal to agricultural production, became socially marginalized while the Brahmins, who were peripheral to the production process, became the nucleus of society.

It is a distinctive feature of Tamil society that even when the caste system began to characterize Tamil society it did not have the four-fold division that it had in northern India. Tamil society is divided primarily into Brahmins and Shudras, with the other two categories being conflated and subsumed under these divisions. Thus the **Chetti** caste despite its hereditary occupation of trading, is not regarded as "Vaisya" but as "Shudra." The vertical division of Tamil society into *idangai* (left-hand) and *valangai* (right-hand) took the place of the traditional caste system in the Tamil context. These categories emerged in the 11th century. Brahmins stood outside these two divisions. These divisions were paramount in all social situations until the 18th century when the *valangai* and *idangai* castes clashed in the European black towns, usually over the right to gain company agencies. These categories faded out in the course of the 20th century.

Christianity had a major impact on the depressed castes, which opted for en-masse conversions both on economic grounds since the new religion offered them money, food, and employment, and

on social grounds because of their inferior status within the caste system. The Paravan and Mukkuvan, who belonged to the fisherman castes, were early converts to Christianity, and by 1923 they had their own bishop. **Christian** converts are also to be found among the **Kammalar, Nadar (Shanar), Vanniyar, Cheruman, Chakkiliyan,** and other depressed groups.

With the resounding success of the Dravidian movements in Tamil Nadu, the fortunes of many of these castes have changed considerably if not dramatically. **Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam** of **E. V. Ramaswami Naicker** (the **Naicker** caste, which is a migrant community from Andhra has itself been equated with the Vanniyar caste) and the establishment of political parties like **Dravida Kazhagam**, led by **Annadurai**, the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam**, led by **M. Karunanidhi**, and the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam**, started by **M. G. Ramachandran**, have consistently pursued a policy of “reservations” combined with anti-Brahmanism. It is noteworthy that in India, Tamil Nadu has the highest percentage of reservations at over 74%. The result has been an anxiety on the part of depressed castes, including converted Christians to claim scheduled caste and schedule tribe status.

The Adi Dravidas consisting of untouchable castes like the Pallar, Pulayar and Paryar, who have perceived themselves as oppressed by the wealthy non-Brahmin castes as well as by the Brahmins, began to evolve exclusive identity called “Panchamas.” They distrusted equally both the Brahmins and the forward castes among the Non-Brahmins. In order to seek social justice for the lowest social castes in Tamil society, they formed associations called Adi Dravida Jana Sabha and Pariah Mahajana Sabha. Initially, the Adi Dravidas tried to work within the ideological framework of the movement during the nationalist struggle but eventually split from the upper caste non-Brahmins. The Mandal Commission in its landmark report, brought out in 1971, classified most of the Adi Dravidas under the scheduled castes and schedule tribes. Caste politics in Tamil Nadu has taken a new trajectory with the emergence of political parties like the **Pattali Makkal Katchi**. The Vanniyar have entered politics on the strength of their status as “depressed” castes. The Vanniyar Sangam is an association of the Vanniyar caste, who dominate in the regions of Vellore, Cuddalore, Tiruchirapalli, Salem, and Tanjavur districts. The community is represented in Tamil politics by the Pattali Makkal

Katchi led by Dr. **Anbumani Ramdoss**. Such parties have played a key role in tilting the electoral balance in favor of either one or the other of the major parties. *See also* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

CHAKKILIYAN. This **caste** comprises the traditional community of leather workers. The Chakkiliyan are referred to as Madiga in the Andhra-Karnataka region and migrant leather workers in the Tamil country are also known as Madiga. The community speaks Tamil, Kannada, and Telugu. The Telugu- and Kannada-speaking Chakkiliyan constitute two distinctive endogamous groups while both use Tamil as a common medium of communication. The ancient **Sangam** Tamil text *Silappadikaram* gives the Chakkiliyan a low social status while the medieval commentary on this text by Adiyakunnallar describes the Chakkiliyan as an untouchable caste. They are also called *thotti* meaning scavengers since many of them were employed as scavengers since early times. Today, they are one of the Scheduled Castes benefiting from the strong **Reservation Policy** of Tamil Nadu State. Nevertheless, this is one of the communities that has undergone mass conversion to **Christianity**, obviously in the quest of better socioeconomic status.

CHANDRASHEKHAR, SUBRAMANIAN (1910–1995). Chandrasekhar, himself a Nobel prize winner in physics (1983) was the nephew of Sir **C. V. Raman**, who won the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1930. Born in Lahore, Chandrasekhar was educated at Presidency College, at the **University of Madras**, and at Trinity College, Cambridge. From 1933 to 1937, he held a position at Trinity. Chandrasekhar joined the staff of the University of Chicago, rising from assistant professor of astrophysics to Morton D. Hull Distinguished Service Professor of Astrophysics and became a U. S. citizen in 1953.

Chandrasekhar determined what is known as the Chandrasekhar limit—that a star having a mass more than 1.44 times that of the Sun does not form a white dwarf but instead continues to collapse, blows off its gaseous envelope in a supernova explosion, and becomes a neutron star. An even more massive star continues to collapse and becomes a black hole. These calculations contributed to the eventual understanding of supernovas, neutron stars, and black holes. Chandrasekhar was awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Astronomical

Society in 1953 and the Royal Medal of the Royal Society in 1962. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1983.

CHEKIZHAR (ca. 12th century CE). He was also known as Arulmolidevar. Author of the famous Saiva hagiographical work *Periyapuranam* Chekizhar belonged to the **Vellala** caste. The Vellala are agriculturists by occupation. Chekizhar hailed from Kunrattur and was a staunch devotee of **Shiva** installed in Tirunagesvaram. Despite his humble beginnings, he was appointed chief minister by the **Chola** King Kulottunga II. The lives of the Saivite Nayanmars are narrated by him in captivating **Tamil language**. It is said that this was written to counteract the influence of the Jaina text *Jivakachintamani*. It is noteworthy that the majority of these saints were drawn from the lower castes—Kannappa **Nayanar** (a hunter), **Tiruneelakantar** (a potter), and **Nandanar** (a **Pulaya** regarded as an “Untouchable” who usually perform **agricultural labor**). Among the **women**, the most famous life is that of **Karaikkal Ammaiyar**, who is said to have discarded her beautiful female form and assumed a skeletal, demonic form in her pursuit of salvation.

CHELLAPPA, C. S. (1912–1998). He earned a niche for himself in the galaxy of modern Tamil writers through his crisp short stories. He brought a new dynamism to the entire genre of fiction, a deeper identification with the native milieu, a language closer to the people’s tongue and hence rooted in their very own world. His concern and compassion for human predicaments is a hallmark of all his creative writings. *Vadivasal (The Arena, 1959)* remains one of Chellappa’s famous novelettes. Using the motif of *jallikattu*, a native form of bullfight, the author takes the reader through the ups and downs of several conflicts (between man and man and between man and beast). *See also* LITERATURE.

CHEMBAI VAIDYANATHA BHAGAVATHAR. *See* VAIDYANATHA BHAGAVATHAR, CHEMBAI.

CHEMMANGUDI. *See* IYER, CHEMMANGUDI SRINIVASA.

CHENNAI. Chennai, which was known until 1996 as Madras, is the fourth largest city of India and the capital of Tamil Nadu. Also known

as the auto capital of India, Chennai is the home of Marina Beach, the second longest beach in the world. Chennai ranks next only to Bangalore in the software exports from India and has grossed over Rs. 100 billion in 2005. Chennai is also home to one of the **Indian Institutes of Technology**, IIT Madras.

Until a couple of decades ago, it was known as Madras, a name that Tamils continue to use for this city out of sheer force of habit. Chennai was an ancient habitational site and Mylapur, now one of the areas in Chennai, was known in the early centuries of the **Christian** era as “Meliapore.” It is believed that the Christian apostle San Thomas lived and probably died at Mylapur, which came to be known as San Thome, named after him during the 16th century when the region came under the Portuguese and Dutch colonial influence. One of the landmarks of the area today is the exquisite San Thome church. Chennai itself rose to prominence once again when the British built Fort St. George. The town came to be called Chennapatnam or Madrasapatnam.

Chennai is home to the automobile manufacturing giants in the country. More than 35% of heavy vehicles produced in the country, such as cars, buses, lorries, trains, and bicycles, are produced in Chennai, and it is referred to as the Detroit of South Asia. The heavy engineering manufacturing **industry** is based in the suburbs of Chennai. Chennai boasts presence of global car manufacturing giants like Ford, Hyundai, BMW, and Mitsubishi as well as homegrown industries like Madras Rubber Factory (MRF), TI Cycles of India, **Amalgamations**, **Ashok Leyland**, and **TVS Group of Companies**. Companies such as Cognizant, Covansys, Xansa, Verizon, iSoft, and many others are Chennai-based companies in India. Infosys has set up India’s largest software development center to house 25,000 professionals at an estimated investment of Rs.12.5 billion in Chennai. India’s largest IT Park is housed at Chennai. Chennai has become the most preferred BPO hub in India and South Asia. Chennai is sometimes referred to as the “Health Capital of India” or the “**Banking Capital of India**” having attracted investments from international corporations and the World Bank.

It is also poised to become an important cyber capital. In its pivotal position as the capital of Tamil Nadu, Chennai is also the hub of Tamil politics and its cultural twin, the **Tamil cinema**.

CHERA. *See* CHERA DYNASTY.

CHERA DYNASTY. The Chera kings were among the “Muvendavelar,” literally “three kings” who flourished during the **Sangam** period, the other two being the “**Chola**” and the “**Pandya**” kings. The Cheras ruled over the area called variously as **Cheramandalam**, Malayamandalam, or Vanjinadu, comprising roughly the present-day state of Kerala but falling under the traditional region of Tamilaham. The language spoken was **Tamil** as in the other **Tinais**. A detailed account of the Sangam Cheras is found in the literary anthology *Padirrupattu* literally “The Ten Tens.” According to oral tradition the Chera king Perunchorrudivan Cheraladan, literally “The Chera who fed many,” gained fame by feeding the entire Pandava army during the Mahabharata war! Among the early historical evidence of the Cheras are the references in the Asokan edicts (roughly third century BCE), which refer to the “Keralaputra.”

The earliest recorded Chera king was Athan I who was contemporaneous with **Karikala Chola** and died fighting him on the battlefield of Vennil. The Sangam bard **Kapilar** has eulogized him as his patron in several poems in the *Puram Nanuru* anthology. His son Athan II cemented an alliance with the Chola kings by marrying Chonai, the daughter of **Karikala Chola**. The sons of Athan II—**Cheran Chenguttavan** and **Ilango Adigal**—are among the most celebrated figures in Chera history. Cheran Chenguttavan was known as a great warrior. In his 50-year rule he is said to have established his military superiority from the Ganga basin to the South. The story goes that his mother Vanavanmadevi became *sati* on her husband’s death. Chenguttavan made a *sati* stone (*sati kal*) and sought to consecrate it by the waters from all sacred rivers including the Ganga. It was in the course of this expedition that he vanquished many northern kings. His brother, Ilangao Adigal, became a Jaina monk and authored the text called the “first Tamil epic” namely, *Silappadikaram*.

During the post-Sangam period when the imperial dynasties emerged once again in the early medieval period, Cheramandalam had administratively moved out of the Tamil country. Sometime around the 10th century CE Malayalam language evolved in this region. Kulasekhara **Alvar**, who reigned in the sixth century CE, occupies a unique place in this dynastic history. While he began as a great warrior who defeated both Pandyas and Cholas, he is renowned today as a great Vaishnavite Alvar saint and the composer of the San-

skrit text *Mukundamala*. Another famous king of the Chera dynasty was **Cheraman Peruman Nayanar**, one of the Saivite trinity, the other two being **Appar** and **Tirujnanasambandar**. The copper plate inscriptions from Kottayam talk of the economic prosperity of the Chera country largely because of the grant of trade privileges to Jewish and **Christian** merchants.

While the dates for the early Chera kings are uncertain, dating of medieval Chera is on firmer ground. Ravivarman Kulasekhara Peruman (1266–1316) was the best known of the later Cheras. Under him Chera rule seems to have proved most beneficent to the people.

CHERAMANDALAM. *See* MANDALAM CHERA.

CHERAN CHENGUTTAVAN. *See* SENGUTTAVAN.

CHERUMAN (CHERAMAN). They are a migrant community into Tamil Nadu from the Palghat district of Kerala. Most of the men are employed as plantation labor in the **Nilgiris**. The **women** work as **agriculture laborers**, especially in the tasks of sowing, transplanting, weeding, **irrigation**, and harvesting. Many of them make a living selling firewood or hire themselves out as domestic laborers. They are also found in the Dharmapuri, **Coimbatore**, **Madurai**, Tirunelveli, and Ramanathapuram districts. They are bilingual and speak both Malayalam and Tamil. They are regarded as one of the “Depressed **Castes**” although they regard themselves as superior to the **Parayan** and Vettuvan communities. The Cheruman worship folk deities like Kutti Chathan, Karunkutti and Parakutti rather than the Brahmanical gods.

CHETTI. *See* CHETTIAR.

CHETTIAR (CHETTI, CHETTY). The Chettiars constitute the merchant community of Tamil Nadu. They can be treated as being synonymous with the Chetti although in some places they choose to regard themselves as distinct and separate. The Chettiar nomenclature may have been given to the merchants referred to as “Vanigar” in the Tamil Brahmi inscriptions of the first and second centuries CE. While denominations like the Nattukottai Chettiars of **Pudukkottai** are primarily

Tamil-speaking, the Banajiga and Komatti Chettis speak either Telugu or Kannada, depending on the region from where they had migrated into Tamil Nadu.

The name of Chettiar is almost as synonymous with business as with the Baniya community of Uttar Pradesh, and Haryana. Inscriptional references to the Chetti begin from the 11th century onwards as Kudirai Chetti, Chilai Chetti, etc. The Chettiar constitute the biggest group among the **Tamil diaspora**. In the 19th century, the rubber plantations in Malaysia were started by Chetti entrepreneurs. During the colonial period, Chetti diaspora capital formed the basis of the rubber, sugarcane, tea and coffee plantations in **Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka**, Burma, Mauritius, **Reunion Islands, South Africa**, Guadaloupe, Martinique, and other West Indian islands. The Chettiar also became money-changers and many private banks such as the Vysya (another name for Chettiar community) bank is largely owned by Chettiars.

In a nine-day festival called **Navarathri** Tamil homes are decorated with images of gods and everyday figures somewhat like the Native American *katchinas* arranged in the form of a cascading ladder. This kind of an arrangement is called *kolu*. Among these an indispensable doll is the fat, pot-bellied Chettiar selling provisions. No *kolu* is considered complete without him, since he is the symbol of prosperity. Yet he occupies the lowest place in the hierarchical ladder. This folk practice is in fact reflective of the economic and social status of Chettiars in Tamil society. While they are indispensable to the **economy** they are looked down upon in society as being mercenary.

CHETTIAR, ANNAMALAI Rajah (1881–1948). He was born into the Nattukottai **Chettiar** community of merchants in 1881. He left his traditional profession of trade and showed keen interest in both **music** and **education**. The 1930s witnessed a keen competition between **Brahmins** who specialized in Sanskrit compositions and **non-Brahmins** who became votaries of pure Tamil music. The latter hailed Annamalai Chettiar as the father of the Tamil Isai Movement. He founded the **Annamalai University** in 1928 as a College of Music, but it later blossomed into a full-fledged University. Rajah Annamalai Chettiar started the **Tamil Isai Sangam** (which can be broadly translated as Tamil Music Academy) in 1942 at the Annamalai Uni-

versity. Annamalai continued to function as the hub of the Tamil Isai Sangam for many years to come. The university still attracts the best names in the world of music among its staff. Annamalai Chettiar passed away in 1948 leaving behind him an immortal legacy of music and education. *See also* M. A. CHIDAMBARAM.

CHETTIAR, NALLI KUPPUSAMI (1940–). Nalli Kuppusami **Chettiar**, owner of the **Nallis** saree showroom, was born into the traditional **caste** of silk weavers known as **Padmasaliya** in 1940. The Padmasaliya community especially in the **Kanchipuram** region has been involved in the weaving profession since the **Chola** period that is roughly the eighth and ninth centuries CE onward. His grandfather, Nalli Chinnasami Chettiar, started the Nalli silk business in 1923 and was continued by his son Nalli Narayana Chettiar. However, the Nalli silk empire has touched an all-time high under Kuppusami Chettiar. Apart from his silk business, the “Silk King” is also involved in the preservation of the Tamil cultural heritage. He is one of the moving spirits behind *Dakshina Chitra*, which is an attempt to recreate a crafts village of the Chola times.

CHETTIAR, T. A. RAMALINGAM (1881–1952). Ramalingam **Chettiar** was born at Tiruppur in **Coimbatore** district. His father was a leading merchant and **banker** with considerable landed property. A leading lawyer in the area, he gradually entered in the government in key positions. His political career began with the **non-Brahmin movement** but soon he preferred to join nationalist politics as a member of the Congress Party. He was elected to the Madras Legislative Council in 1921 and continued to be a member until 1939. His greatest contribution was as the pioneer of the cooperative movement in Madras. He encouraged the formation of cooperatives by primary producers especially in the handloom sector. He was the president of the Cooperative Central Bank, the State Cooperative Bank and the Madras Land Mortgage Bank. In 1946, he became a member of the Constituent Assembly, and, in 1951, he was elected unopposed to the first Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament). *See also* BANKING.

CHETTY. *See* CHETTIAR.

CHETTY, GAJALU LAKSHMANARASU (1806–1868). Born in the vicinity of Madras (present-day **Chennai**) into a Komati merchant's family, Lakshmanarasu was a successful businessman dealing in the textile and indigo trade. He was drawn into politics because of avowedly anti-missionary views. He actively participated in the anti-British protests, adopting the English methods of picketing and demonstrations. His newspaper *Crescent* became the mouthpiece of the **Madras Native Association**, founded by him and some of his contemporaries like Srinivasa Pillai, A. Alwar **Chetty**, and P. Veeraperumal Pillai. Lakshmanarasu parted ways with his friends like Srinivasa Pillai and M. Venkatarayalu Naidu who believed that social reform had to be based on British support and cooperation unlike Lakshmanarasu who believed that it was only the collective will of the community that could end the evils in Tamil society and that freedom was a *sine qua non* for social development. Lakshmanarasu Chetty passed away long before India's freedom became a reality.

CHETTY, R. K. SHANMUGAM (1892–1953). Shanmugam **Chetty** was born into a wealthy Vanika Vaisya (oil monger community) family in **Coimbatore**. In 1913, he graduated from the Madras **Christian** College and got his law degree from Madras Law College. He was greatly influenced by nationalist leaders like B. C. Pal, S. N. Bannerjee, and Lala Lajpat Rai. At one point he also admired the principles of the **Justice Party**. He joined the bar in 1919. He was deeply influenced by **Annie Besant** and went to England with her as a member of the National Convention. He became a member of the Madras Legislative Council during 1920–1922 and of the Central Legislative Assembly from 1923 to 1934, a long 11-year period. He was re-elected in 1926 and 1930. In 1925, he was elected on a Swarajya Party ticket but resigned after the Lahore Congress. In 1933, the British conferred upon him the title Knight Commander of the Indian Empire (KCIE), which he surrendered in 1947. He held the key post of constitutional advisor to the Chamber of Princes. From 1947 to 1949, he served as the first finance minister of independent India. He also served as the vice chancellor of **Annamalai University** during 1951–1952.

CHIDAMBARAM, M. A. (1918–2000). Chidambaram was the third son of Dr. **Rajah Annamalai Chettiar**, the founder of **Annamalai**

University. Chidambaram is the founder of the M. A. Chidambaram group of companies of which Southern Petrochemical Industries Corporation Limited (SPIC) is the parent company. The group is involved in agricultural products (agrobusiness), chemicals, petrochemicals, detergents, electronics, shipping, engineering services, and port management besides providing infrastructural and logistic support to major industrial groups. The Chidambaram Charitable Trusts have also contributed substantially to Dr. Sanjeevi's Voluntary Health Service. Chidambaram has also made notable contributions to **music** and was the founder of the **Tamil Isai Sangam**. *See also* INDUSTRY.

CHIDAMBARAM, P. (1945–). Chidambaram is the son of a well-known **Chennai**-based industrialist Palaniyappa **Chettiar** but chose to give up the family business to join radical Left politics. In 1967, he joined the Congress after the party had been trounced in the General Elections. In 1967, following the split in the Congress Party and the creation of Congress I under Indira Gandhi's leadership, he joined the new party. He became very close to Rajiv Gandhi and served in his cabinet as minister. Along with **G. K. Moopanar**, Chidambaram was one of the key figures in forming the **Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC)**, a splinter group of the Congress I in 1996. In 1999, he fought the elections from **Tiruchirapalli** under the banner of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance. Today, however he is back in the Congress I, having merged his fledgling party with the parent organization. Chidambaram is the finance minister of the Congress I led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) headed by Dr. Manmohan Singh as the prime minister. A Harvard-educated economist, Chidambaram has had two terms as India's finance minister and been instrumental in the opening up of the Indian **economy** to the processes of liberalization. Along with Manmohan Singh he is taking India closer to globalization and has opened the doors of different sectors to foreign investment.

CHIDAMBARANAR, V. U. (1872–1936). Also referred to as Chidambaram Pillai, Va Vu Chi, as he is popularly known, enjoys the unique title "Kappalotiya Tamizhan," literally "The Tamilian who commanded ships." Born in 1872, his English **education** proved useful in his long battle against the British colonial regime. Along with his compatriot Subramanya Siva, he ran nationalist **newspapers** like

Tamil National and *Hindu Nation*. As a publisher, he reprinted celebrated Tamil works like *Tolkappiyam*, *Tirukkural*, and *Sivajnana Bodham*. In the history of the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**, Va Vu Chi's claim to fame rests on his founding the first Indian shipping company, Svadeshi Shipping Corporation, which challenged the British monopoly in shipping. The company was destroyed by the British and its owner was arrested. He spent many years in the **Andamans**. This intrepid entrepreneur and freedom fighter died in utter poverty in 1936.

CHINNAPPA, P. U. (1915–1951). Chinnappa dominated the Tamil **theater** as a celebrated actor and singer during the 1930s and 1940s. He was trained not only in classical **Carnatic music** but also in Tamil martial arts and gymnastics, an unusual combination of skills. His debut film Raja Sandow's *Chandrakanta* (1936) as well as T. R. Sundaram's *Uttama Puttiran* (1940) based on Alexander Dumas' *Man in the Iron Mask*, were both super hits. *See also* TAMIL CINEMA.

CHOLA. *See* CHOLA DYNASTY.

CHOLA DYNASTY. The Chola dynasty was one of the three major dynasties that flourished during the **Sangam** age of Tamil history and revived sometime in the 9th century to last until the 13th century when it faded away. The Sangam Cholas ruled roughly from 50 CE to 150 CE. **Kaveripumpattinam** was one of their major ports. An outstanding Chola king of the Sangam period was **Karikala Chola**, who is renowned as the builder of the grand dam called "anicut" over the two rivers—**River Kaveri** and River Kollidam. The other important chieftains who are said to have been chief subordinates to Chola authority were such men as Nalankilli, Killivalavan, and Rajasuyamvedda Perunarkilli. The prefix "Rajasuya" (referring to the fire sacrifice performed by **Brahmins**) of the last chieftain is interesting because it shows the beginnings of Brahmanization and Sanskritization in the Tamil country.

The Chola dynasty is not heard of from the third century to the eighth century CE. The revival of their power began in the ninth century with Vijayalaya Chola. The imperial Cholas ruled over an extensive empire and in fact caused the spread of Saivism in regions be-

yond their own shores such as Sri Lanka and the group of islands in the Malay Archipelago. During the period of Aditya Chola I, the region of Thondaimandalam was successfully conquered by defeating the **Pallava** king Aparajita Varman. When the Cholas established their hegemony over the Pallava country, Thondaimandalam was renamed as Jayankonda **Cholamandalam**, literally “the land successfully conquered by the Cholas.” Chola queens played active roles in extending patronage to Brahmins and in constructing **temples**. **Irrigation** tanks were often built under the patronage of royalty. **Metal crafts** reached its zenith during the 10–11th centuries. This age is known as the Chembian Maadevi era because of the patronage extended by her to metal craftsmen. **Rajaraja Chola I** is regarded as the greatest king of the Chola dynasty.

CHOLAMANDALAM. See MANDALAM CHOLA.

CHOLA, RAJARAJA I (ca. 10th century). Rajaraja I, also called Rajaraja the Great, is regarded as the outstanding king of the **Chola dynasty** who ruled between 985 and 1012 CE, attaining great power and prestige under his leadership. Inscriptions record his victories over the Pandya and **Chera** kings, Amaraunga Pandya and **Cheruman** Peruman Basukra Ravivarman. Rajaraja also attacked Sri Lanka and sacked its capital Anuradhapura renaming it as “Mummudi **Cholamandalam**.” It was said of this king that while he was great in war he was greater in peace. The **Temple of Brahadisvara** in **Tanjavur**, dedicated to Lord **Shiva**, was constructed in his time. The temple is an outstanding example of Chola art and architecture. Brahadisvara temple also provides detailed inscriptional information on the craftsmen and dancing girls attached to the temple, their functions and the wages paid to them. Rajaraja not only patronized Saivism of which he was a staunch follower but also other **religions** like Buddhism. The Buddhist *Vihara* in Nagapattinam was in fact named “Rajaraja Perum Palli” in recognition of his religious liberality.

CHORU. The word means cooked rice, the staple food of Tamilians. This could be either boiled rice (*puzhungal arisi*) or refined rice, (*pachchai arisi*) or coarse red rice, usually eaten by the lower strata of society. Instead of rice, the poorer classes also use *varagu* or millet as

their *choru*. The chamba variety of rice was cooked with pepper and cumin seeds to make a specific dish called *chamba choru*. See also CUISINE.

CHRISTIANITY. See CHRISTIANS OF TAMIL NADU.

CHRISTIANS OF TAMIL NADU. According to oral tradition among Tamil Christians, also backed up by Christian missionary organizations, the earliest Tamil converts to Christianity can be traced to the first century CE when the Apostle Saint Thomas visited south India. St. Thomas established a settlement of Christians baptized by him at Mylapore (the Portuguese Meliapore) in modern **Chennai** (the capital of Tamil Nadu), which led to the place being known as San Thome. The Syrian Christian community in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, in fact, has some copper plate inscriptions belonging to the ninth century in their possession that record privileges granted to the early Christian missionaries by the local king.

Roman Catholicism was introduced by the Portuguese through their Jesuit missionaries in the 16th century. A century earlier, **Roberto de Nobili** had made massive conversions especially of upper-caste **Hindus** through the **Madurai** mission. Nobili in fact came to be hailed as a “Rishi” (Sage) and a “Brahmana Sanyasi” (Brahmin ascetic) by the local population. Many of the Christian missionaries, including **C. J. Beschi** (better known as Viramamunivar), **G. U. Pope**, and **Bishop Robert Caldwell**, besides Nobili himself, made invaluable contributions to **Tamil** language and **literature**. Proselytization by Protestant missionaries began with the Dutch and the English **East India Companies** in the 17th century. **Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg** (1681–1719) is one of those early missionaries who also made major contributions to Tamil. He was the first western scholar to prepare a catalog of Tamil literary works with brief sketches about each text. Hindu reaction to the proselytizing activities of the Christians began fairly early. Father John de Brito was, in fact, sentenced to death by the ruler Sethupati in the Marava country (the region around **Pudukkottai** and Ramanathapuram districts) and was executed in 1693. Despite continued resistance from the Tamil natives, Christian conversions have grown over the years. There have been en masse conversions of backward **castes** like the **Kaikkolar**, **Kam-**

malar and untouchable castes like the **Pallar**, **Parayar**, **Mukkavar**, etc. in the 19th and 20th century. The evangelical zeal of Christians reflected itself in service by establishing hospitals, schools, and colleges not only in Chennai and other large towns but also in the most backward areas of Tamil Nadu, earning the gratitude of the Tamils and winning them over to Christianity. It is, however, noteworthy that the Tamil Christians have not been able to get rid of their caste hierarchies. In fact, the seating in the pews of churches continues to follow the pattern of segregation of upper and lower castes.

In 2002, the government of Tamil Nadu, under the leadership of the chief minister **J. Jayalalitha**, passed the anti-conversion ordinance. The ordinance states: “No person shall convert or attempt to convert either directly or otherwise, any person from one **religion** to another either by use of force or by allurements or by any fraudulent means.” The ordinance further includes the clause that every act of conversion should be reported to the district magistrates of that locality. It is noteworthy that the All India Christian Council has reacted sharply to this legislation. The legislation was eventually withdrawn in the face of fierce opposition. The Tamil Christians today constitute around 2.32% of the population and are statistically somewhat similar to the Tamil **Brahmins**. While they are a fairly comfortable community in economic terms, the religious impasse at the level of state policy seems to have left the Tamil Christians uneasy about their future.

CINEMA. *See* TAMIL CINEMA.

COIMBATORE. Coimbatore is the third largest city in the Tamil country. As it is exposed to the Palghat gap of the Western Ghats, it enjoys a salubrious climate. It is known as the textile city of the Tamils, overtaking **Kanchipuram** in this regard. It is also a major **industrial** city, attracting multinational investments. Coimbatore is known for a host of engineering goods as well as handlooms and handicrafts. The earliest Agricultural University of Tamil Nadu, the nucleus for which was laid in 1868 at Saidapet, Madras (present day **Chennai**), was shifted to Coimbatore as a full-fledged university in 1907. The Maruthamalai hill temple dedicated to Lord **Murugan** sustains the religious interest in the region. *See also* UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL.

CUISINE. Rice is the staple food of the Tamil country and archaeological finds from megalithic sites like **Adichchanallur** and Tirukkampuliur have provided evidence of grains and granaries. Varieties of millets along with coarse red rice continue to be the major component of the diet of the poor Tamils. While communities like **Brahmins**, Saiva Pillai, or **Mudaliyar** are associated with vegetarianism, the majority of communities are non-vegetarian. However, it must be noted that meat is only an additional adjunct to a meal consisting primarily of rice and spinach or other vegetables, unlike in the West, where a diet would be primarily meat, sometimes accompanied by vegetables. An interesting aspect of the dietary patterns of the Tamils ranging from the Brahmins to the Vellalas and the lower **castes** like the **Pulaya** or **Pallar** comes from a song in the *Perumpanatrupadai*, a text from the **Sangam literature**. The Panar poet or wandering minstrel says that the fishermen fed him rice and dried fish called *karuvad* on plates made of palmyra leaves. The Brahmins gave him fine rice with mango pickle and the pomegranate cooked with butter and seasoned with *karuvembu* leaves. The Vellala farmers gave him varieties of fruits and the water of the tender coconut. In the toddy shops, frequented by the poorer classes, he was given fried pig with toddy. The poet comments that it was only kings who could afford the fragrant wines brought by the *Yavana* (a generic term used for Greek and Roman merchants) who had a flourishing trade with early Tamilaham. A beverage like coffee, regarded as a cultural marker of modern Tamils, did not, in fact, enter the Tamil consumption pattern until the colonial period. Chilies, potatoes, and tomatoes were similarly colonial entrants and in early Tamil inscriptions and **literature** only the use of pepper is mentioned. Spices were very much a part of the Tamil cuisine and we have references to the use of cardamom, pepper, cloves, mustard, poppy seeds, fenugreek, and other spices from the literature of the early Christian era that is Sangam period onwards. Varieties of gourd including bitter gourd, pumpkins, beans, brinjal/aubergine, raw bananas, okra, and several kinds of yams and other tubers and roots are widely grown and consumed. Spinach is an essential part of the diet and is widely consumed by the lower castes because it is either found wild or available cheap. The medium of cooking is either sesame oil or groundnut oil. This is in contrast to the Kerala coast, where coconut oil is the cooking medium or much of

northern India, which uses mustard oil in its cuisine. *See also* AAP-PAM; ADAI; APPAM; AVIYAL; CHORU; DOSAI; IDLI; KALI KANJI; RASAM; SAMBAR; VADAI.

– D –

DANCE. Dance in Tamil culture, as in almost every ancient culture, was synonymous with folk dance. Tamil *koothu* or *aattam* is referred to in the Sangam classics such as *Tolkappiyam*, *Kurunthogai*, *Kalittogai* and the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram*. The *koothu* was performed for both **Murugan** and his tribal consort, Valli. While these were danced in religious ecstasy, the other kind of *kuthu* was called *Kalanilaikkuttu*. This *kuthu* was arranged in honor of a young soldier who had fought valiantly and returned victorious. A variation of this was the *atal* referred to in the *Purattinaiyiyal* of the *Tolkappiyam*. The ritual dance celebrated the valiant death of a fallen chief. Irrespective of the side they represented, the chieftains came together in a dance performed with swords to show their respect for the fallen enemy/friend. The *veriyattam* or *vettuvavari* was performed by women in a state of possession. The dance was accompanied by ritual offerings of food (involving animal sacrifice) before Murugan or **Korravai**. The dancers were priestesses from the **Marava** tribe. The dancer in a state of possession would predict the difficult times that lay ahead for the village folk and how these could be averted.

Among other popular dance forms are the folk performances called **Karaga Attam**, performed by dancers with a stack of pots balanced precariously on their heads. Equally well known is the dance form called **Poikkal Kudirai Attam** in which the dancers get into the frame of a wooden horse and perform intricate steps.

However, classical dance had begun to evolve by the **Sangam age** (ca. 3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE). References to various dance forms occur in **Ilango Adigal's** *Silappadikaram* since its principal protagonist, Madhavi, was a courtesan well versed in dance and **music**. Codified by Bharata Muni, the **Bharatanatyam** today constitutes the signifier of the classical dance tradition of the Tamils. One of the best exponents of this art form was the legendary **Balasaraswati**. Following her, **Rukmini Arundale** established the school for Bharatanatyam

called Kalakshetra in Adayar. *See also* DEVARADIYAR; KRISHNA-MURTHI, YAMINI; MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; MANSINGH, SONAL; SAMSON, LEELEA; SARABHAI, MALLIKA; SARABHAI, MRINALINI; SARUKKAI, MALAVIKA; SUBRAMANIAM, PADMA; VIJAYANTIMALA; VISHVESWARAN, CHITRA.

DEVADASI. *See* DEVARADIYAR.

DEVANEYA PAVANAR (1902–1981). Devaneyya Pavanar was a contemporary of **Maraimalai Adigal** who founded the Pure Tamil Movement known as **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam**. Like its founder Arunachalam, who changed his name to Maraimalai expunging the Sanskritic content in his name, Devaneyar changed his suffix “Kavi-*vanar*” and made it “Pavanar” (meaning poet). Devaneyya Pavanar, who was a convert to **Christianity**, made major contributions to Tamil history and culture, and he has often been compared to **Bishop Robert Caldwell**, the famous missionary-scholar of Tamil. He taught the ancient Tamil grammatical text, the *Tolkappiyam*, for 12 long years in the high school at Salem. Among his literary creations are: *Tamizhar Varalaru* (On History), *Tamizhar Madam* (On Religion), *Pandai Taniyatchi* (On Governance), and *Isai Tamizh Kalanjiam* (On Tamil Music).

Pavanar produced 27 literary works in Tamil. As a consequence of his conversion to Christianity, he also celebrated the Christian gospel, and an anthology of his poems invokes the glory of Jesus Christ. He wrote four books in English that were intended to spread the glory of Tamil in foreign lands. It is interesting that his admirers and followers formed a society called “Pavanar Tamizhkudumbar” whose members made it a rule to consciously expunge all Sanskritized terms from their oral and written communications. He is known as “Tamizh Tandai,” i. e., “Father of Tamil” and “Tanitamizh Kavalari,” literally “Protector of Pure Tamil.” **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker** gave him the title “Tamizhar Maravar.” He won the respect and admiration of the leading Tamil politicians of his age like **M. G. Ramachandran** and **M. Karunanidhi**. After his death in 1981, the Tamil government founded a library in his honor in the city of Madras (present-day **Chennai**), which is today a leading research library. *See also* ADAYAR LIBRARY; SARASWATI MAHAL LIBRARY.

DEVARADIYAR (TEVADIYA). In early Tamil Nadu, the Devaradiyar were **temple** girls who were cultural repositories of the tradition of **dance** and **music**. In colonial Tamil Nadu, their position deteriorated to the position of common prostitutes. It is important to point out that nowhere in medieval records does the term “Devadasi” actually figure. They are known by various terms, such as “Devaradiyar,” Soole, Sani, Paatra, and sometimes Ganika or Dasika. Inscriptions suggest that there was a hierarchy among dancing girls, depending on the nature of the temple work assigned to them. There are several instances of the sale of dancing girls to the temple, indicating that their status might well have been that of virtual slaves.

Inscriptional evidence is, however, equally clear on the point that while slaves may have constituted one rung of female temple servants, the other rung consisted of independent **women** professionals. Therefore, not all temple women were slaves or from a lowly status. Many of them enjoyed a high status, property, and a respectable position in society. Historical evidence talks about the land holdings of Devaradiyar—women dedicated to temple service. They were considered to be the brides of the Lord and are therefore referred to as “padiyilar”—literally “ones without husbands.” The 11th-century inscription of **Chola Rajaraja I** states that the Devaradiyar were invited to serve the **Tanjavur Periya Koyil** and were given house sites and land near the temple. In 1337 CE, the task of conducting the celebration of an important festival at the temple of Alamelumangamma in Tiruchchanur (Tirupati) was jointly given to the Devaradiyar and the **Kaikkolar**. The Devaradiyar also enjoyed the privilege of an exclusive audience with the king. These women were then powerful, financially independent, and apparently socially respected. Records testify to them as landowners as well as generous donors of land to the temples.

The metamorphosis of the once powerful Devaradiyar into the socially ostracized, economically pitiable “Tevadiya” has been and will continue to be the theme of feminists and social activities for a long time to come. The displacement of women from many of the traditional **industries** like handlooms and handicrafts led to women turning to prostitution as a livelihood. In colonial South India, the loss of temple patronage to a great extent resulted in the temple dancers seeking alternative patronage and sliding gradually into a situation

where they were perceived as a source of social immorality and the specific concern of colonial reformers, both imperial and native.

The acting profession came almost naturally to these women who were used to the “public” (read “male”) gaze. An interesting proverb in Tamil illustrates the transition from “Devaradiyar” to “Tevadiya.” The proverb says: “The Devaradiyar who (at one time) found the temple food unpalatable is now willing to turn summersaults for the sake of a few morsels of rice.” Devadasis made a mark not merely as professional actresses but also as singers and dancers. For the South, the outstanding example is that of **M. S. Subbalakshmi**, who gave a memorable performance in the film *Meera* and also emerged as a foremost exponent of **Carnatic music**.

While Devadasi women in Peninsular India (many of whom were drawn from the **Isai Vellala** community among the Tamils) were finding alternative professional outlets, many women, including Moovalur Ramaritham Ammaiyar (herself belonging to the Devadasi community), and Dr. **Muthulakshmi Reddy**, were doing door to door campaigning for the abolition of the Devadasi system. The Devadasi system was legally abolished in 1947, the year of India’s independence, but professional prostitution by members of this **caste/community** continues unabated. *See also* BALASARASWATI, T. S.; BRINDA, T.; DHANAMMAL, VEENAI; AND MUKTA, T.

DHANAMMAL, VEENAI (1867–1939). Veenai Dhanammal is one of the finest exponents of the *Veenai*. No finer or more sensitive exponent of this instrument is known in the history of **Carnatic music**. The Veena was her natural and preferred vehicle of expression although she was also a vocalist of the highest quality. Dhanammal was born into the **Devaradiyar** tradition, and, therefore, **music** and **dance** were her rightful inheritance. Dhanammal and her sister, Rupavati, both practiced dancing for some time, as did **T. S. Balasaraswati**’s mother Jayamma and almost every other member of the family. Music and dance reigned supreme in the household. The family was an inspiration for composers and teachers alike. First, there was the association of Subbaraya Sastri. Then, there was Sattanur Panchanadier, a pupil of **Muthuswami Dikshitar**, who taught music to Veenai Dhanammal and Rupavati. Patnam Subramania **Iyer** taught Dhanam’s daughter. A great many of the *javalis* of Dharmapuri Sub-

barayar were composed in that home. It is noteworthy that Dhanammal in her later years emerged as a great patron of Carnatic music, and her home became known for its musical gatherings.

DHANRAJ PILLAI (1968–). One of India's best center forwards in hockey history, he was highly respected by rival teams. He is a recipient of the Arjuna Award (1995) and the K. K. Birla Award (1998–1999) for excellence in sports. He was also the highest goal scorer in the Bangkok Asian Games. He was the only Indian player to figure in the World Eleven side during the 1994 World Cup at Sydney. Playing for Mahindra & Mahindra on the domestic circuit, he was chosen the Man of the Final in the **Murugappa** Gold Cup in 1999. He has also played for foreign clubs, such as the Indian Gymkhana (London), FC Lyon (France), Selangor (Kuala Lumpur), Abhahani Limited (Dhaka), and Stuttgart Kickers (Stuttgart). He was part of the team that was placed first in the four-nation tourney in Perth, Australia (2000), and the SAF games in **Chennai** (1995). His dream is to be part of an Olympic Gold medal-winning team.

DIASPORA. *See* TAMIL DIASPORA.

DOSAI. Soaked rice and dehusked black gram, usually at a proportion of 4:1, are ground together into fine paste and allowed to ferment for 10 to 12 hours after adding salt to the batter. Once the batter is fermented, it is spread on a flat pan, similar to round pancakes. The *dosai* is eaten with ground coconut *chutney*. The sweet variety of the same made with jaggery is called *vella dosai*. Dosai is usually had for breakfast or with high tea. *See also* CUISINE.

DRAUPADIAMMAN. The worship of Draupadiamman as a folk deity by the Tamils is a classic example of the fusion of Sanskritic and folk religious beliefs. Draupadi is the queen of the five Pandava brothers in the Sanskrit epic *Mahabharata*. The custom of polyandry by which a woman could have multiple husbands is still prevalent in parts of Himachal Pradesh, notably Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti. It is, however, only in the Tamil country that the worship of Draupadiamman as a powerful folk goddess has taken such strong root. Draupadi emerged as a major folk deity in the Tamil country with the **temples** to the Draupadiamman

being located in Chingleput, South Arcot, North Arcot, and Salem districts. In many of these temples, worship of her is very similar to that of **Mariamman**. In the Tamil Nadu temples, she is usually worshipped with the ceremony known as *poo midithal* or fire walking.

DRAVIDA KAZHAGAM (DK). The Dravida Kazhagam was founded in 1944 by **C. N. Annadurai** and his followers, including **M. Karunanidhi**. The party was formed because of the strong personal and ideologically differences that had created a sharp cleavage between **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker** and many of his party workers due to his decision to marry Maniammai, a party worker and his junior by at least a couple of decades. The Dravida Kazhagam eventually became the powerful Dravidian Party called **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)**. *See also* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM (DMK). The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, popularly known as DMK, was founded in 1949 by **C. N. Annadurai** as a breakaway faction from the **Dravida Kazhagam** founded by (Periyar) **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**. However, **M. Karunanidhi**, the former chief minister of the State, has remained the leading light of the party. Nedunchezian, E. V. K. Sampath, K. A. Mathiazhagan, Nanjil K. Manoharan, and K. Anbazhagan are some of the early stalwarts of the party. It would be a truism to state that the history of Tamil Nadu politics cannot be written without the predominant role played by the DMK. Influenced strongly by the ideology of the **Justice Party**, the party is against theistic practices and is founded on concepts like rationality, social justice, **caste** equality, and anti-Brahmanism. The entry of the matinee idol **M. G. Ramachandran**, known as “Makkal Tilakam” (The Hero of the People), in 1952 lent an aura of glamor to the party.

In the 1957 elections, it captured 15 seats in the Tamil Nadu Assembly and two at the Central Parliament. It was the successful anti-Hindi agitation of the DMK, beginning with the momentous struggle of 1967, when Karunanidhi came to prominence that led to the Tamil linguistic chauvinism of the Dravidian political parties. The anti-Hindi plank swept the DMK to power in 1967 with Annadurai as its first chief minister. His radical social reforms were suspended midway because of his untimely death due to cancer in 1969. Karunanidhi suc-

ceeded him as the chief minister. The *Murasoli* paper was started as the media organ of the DMK. In 1971, Karunanidhi became chief minister following the sweeping victory of the DMK in the general elections. However, 1972 witnessed a bitter rift between Karunanidhi and the more popular leader M. G. Ramachandran (MGR). MGR broke away and formed his own party in 1977 called the **Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK)**, which subsequently became the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)**. These two parties in the context of Tamil Nadu are virtually like Tweedledum and Tweedledee, with very little differentiating them ideologically except their intense hatred of each other and deep seated political rivalry. The party bitterly opposed the Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi in 1975, and many of the party leaders like C. Chittibabu and Sattur Balakrishnan died from torture in prison following their arrests under the Emergency law Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). In 1994, a splinter group formed out of the DMK namely the **Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK)** under the dynamic leadership of **Vaiko**.

It is in the logic of political volte-face that the DMK, despite its avowed dislike of theism and its anti-Brahmanical, anti-Sanskritic stance, should have entered into a lengthy political marriage with the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and held office under the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government until the alliance broke up on a bitter note before the 2004 general elections. In 2004, the DMK was an ally of the same Congress I that had been responsible for the imposition of an unwarranted emergency and resultant political excesses. In the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly elections in 2006, it is not surprising that the anti-incumbency factor has brought Karunanidhi (now an octogenarian) back into power. Karunanidhi's son, M. K. Stalin, who had a successful term as the mayor of **Chennai**, is also an aspirant for the leadership of the DMK. *See also* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

– E –

EAST INDIA COMPANIES. The 16th and 17th centuries in Europe were a time of imperial and commercial expansion. The impact of

this was felt in South India, much valued both for its textiles and spices. In the 16th century, only the Portuguese had a sphere of influence in southern India. They held Goa, Diu, and Cochin on the Malabar Coast and Nagapattinam and San Thome on the Coromandel Coast. The commercial interest of the Portuguese was essentially concerned with the export of pepper and spices from Cochin in the Malabar coast and the Malay Archipelago and Coromandel textiles were used as the principal articles of barter in the spice trade. With the Spanish takeover of Portugal in 1580, their presence in India began to fade except for Goa.

The 17th century witnessed intense political and commercial rivalry between the Dutch and the English East India Companies. While the Dutch dominated the first half of the century, the English definitely emerged as the main commercial power in the south by the end of it. In 1605, the Dutch pinnace *Delft* reached Masulipatnam (in Andhra), where the Dutch East India Company established a factory under the leadership of Pieter Yassax Eyloff. Dutch settlements were also established at Nizamapatnam, Tegnapatnam, Devanamapattinam (renamed Fort St. David), and Pulicat (Fort Geldria) located near modern **Chennai**. The English East India Company was established in 1600. In 1611, the *Globe* brought the first English traders to Nizamapatnam and Masulipatnam, and these entered into a partnership in 1619 with the Dutch at Pulicat. By the 1620s, the alliance between the English and the Dutch East India Companies had broken down due to mutual suspicion. From Pulicat, the English moved on to Armagaon and then to Madras (Chennapatnam). The port town of Mylapore, in which the fort of San Thome was built, was another important center of commercial activity, sometimes in Dutch hands and at other times in English hands. By the 1620s, the Danish East India Company had also secured trading rights from the Nayak of **Tanjavur** and had established settlements at Tranquebar (Tarangampadi) near Nagapattinam and at Porto Novo (Cuddalore). The French East India Company entered the commercial fray only in the 18th century, establishing itself firmly in **Pondicherry**. However, it was the English East India Company that emerged triumphant, paving the way for the colonization of India by the British.

ECONOMY. Tamil Nadu's economy is the third largest and among the most highly industrialized in India. The average growth rate of the

state is 6–7%, a growth rate that has consistently exceeded the All India average. Tamil Nadu ranks high among the Indian States in terms of per capita income. Until the 1980s, the per capita income was below the national average, but it has remained consistently above the national average since the 1990s. The State's per capita income at current prices was Rs.19,889/- in 2000–2001. The only other states that have a higher per capita income are Maharashtra, Punjab, and Haryana. The share of Tamil Nadu in India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is 7.2%. The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) in 1993–1994 constant prices, which was at Rs.705.13 billion in 1996–1997 went up to Rs.907.60 billion in 2000–2001. The State Domestic Product (SDP) has been worked out to US\$19.6 billion at the official rate of exchange. Information Technology, especially software, electronics, auto components, pharmaceuticals, and leather, are some of the priority areas of the State. Consumer durables, rubber and plastic products, and the food processing industry are some of the upcoming sectors of the economy.

The economy of the State revolves around three major sectors—**agriculture, industry**, and services. Out of these, industry accounts for 34% of the economy and services for 45%; and agriculture constitutes only 21% of the economy.

Tamil Nadu has an advanced engineering and manufacturing sector. Most of the firms in the engineering and manufacturing sector have a global reputation for their undiluted focus on human resource, productivity, and quality. The manufacturing sector accounts for over 30% of the State's output. The major industrial sectors are automobile industries—especially auto components—engineering, mineral-based industries, leather, pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals, cotton textiles, and ready-made garments.

The vehicle industry is a major component of this. Vehicular production is said to range from bicycles to battle tanks. In 2002, Tamil Nadu's share in the vehicular production in India was cars—21%; heavy commercial vehicles—33%; motorcycles—35%; mopeds—13%; and railway coaches—46%.

In the last five years, Ford Motors, Hyundai Motors, Hindustan Motors, and Mitsubishi Motors have established bases in Chennai, lending further credence to the statement that Chennai has emerged as the “Detroit of India.” In recent years, Tamil Nadu has attracted much foreign investment. Perhaps the most significant reason for this was the

supportive attitude of the Tamil Nadu governments, cutting across party lines for foreign investment and the reduction of bureaucratic red tape. Some of the other factors are road connectivity, single window operations, availability of low-cost labor throughout the Tamil country, etc. In a complimentary tone, John Parker, CEO of Ford India, wrote *Why Ford Chose Chennai?* Some of the arguments he presented were the proximity to the port as well as infrastructural facilities that enabled easy access for imports and exports. The international airport in Chennai connects India to the major industrial capitals of the world. Another factor was its potential to grow in the future, unlike some other Indian States. Today, Tamil Nadu is among the top five preferred States for investments by domestic and multinational companies.

Even more significant than the presence of foreign investment and multinationals is a vibrant indigenous entrepreneurial community. Companies that began as a part of colonial enterprise in India, such as **Parrys**, **Simpsons**, and **Spencers**, have now passed into the hands of Tamil entrepreneurial groups. S. Anantharamkrishnan, a Tamil Brahmin from Tirunelveli, became a director of the Simpsons group in 1938 and founded **Amalgamations** in the same year. Today, Amalgamations is a mega concern with acquisition of 23 companies. Another major group led by A. M. M. Mugugappa Chettiar, who belonged to the traditional trading community of Chettiars, took over Parrys. Spencers, founded in 1863, has been in the hands of liquor baron Vijay Mallya for the last two decades.

Agriculture used to constitute the backbone of the Tamil economy. No longer so. A large part of the population may still live in the country—nearly 70% of the population is in one way or the other related to the rural economy—but the overall share of the agrarian sector in the Net State Domestic Product economy (NSDP) has clearly fallen. The agrarian sector at 21% has only a one-fourth share in the Tamil economy. The Tamils are primarily rice eaters, and rice is the principal crop of the land. The importance of the agricultural sector stems from its strong links with overall economic growth. The State has a highly diversified primary sector. Its components include cotton, rice, oilseeds, sugarcane, marine products, and plantation products, such as tea and coffee. It is specifically linked to the growth in agro-based industries such as cotton textiles, vegetable oils, and sugar. Tamil Nadu occupies a dominant position in sugar manufac-

turing. Agriculture is also linked with the demand for and production of fertilizers, pesticides, and machinery. Tamil Nadu is also a leading manufacturer of pumps.

In contrast to the other sectors of the economy, however, the agrarian sector in Tamil Nadu is going through a relative decline. In the 1980s, the growth in the agricultural sector was 5.3%, but this fell to 3.95% in the 1990s and has since fallen further. In contrast, the annual growth rate in the manufacturing and tertiary sectors has improved from 4.52% and 6.72% in the 1980s to 5.35% and 7.12% in the 1990s. The relative decline in agriculture can be attributed to its dependence on the spatial and temporal distribution of the monsoon, the growing pressure on land, and the over-exploitation of groundwater resources. As a result of lack of water, 12% to 16% of the gross cropped area remains fallow every year. This has pushed many farmers, especially the youth, out of the agricultural sector and into urban areas in search of employment. In 1999–2000, the Tamil Nadu government launched a Wasteland Development Programme. The idea was to benefit and bring back into the economy the small and marginal farmers by converting wastelands into arable lands. Efforts are also being made to improve productivity by evolving drought resistant varieties of pulses and cereals. However, foodgrains alone cannot sustain or promote economic growth and must go hand in hand with diversification, which is being sought across sub-sectors as well as within each sub-sector such as horticulture, fisheries, livestock, and dairy production. The State has been fairly successful in this diversification.

Tamil Nadu has a modern services sector, too. Services account for about 50% of the total output. Software, entertainment, news and media, trucking, food services, banking, accounting, architecture, construction, industrial design, **education**, health care, and organized retailing power the services sector. The services sector, quite like the manufacturing sector, attracts top talent from around the country.

Tamil Nadu's primary, secondary, and services sectors together constitute an economy that is among the world's most diversified. The social sector has kept pace with the economy's growing diversification. It has the second-lowest fertility rate in India. Its literacy at 74% is among the highest. The total pool of human resources is rated among the top three by the New Delhi-based Centre for Policy Research. Yet the presence of slums and strong signs of poverty belie this optimistic

picture. *See also* AGRICULTURAL LABOUR; AMALGAMATIONS; BINNYS; CHETTIAR; CHETTIAR, NALLI KUPPUSAMI; CHIDAMBARAM, M. A.; INDIA CEMENTS; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY; MADRAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY; MURUGAPPA BUSINESS GROUP; NALLIS; SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES; WOMEN IN BUSINESS.

EDUCATION. According to the 2001 census, Tamil Nadu has a literacy rate of 73.75% as against an All India figure of 62%. This is considerably higher than the 62.7% recorded in 1991. In the course of the decade, male literacy went up from 73.75% to 82.33%. Equally significant is the rise in female literacy, which has increased by more than 13 percentage points from 51.33% in 1991 to 64.55% in 2001. According to 2001 figures, the State had 155 engineering colleges, 204 polytechnics, and 525 **Information Technology** institutions. The Business World Survey of 1999 rated Chennai as no.1 in India for software education.

A detailed analysis of the 1991 census shows wide disparities and variations in education across Tamil Nadu in terms of gender, class, and spatial location. An analysis of the urban-rural differentials in literacy rates for 1991 shows that the male-female literacy ratio is 1:2 in urban areas, while for rural areas it is 1:6, proving that gender discrimination is higher in the rural areas than in urban areas. The literacy rate of the scheduled castes (SC) is considerably lower than that of the total population in all of the districts. The State's literacy rate for the SC population is 46.74%, of which the ratio of overall literacy to SC literacy is 1:34. In the case of SC women, the literacy rate is 34.89% with the comparable ratio to overall female literacy at 1:56. The Tamil Nadu Human Development Report issued in 2003 expresses grave concern over SC literacy, especially in the case of women.

The Tamil Nadu government has been committed to the task of providing primary education for all children up to the age of 14 years. It is noteworthy that the first efforts in this direction were made by the early **Christian** missionaries in the Tamil country. The **East India Company** had started a school at Fort St. George in 1673 for educating the children of its own employees. However, it was missionaries like Ida Scudder who did much for education. The Report of the Elementary Education Survey of the Madras Presidency in 1925

showed that the mission schools were an important component of the literacy drive besides non-mission schools, local boards and municipal Councils and some governmental schools.

According to the figures provided by the National Institute of Education and Planning (NIEPA) in 1997–1998, of 68.14% of children enrolled in primary schools, 35.18% were boys and 32.95% were girls. Primary or elementary education has benefited greatly from the “Mid-day Meal Schemes” of the Tamil Nadu government. The promise of free meals has been a major inducement in bringing children from poorer families into schools. Education at the middle school level has also recorded a dramatic increase. From 1975 to 1998, according to the NIEPA Report, the increase has been nearly 161%. The gender ratio has also gone up from 1.72 to 1.16.

On the flip side, the infrastructure in many of the schools except the elite schools is extremely poor in terms of basic facilities such as drinking water, toilets, etc. Although 75% of the primary and middle schools have drinking water, only 51.9% have toilet facilities. Only 27.5% of the schools have separate toilets for girls. The schools have virtually no fire safety measures—a result of which was the great fire tragedy in a municipal school in Kumbakonam (Tanjavur district of Tamil Nadu) in 2003, when hundreds of children under the age of ten died in a fire trap.

The vocational sector of education has witnessed some major changes in recent years as a result of consistent government policy favoring vocational education. The new all-India pattern education (10+2+3) introduced in Tamil Nadu in 1978 had vocational training as an important component. The Sixth Educational Survey undertaken in 1993, which was the last major survey, shows that Tamil Nadu has been a pace setter in vocational training. Sixty-six vocational courses in six major areas including **agriculture**, home science, commerce, engineering and technology, health, and other subjects are being taught at the Plus Two level. Out of 2,493 government and aided higher secondary schools, vocational courses have been introduced in 1,389 schools, that is, around 47%.

In the domain of tertiary education, Tamil Nadu has witnessed a rapid growth in higher education in the last two decades, including industrial training institutions, polytechnics, arts and sciences, and engineering colleges. The government introduced computer science

as an elective subject in all 1,200 higher secondary schools in the State between 1999–2000 and 2000–2001. According to figures provided by the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Ltd. (TIDCO) in 2001, Tamil Nadu ranked first in software education with 180 information technology institutions. The State boasts a number of renowned universities, including the **University of Madras**, **Annamalai University**, and **Madurai Kamaraj University**. In a move to further the cause of women’s empowerment, the State has started 11 polytechnics, 53 governmental colleges in the sphere of vocational training, and 120 arts and sciences colleges exclusively for women. The **Mother Teresa Women’s University** was established exclusively for women in the 1980s in Kodaikkanal but this has subsequently been shifted to Chennai. *See also* ADAYAR LIBRARY; BHARATIYAR UNIVERSITY; INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES; SARASWATI MAHAL LIBRARY; TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY; THE TAMIL NADU DR. M. G. R. MEDICAL UNIVERSITY; and TAMIL UNIVERSITY.

ETTUTHOGAI. It is believed that more than 500 poets were involved in the production of this corpus of literature consisting of eight anthologies. These were: *Narrinai*, *Kuruthogai*, *Aingurunuru*, *Patirrupattu*, *Paripatal*, *Kalittogai*, *Aham Nanuru*, and *Puram Nanuru*. The texts represent both of the literary modes representative of Tamil culture—*aham*, meaning the interior, and *puram*, meaning the exterior. *Narrinai*, *Kuruthogai*, *Aham Nanuru*, and *Puram Nanuru* are anthologies of 400 verses each. *Puram Nanuru* deals extensively with **Sangam** polity, the character of chieftains and kings and the ways and goals of warfare. *Aham Nanuru* deals with domesticity, love, and familial relationships. Most of the poems have colophons that enable us to know the name of the poet as well as locate the text in historical time. *Paripatal*, which is a religious text dealing with the attributes of **Murugan** (known as the Tamil god) and of Tirumal, is among the shortest with just 22 verses extant out of the original 70. The *Padirupathu* focuses on the **Chera** kings and describes the Malayalam region, which today forms the modern state of Kerala. Apart from men poets such as **Kapilar**, a number of **women** poets have also contributed to this anthology. Some famous women poets whose compositions figure here are: **Auvaiyar**, Kakkaiyatiniyar and Veni Kuyatiyar.

EXTREMISM. *See* EXTREMISTS IN THE TAMIL FREEDOM STRUGGLE.

EXTREMISTS IN THE TAMIL FREEDOM STRUGGLE. The extremist movement in Tamil Nadu began around the same time that the Moderate-Extremist split occurred in the Indian National Congress following the partition of Bengal in 1905. It is ironic that one of the main votaries of extremist politics in the north, Surendranath Banerji, should have castigated the Tamil Nadu political scene as “benighted,” a phrase, which originated in the East India Company records but was picked up for the first time by a nationalist leader. Perhaps the remark was meant as a snide comment on the moderate stance of Tamil Nadu politicians, especially organizations like the **Madras Native Association** and the **Madras Mahajana Sabha**. Banerji, however, publicly withdrew his remarks at the third convention of the Indian National Congress held in Madras in 1887 after his firsthand observations of the nuanced politics of the Tamil country. The Tamils, slowly but surely, moved into extremist politics, following the failure of the moderates to achieve either social reform or political concessions through colonial support.

At the Congress session in 1906, Bipan Chandra Pal put forward an eloquent appeal for boycott as a concomitant of the Svadeshi (self-rule) movement. The major part of the Madras delegation, led by L. A. Govindaraghava **Iyer**, voted against boycott while a small but significant minority led by **Subrahmanya Bharati** and **V. U. Chidambarnar**, supported it. They were to form the core of the extremist movement in Tamil Nadu joined by personalities like Ethiraj Surendranath Arya, Varadaraja Sharma (a Sanskrit pundit of **Tanjavur** college), V. Chakkarai **Chetti**, C. S. Bharati, and K. Venkat Rao. In 1908, they formed the Chennai Jana Sangam. The extremist movement was, however, perceived as a half-way house since it did not seem to go far enough. The extremists were also ruthlessly suppressed by the British regime. The logical sequence to the failure of extremist politics in Tamil Nadu was the emergence of **revolutionary terrorism** in the freedom struggle. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMILNADU.

EYIL PATTINAM. A leading port of the **Sangam** age along with Poduca (**Pondicherry/Arikamedu**) and Kabera (**Kaveripumpattinam**).

The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* refers to it as Sopatna. Archaeologists located this site within Tindivanam Taluq in South Arcot district. During the period of Vikrama **Chola**, it seems to have been donated to **Brahmins** and was therefore renamed Vikrama Chola Chaturvedimangangalam. The prosperity of the town can be gauged from this fact since only the most fertile tracts were given in donation to Brahmins. One of the Sangam poets, Sirupanan, sang of Eyil Pattinam as “having villages surrounded by salt pans,” indicating that as a coastal town it must have been a major producer and exporter of salt. Eyil Pattinam seems to have disappeared after Kulottunga II’s time. It is believed that like Kaveripumpattinam it was submerged in the sea.

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FIJI ISLANDS. *See* TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS.

FREEDOM STRUGGLE. *See* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU. The **Madras** Presidency earned for itself the sobriquet “benighted Madras,” a politically loaded term that resulted in the marginalization of Tamil Nadu in the historiography of the Indian nationalist movement. The term could have multiple meanings. “Night” has been interpreted by nationalist historians of the North as reflecting the “ignorance” or political apathy of Tamil Nadu. The presence of a strong comprador class, which had succeeded in winning numerous “titles” or “knighthoods” from the British queen, may also have resulted in this dubious sobriquet. However, historians are now gradually recovering the history of the Tamils’ role in the freedom struggle. In fact, one of the earliest concerted rebellions against the British in the Tamil country commenced in 1800 with the grand federation formed by the Palayakkarar (called Poligars by the British) led by **Kattabomman** of Panjalakurichi and **Marudu Pandyan** of Sivagangai and lasted until 1806. This can justly be regarded as a precursor to the grand rebellion in 1857.

The political struggle in Tamil Nadu went in tandem with the nationalist struggle and the role of the Indian National Congress in anti-

imperialist movements such as *Svadeshi* (self-rule) and boycott. The **Madras Native Association (MNA)** was formed before the inception of the Indian National Congress under A. O. Hume's leadership in 1885. The third session of the Indian National Congress was held in 1887, presided over by Badruddin Tyabji. The Madras delegation included stalwarts from the MNA such as **A. Svaminatha Iyer, S. Subramanya Iyer, P. Somasundaram Chetty, C. Vijayaraghavachariyar, Sabapati Mudaliyar, P. Rangaiah Naidu, and G. Subramanya Iyer**, the founder of the *Swadeshmithran* and *The Hindu*. The demands put forth were typical of moderate demands elsewhere in India—participation in legislative councils, separation of the judiciary from the executive, opening of a military academy and institutions for imparting technical education to Indians, reduction in public expenditure by the government, and protection of the Indian handloom sector, which was facing the onslaught of mill cloth from England.

The repressive policies of the British and the harsh prison terms meted out to the Tamil patriots resulted in the rise of **extremism** in Tamil politics. **V. U. Chidambaranar**, Subramanya Siva, and Subramanya Bharatiyar wrote and spoke against the colonial regime. Patriotic Tamil **newspapers** and periodicals like *Nava Shakti*, *Swadeshmithiran*, and others began to mushroom. At the same time, enterprising Tamils started their own businesses such as Chidambaranar's Indian Steam Navigation Company, which tried to break the British monopoly over trade.

At the Congress session in 1906, Bipan Chandra Pal put forward an eloquent appeal for Boycott as a concomitant of the *Svadeshi* (self-rule) movement. The major part of the Madras delegation, led by L. A. Govindaraghava Iyer, voted against boycott while a small but significant minority, led by Subramanya Bharati and V. U. Chidambaranar, supported it. They were to form the core of the extremist movement in Tamil Nadu, joined by such personalities as Ethiraj Surendranath Arya, Varadaraja Sharma (a Sanskrit pundit of **Tanjavur** college), V. Chakkarai **Chetti**, C. S. Bharati, and K. Venkat Rao. In 1908, they formed the Chennai Jana Sangam. Public meetings began to be addressed in Tamil, the **language** of the people, rather than in chaste English as the members of the **Madras Mahajana Sabha** were wont to do. In 1894, the Congress session was held in Madras.

The period saw the emergence of **Annie Besant** as the main force behind the home rule movement. The **Theosophical Society** founded at Adayar, Madras, used English and the tools of Western liberalism to press for political and social reforms in Tamil Nadu. One such issue was the Age of Consent Bill (legislation introduced in 1889 to raise the age of consent for marriage from 10 to 12), and the other was the Devadasi bill (introduced in the 1930s), which sought to end the evil practice of prostitution traditionally practiced by the **Devadasis** in south India.

The **Brahmin** domination of the Madras Native Association and the Madras Mahajana Sabha was offset by the **non-Brahmin movement** in Tamil Nadu. Toward the end of 1916, a new party, called the South Indian Liberal Federation or the **Justice Party**, came into existence in the Madras Presidency. Its leaders were P. Thyagaraya Chetty, T. M. Nair, and later, **E. V. Ramaswami Naicker**, who came to be known as Periyar (respected one or elder). The journal, *Non-Brahmin*, became its mouthpiece. Later, Periyar started *Kudi Arasu* and *Viduthalai* both of which advocated the non-Brahmin ideology. In the 1930s, the Justice Party obtained the majority and formed the government under the diarchy system devised by the British. The Justice Party, however, lost much ground in the subsequent years because it was perceived as a collaborator of the colonial regime. Periyar started the **Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam (Self-Respect Movement)** and went on to found his own party called the **Dravida Kazhagam**. The Tamil Separatist movement also started under Periyar's leadership, and it is noteworthy that during the transitional years of India's freedom, notable leaders of Tamil Nadu, including E. V. Ramaswami Naicker, began asking for an independent "Dravidisthan."

Gandhi's twin strategies of boycott and *Swadeshi* found much support in Tamil Nadu, especially in traditional weaving centers like Salem, **Coimbatore**, Erode, and **Kanchipuram**. The inhuman treatment of extremist patriots led to the emergence of **revolutionary terrorism** in Tamil politics. The conspiracy and assassination of the Tirunelveli collector, E. W. D. Ashe on 17 June 1911 by **Vanchinathan Iyer** (originally from Krishnapuram but settled down in Chenkottai) and 14 others was a milestone in the evolution of revolutionary terrorism in the State. In the 1930s, Gandhian Civil Disobedience and Revolutionary Terrorism went in tandem in Tamil Nadu. Disobedience predominantly took the form of Salt Satyagraha, which was a mass protest against the unfair tax on salt by the

colonial regime. **C. Rajagopalachari**, T. S. S. Rajan, and Rukmini Lakshmipati launched the agitation in Vedaranyam in **Tiruchirappalli** district. Madras (present-day **Chennai**), Tiruppur, Velur, Salem, Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli (especially Krishnapuram) and Kallikottai became hotbeds of revolutionary activity. It is ironic that the British regime used the Malabar police to *lathi* charge or shoot the patriots. Another direction of patriotic protest was to remove the British flag and hoist the Congress flag atop important official buildings. A revolutionary youth, **Tiruppur Kumaran** died defending the Indian flag.

The Government of India Act of 1935 opened up a new era in the history of India's freedom struggle. In Tamil Nadu, following the elections of 1937, the Congress came to power and C. Rajagopalachari formed the ministry. The Quit India movement witnessed violence in Tamil Nadu as elsewhere in the country. Following the end of World War II in 1945, elections were held in India in 1946 and a Congress ministry was formed in Tamil Nadu under **T. Prakasam**. India became independent on 15 August 1947, and C. Rajagopalachari became the first Indian governor general of India. *See also* EXTREMISTS IN TAMIL FREEDOM STRUGGLE; REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM IN TAMIL NADU; STUDENTS AND FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

– G –

GAMES FOR BOYS. Psychologists have called such games “cathartic” because they cleanse the child of such feelings as jealousy and rivalry.

Chadugudu is a game played with two teams. A member of the team recites a line continuously, holding his breath and crossing the central line and entering the opponents' side. If he touches anyone on the opposite team, he must endeavor to get back to his own side without getting caught and without a pause in his chanting. This deceptively simple game can be a grueling test of endurance and strength. Playing with tops is a popular boys' sport. One boy will place his top within a circle and the others will try to pull it out with their tops. Finally, the tops are rotated on the palm of the hand and the one who is able to sustain the spin on his palm emerges as the

winner. Kite flying is another popular sport, and each boy tries to cut the other's kite. Boys are also fond of playing games with marbles called *Goli* in Tamil. The boy who is able to collect the maximum number of marbles is acknowledged the winner. Another game is called *Aadu Puli*, meaning "goat and tiger." The tiger is surrounded by the goats who form a circle around him. The boy who is the "den" approaches the circle asking "where is my goat?" If the tiger manages to successfully "touch" any of the goats, that boy will have to become the "den" in his turn.

In recent years, cricket has become the most popular sport among boys both in the countryside and in the cities. Interestingly, Tamilians have for a long time played a folk version of cricket known as *Kilithattu*. The folk game is played with two bats or sticks and a small peg four inches long and chiseled at both ends. The longer stick hits the peg and the other person standing near the peg will hit it with his bat. If the peg is caught in mid air, the player is deemed to be "out."

GAMES FOR GIRLS. Tamil girls can still be found playing hopscotch even on a hot summer afternoon in the streets of Tamil Nadu. This is an ancient sport of the Tamils. Another popular game called *kallu* is played with five stones or pebbles by throwing them up into the air and catching them in various sequences. The game is good for hand-eye coordination. The indoor game *pallanguzhi* also called *thayam* is played with cowrie shells or with *manjadi seeds* (seeds that are naturally colored red and black) on a board, which will usually have 14 cavities. A curious game that seems to go back to the early monarchical period and reflects an oppressive system of taxation under the kings is called *Pusanikkai* meaning "pumpkin." A girl "pumpkin" hides between a gardener and a guard. Another girl acts as "king," demanding of the gardener that he surrender his pumpkins. The survival of the "pumpkins" depends on the gardener's skill in evading the king. The game ends when the pumpkin/pumpkins finally surrender to the king. This game is now a part of collective folk memory but is no longer played.

Many of these games are accompanied by folk **music**. For example, the game *kuchchi kuchchi Rakkamma* is sung by both teams in which one team declines to give the girl, saying the price is too small. A significant aspect of this ancient Tamil game is the indication that in early times there was no dowry in the Tamil country (unlike today

when dowry is rampant) but, on the contrary, the bridegroom had to pay “bride price” if he wanted to get married.

GANESAN, GEMINI (1919–2005). A film actor, also known as Ramaswamy Ganesan, became known as Gemini Ganesan because of his long association with **Gemini Film Studios**, which he joined in 1946. Known for his soft, romantic roles, Gemini Ganesan acquired the popular name *kadal Mannan*, literally “king of romance.” He married the film actress **Savithri Ganesan**, and the two together gave many memorable performances. Ganesan is the father of the famous Hindi actress Rekha. *See also* GANESAN, SIVAJI; TAMIL CINEMA.

GANESAN, SIVAJI (1927–2001). Born Villupuram Chinnaiah Pillai Ganesan, this film actor became known as Sivaji Ganesan after his memorable performance as the Maratha King Chathrapathi Sivaji in **C. N. Annadurai’s** play *Sivaji Kanda Indu Rajyam*. With the film *Parasakthi* in 1952, he became the official icon of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)**. The film is remembered for the fiery ideological speeches delivered by Sivaji. He joined the DMK party in 1949 but began distancing himself from it in the 1950s. In the 1960s, he joined the Congress but later deserted it to support the new party Janata Dal, which came to power in 1977. He was a member of the upper house of the Indian Parliament, the Rajya Sabha, between 1982 and 1988. Sivaji’s mass appeal and iconic status rivaled that of his contemporary, **M. G. Ramachandran (MGR)**. He was honored with the title of *Chevalier* by the Government of France, was conferred Padma Shri and received other awards from the Government of India. When he died in 2001, his funeral procession was witnessed by unprecedented crowds. He was truly the *Nadigar Tilagam*—literally “the best of actors.” *See also* GANESAN, GEMINI; RAJNIKANT; TAMIL CINEMA.

GEMINI FILM STUDIOS. This emerged as the most popular film studio in the 1940s. The studio was founded by S. S. Vasan, who started his business as a film distribution agency. The 1948 mega hit, *Chandralekha*, produced in Gemini studios, was also successfully dubbed in Hindi. Following another major Tamil 1949 hit, *Apporva Sahodarargal*, a remake of Alexander Dumas’s *The Corsican Brothers*, the studio flourished. It began producing Hindi films as well, including

Insaniyat (1955) and *Raj Tilak* (the remake of the Tamil film *Vanjikottai Valibhan*) in 1958. The actor Ganesan became known as **Gemini Ganesan** because of his long and successful association with the Gemini Studio. Unlike its contemporary **AVM Film Studios** that still operates successfully, Gemini Studio folded in the late 1970s. *See also* TAMIL CINEMA.

GOPAL NAYAK (fl. 18th century). He was the poligar of Virupakshi and an early freedom fighter against British rule. Gopal Nayak is remembered today as the leader of the Dindigal league—a fascinating conglomeration of anti-British forces. While continuing to pay the heavy taxes levied upon their tiny principalities, the poligars, led by Gopal Nayak of Virupakshi, Lakshmi Nayak of Manaparai, and Poojari Nayak of Deodanapatti, drew into their fold gallant chieftains and poligars. The three streams of rebel organizations led by the chiefs of Tirunelveli, Ramnad, and Dindigal met in Kallarnadu. The support of the **Kallar**, an ancient forest tribe going back to the **Sangam** period, provided vital support to the rebels in terms of a military base. The Dindigal League drew inspiration from the stiff resistance to the British put up by Tippu Sultan of Mysore in the course of the Mysore wars. Tippu even sent along a contingent to show his solidarity with the Hindu poligars. The Dindigal League began its operations at **Coimbatore** and eventually joined the rebels under **Oomai Thurai**, the deaf and dumb brother of **Kattabomman**, the poligar of Panjalankurichi. In a last-ditch battle at Anamalai hills, the local peasantry came to the aid of the rebels, but the gallant Gopal Nayak, now an old man in his seventies, was finally overpowered and hanged by the British in 1801.

GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI (1811–1896). This musical genius and saint composer was a contemporary of **Thyagaraja**. According to musical lore, it is said that the two encountered each other when Thyagaraja sang a composition in *raga* Abhogi and asked Gopala-krishna Bharati whether he had composed anything in this *raga*. The saint responded by spontaneously singing *Sabapatiki veru daivam*, meaning “no god can equal the great Sabapati,” now regarded as a celebrated composition on Lord Nataraja of Chidambaram temple. This great saint-composer gave up family life in order to concentrate on the path of renunciation and devotion. He was a practitioner of the ancient style of living enjoined in the Hindu scriptures called *unja*

vritti, whereby devotees would sing the name of the Lord and move from house to house accepting alms. Gopalakrishna Bharati is also associated with the dramatic musical tradition called *kalakshepam*. In this dramatized musical tradition, religious stories, Tamil mythological themes, and social plots are handled in a manner that can be called the **theater** mode, interspersed with full-throated **music**. Among his best-known literary creations is *Nandanar Charitram*, which was published by a French publisher, Siseya, at Karaikkal in 1861. He composed over 100 songs and three musical plays. This saint-composer is also credited with systematizing as well as richly contributing to the devotional musical tradition known in the Tamil country as *Hari Bhajanai* meaning “worship of Hari.”

GOPALASWAMY, V., alias VAIKO (1944–). Gopalaswamy belongs to a group of emerging politicians of Tamil Nadu who have begun to play key roles in the highly volatile Tamil Nadu politics. Gopalaswamy had his political grooming under political stalwarts like **M. Karunanidhi** in the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)**. Better known as Vaiko and a prominent politician of the State today, he is free on bail after having been in prison under the new anti-terrorist legislation Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), clamped on him by the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)**-led **J. Jayalalitha** government. He has been accused of indulging in anti-government activities by openly sponsoring the cause of the Liberation Tigers for Tamil Ealam (LTTE). In fact, Vaiko’s admiration for their leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran (whom he met in the jungles of Vavuniya in Sri Lanka), led him to name his grandson “Prabhakar.” Qualified as a lawyer, Vaiko entered politics under the influence of the DMK leader M. Karunanidhi. Vaiko was elected three times to the Rajya Sabha by the DMK leadership. He went into prison for the first time in 1976 under the draconian law, Maintenance of Internal Security Act, for opposing “Internal Emergency” imposed by the then Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. He was also jailed during the DMK Party’s anti-Hindi agitation. Vaiko briefly joined the AIADMK in 1998 and rejoined the DMK in 1999, only to leave yet again in 2001. Currently, Vaiko heads the new party founded by him called **Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK)**.

GUYANA. *See* TAMILS IN GUYANA.

– H –

HINDU, THE. Six young visionary nationalists—**G. Subramanya Iyer**, M. Veeraraghavachari, T. T. Rangachari, P. V. Rangachari, D. Kesava Rao Pant, and Subba Rao Pantulu—started *The Hindu* in 1878. Their starting capital was one rupee and three quarters of an anna. Interestingly, this “**Brahmin** dominated” paper launched its first issue on 20 September 1878 with the support and patronage of the “Triplicane Literary Society,” founded by a Muslim, Mir Ali. Within four years, *The Hindu* had emerged as the barometer of the political climate of the Madras Presidency. It is said that the British Viceroy George Fredrick Samuel Rippon used to suggest on many occasions, “Take *The Hindu* and see what it says.” It became a tri-weekly periodical in 1883, but 10 years later it was a full-fledged daily **newspaper**. On 7 November 1897, the paper wrote a fairly accurate description of the professional background of the early Tamil freedom fighters: “School masters, lawyers and journalists form the most important and active members of political bodies or associations.” In 1905, Kasturi Ranga **Iyengar**, a successful lawyer from **Coimbatore** who came to practice in Madras, purchased *The Hindu*. While the paper devoted much coverage to the functioning of the **Madras Native Association (MNA)** under **V. Bhashyam Iyengar**, the founder members of *The Hindu* constituted the **Madras Mahajana Sabha** when the MNA began losing political ground. The newspaper sought collective nationalist activity against imperial rule rather than piecemeal provincial efforts. In its editorial dated 12 July 1883, it stated “The time for half-measures and half-hearted action is gone; that for united and sustaining efforts has arrived. The 250 million living in this vast continent should no longer regard themselves as inhabitants of different provinces. . . . They have become the nation of a great and flourishing empire.” The history of the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu** is, in fact, well documented in the centenary publication of *The Hindu*, detailing these eventful years through its editorials and news stories.

The Hindu continues to be a popular daily with the control predominantly in the hands of the Kasturi family and is one of India’s leading English-language dailies with ten editions from different cities across the country. The circulation of the paper in April 2005,

according to India's Audit Bureau of Circulation, was 1,078,000, with a readership of more than 8 million.

HINDUISM See, ALVAR; BHAGAVATA MOVEMENT; BRAHMINS; CASTE; IYENGAR; IYER; NAYANAR; NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT; RELIGION.

HONG KONG. See TAMILS IN HONG KONG.

– I –

IDAIYAR. The Idaiyars are a community of shepherds. They came from the intermediate zone called *tinai mullai*, which lay between the hilly *tinai kurinji* and the arable agricultural *tinai marudam*. Their name itself, meaning “intermediate” or “middle,” seems to have been derived from their socio-economic location in Tamil society. The **caste** name is interchangeable with the names Konar or Kovalar, names used as early as the **Sangam** period for pastoralists. The Idaiyar employ the suffix “Pillai” in the northern districts of Tamil Nadu, in areas like North Arcot and the Ambedkar districts. In the southern districts, they are called Konar. Among their other titles are Nambiyar and Nainar.

IDANGAI AND VALANGAI CASTES. The vertical division of Tamil society into *idangai* (left-hand) and *valangai* (right-hand) **castes** took the place of the traditional caste system in the Tamil context. These categories emerged in the 11th century. There are several myths regarding the origin of these divisions. One story is that King Parimalan who was ruling the Chola country was murdered by one Vedavyasan over the issue of the right to priesthood of the **Kammalar** (craft community). The successor king made his supporters stand on his right and his opponents stand on his left hand and thus did the *idangai* and *valangai* categories come about. Another oral tradition is that Goddess Kamakshi of **Kanchipuram** created the two divisions. **Brahmins** stood outside these two divisions. Figuratively it cut the societal body into the left and the right castes depending on the nature of their economic occupation. By and large the agricultural

groups formed the *valangai* while the craft groups constituted the *idangai*. **Chettis** or merchants seem to figure on both sides. There however seems to have been no clear logic to this division. For instance the Komati Chettis are regarded as *valangai* or right but the Beri Chettis are *idangai* or left. The **Saliya** weaver caste are *valangai* but the **Kaikkola** and Devanga who are also weavers are classified as *idangai*. The **Paraiyar** are *valangai* but the **Pallar** are *idangai*. The strangest division is that of the **Chakkiliyan** or Madiga caste. Among them the women are treated as *valangai* and the men as belonging to the *idangai*! During the Chola period King **Rajaraja Chola I** created a special regiment called *valangai velaikkarar*. In the Vijayanagar period, the *valangai* and *idangai* castes united against the oppression of landlords and heavy State taxation. Their united resistance against the State is particularly visible in the widespread protests throughout the Tamil country but particularly in North Arcot, South Arcot and Kanchipuram in 1529.

IDLI. This ancient dish is a favorite food of the Tamils. Rice and de-husked black gram, soaked in water, are ground together in an optimum proportion of 4:1. Salt is added and the dough is allowed to ferment for 10 to 12 hours. The dough rises, becomes light and fluffy. This is steamed in special plates in the shape of circular discs. Unlike *dosai*, idlis are totally devoid of oil. *Idlis* are usually eaten either as breakfast or as high tea. They are highly recommended since they are devoid of oil and are rich in fiber and protein. *Idlis* can be had either with chutney or **sambar**. See also CUISINE.

ILANDIRAIYAN. Ilandiraiyan is referred to in the literature of the **Sangam age**. He is said to be the founder of the **Pallava** dynasty. He ruled from Thondaimandalam with the political capital at **Kanchipuram**. He is therefore known as Thondaiman Ilandiraiyan. He is the hero of some of the poems in the *Pathupattu*.

ILANGO ADIGAL (chronology uncertain but may have fl. ca. second century CE). The grandson of **Karikala Chola**, brother of the **Chera** king **Senguttavan** and author of the celebrated epic *Silappadikaram*. It is believed that he became a Jain monk of the Nigrantha sect. *Silappadikaram* is a mine of information on Tamil his-

tory, **religion**, and culture. One encounters a whole range of **music** and **dance** since the epic's protagonist Madhavi is a courtesan well versed in both.

ILANGO VAN, E. V. K. C. (1948–). As with most Tamil politicians, Ilangovan's political roots go back to the Dravidian parties like the **Dravida Kazhagam**. His illustrious grandparents were **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**'s brother, Krishnaswami Naicker, and the well-known politician E. V. K. Sampath. Ilangovan, however, began his political career as a member of the Congress-I and was elected Youth Congress leader of Erode district in 1978. He was elected to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly in 1984 from Sathiyamangalam. However, he lost most of the subsequent elections as the Congress-I failed to make any inroads into Tamil Nadu politics. He lost in 1989 from Krishnagiri when the Congress decided against forming political alliances with regional parties and decided to contest the Tamil Nadu elections alone. He lost again from Gobichettipalayam in 1998. From 2000 onward, he has held the position of the regional leader of the Congress I. His sole political significance lies in his illustrious political lineage and his representation of Congress I in Tamil politics.

ILAYARAJA (1943–). The late 1970s in **Tamil cinema** can be called the period of the "Ilayaraja Revolution" in terms of the transformational quality of Ilayaraja's **music**. Born Daniel Rajayya Ilayaraja, unlike his contemporaries in the film world he chose to join the Communist party rather than the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam**. Ilayaraja learned classical **Carnatic music** from T. V. Gopalakrishnan, the singer and percussion (*mridangam*) player. His first major successful compositions were those for the musical *Annakili* (1976). Many of his songs fused Tamil folk music with Western classical and South Indian Carnatic music. His fusion techniques are best reflected in the two albums, *How to Name It* and *Nothing but Wind*. Ilayaraja has composed nearly 800 songs, and still continues to compose music although he has been somewhat overshadowed by his one-time assistant **A. R. Rahman**. See also SONGS IN TAMIL CINEMA.

INDIA CEMENTS LIMITED. A small village called Kallidaikurichchi in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu is regarded as the

breeding ground of the Tamil **Brahmin** industrialists. Shankaralinga **Iyer** of India Cements comes from this little pocket of the Tamil country. The company was started in 1946 to manufacture and market cement. The first plant was set up in Shankarnagar in Tirunelveli district and began commercial production in 1949. The company's second cement plant was set up at Shankaridurg near Salem in 1963. Today, the India Cements Group, the largest producer of cement in South India, has seven cement plants—three in Tamil Nadu and four in Andhra Pradesh—with an annual production of nine million tons and a market share of around 28%. The cement from the various company plants is marketed under well-established brands, i. e., Shankar Cement, Shankar Sakthi, Coromandel Cement, Coromandel King, and Raasi Cement, and is sold through a strong distribution network of over 10,000 outlets. The India Cements Group also has a presence in shipping, sugar, trading, and finance. *See also* AMALGAMATIONS; ASHOK LEYLAND; INDUSTRY; TVS GROUP OF COMPANIES.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (IIT), CHENNAI. This premier institution was established in 1959 by an Act of Parliament and was declared as “An Institution of National Importance” in 1962. However, the **Anna University**, also located in **Chennai**, has now overshadowed the IIT Madras. In 1956, the German government offered technical assistance in establishing an institute of higher education in engineering in India. The first Indo-German agreement in Bonn, West Germany, for the establishment of the Indian Institute of Technology at Madras, was signed in 1959. The Institute was formally inaugurated in 1959 by Professor Humayun Kabir, Union Minister for Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs. The IIT system has seven Institutes of Technology located at Kharagpur (est. 1951), Mumbai (est. 1958), Chennai (est. 1959), Kanpur (est. 1959), Delhi (est. 1961), Guwahati (est. 1994), and Roorkee (est. 1847).

The IIT Madras is a residential institute with nearly 360 faculty, 4,000 students, and 1,250 administrative and supporting staff. It is a self-contained campus located in the city of Chennai in a beautiful wooded area of about 250 hectares. It has been growing from strength to strength ever since it obtained its charter from the Indian Parliament in 1961 and has established itself as a premier center for teaching, research, and industrial consultancy in the country.

The Institute has 15 academic departments and several advanced research centers in various disciplines of engineering and pure sciences, with nearly 100 laboratories organized in a unique pattern of functioning. A faculty of international repute, a brilliant student community, excellent technical and supporting staff, and an effective administration have all contributed to the preeminent status of IIT Madras. *See also* EDUCATION.

INDUSTRY. *See* INDUSTRY IN TAMIL NADU.

INDUSTRY IN TAMIL NADU. The Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited (TIDCO) published a report in 2000 stating the essential outline of the state's industrial development. The state records the third largest SDP (State Domestic Product) among the Indian states. In the period from 1960 to 1998, Tamil Nadu had the highest growth rate and is the only southern state with a 6.0% growth rate in the 1990s. The New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research finds Tamil Nadu as the third leading state in human resource development as well as the second lowest in fertility rate. The state also records a literacy rate of 70% in contrast to the national average of 62%. The state boasts 155 engineering colleges, 180 **information technology** institutions, and 204 polytechnics. Tamil Nadu is rated no. 1 in software **education**, and the industry constitutes 13% of the national share. Tamil Nadu has also taken the lead in the automobile industry, contributing the major share of the national vehicle production (See Table 1 below.).

Table 1. Tamil Nadu's Share in Vehicular Production

<i>Nature of Vehicular Industry</i>	<i>Tamil Nadu's Share (% in Indian Economy)</i>
Cars	21
Heavy commercial vehicles (Jeeps, etc.)	33
Motorcycles	35
Mopeds	13
Railway coaches	46

Source: *Industrial Profile of Tamil Nadu*, issued by Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO), Government of Tamil Nadu, 17 December 2002.

Tamil Nadu has a network of about 110 industrial parks that offer developed plots with supporting infrastructure. Also, the government is promoting other industrial parks including Rubber Park, Apparel Parks, Floriculture Park, TICEL Park for Biotechnology, Siruseri IT Park, and Agro Export Zones, among others. Some 56% of India's total knitwear exports come from Tirupur, Tamilnadu.

The heavy engineering manufacturing companies are located in the suburbs of **Chennai**. Chennai boasts the presence of global car manufacturing giants like Ford, Hyundai, BMW, and Mitsubishi as well as homegrown companies like MRF, TI Cycles of India, **Ashok Leyland**, and TVS. Kalpakkam nuclear power plant, Neyveli Lignite Corporation, and the Narimanam natural gas plants provide sources of fuel and energy for the nation; 55% of electricity from wind power produced in India from windmills comes from Tamil Nadu. The town of Sivakasi is the leader for printing, fireworks, and production of safety matches in India. It contributes to 80% of India's total safety matches production, 90% of India's total fireworks production, and 60% of India's total offset printing solutions; it ranks as one of the highest taxpayer towns in India. Sivakasi and Tirupur are 100% employed towns, among a few such towns in India. With Ford, Hyundai Motors, and HM Mitsubishi car projects, Chennai is becoming known as "The Detroit of India." However, small-scale industries still account for a larger share of the labor force. *See also* AMALGAMATIONS; BINNYS; ECONOMY; INDIA CEMENTS; MURUGAPPA CHETTIAR GROUP; PARRYS; SIMPSONS; SPENCERS; TVS.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY. Information technology, IT as it is widely known, is clearly the largest-growing **industry** today. It has been identified as a core area of development by the Tamil Nadu government. It has capitalized on the inherent strengths of the state—a large fund of IT skills, low cost of living, better than average infrastructure, and "investor friendly" public policies. Software exports have brought in earnings of over US\$2.43 billion in 2005. For the hardware sector, Tamil Nadu earned US\$100 million in 2005. It is estimated that the contribution of Tamil Nadu to the IT sector will represent about 30% of India's entire software and hardware production.

Currently, this state is a close competitor to Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Delhi. It is projecting itself to become the “cyber capital of India.” The Tamil Nadu government has maintained a dual focus on the demand as well as the supply side of the IT market. Pentafour, a local IT firm, designs multimedia software applications. The firm is presently designing the multimedia content for Hollywood animation movies. Domestic software giants such as Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), INFOSYS, and WIPRO, operate large development centers in **Chennai**. Satyam, which also is expanding rapidly, has a strong base in Chennai. A recent NASSCOM study has rated Chennai as the best location for setting up software projects within India. The Tamil Nadu government has offered multiple incentives to attract foreign investment into the local IT industry. International software firms like Alcatel, EDS, and IBM have already established their offices in Chennai. Closely following the directive of the World Bank issued in 1999, Tamil Nadu has been developing both “hard” infrastructural support such as transport and communications and “soft” support consisting of institutional infrastructure like effective legal, financial, and **educational** systems.

The technocratic structure in Tamil Nadu is made up of the IT task force that provides policy guidance in tandem with the IT department (the first of its kind in India), which oversees the implementation of these policies. The Electronic Corporation of Tamil Nadu (ELCOT) acts as a single window agency for all IT-related investments in the state. Both ELCOT and the state venture capital fund provide financial support at the grass roots for major IT projects such as E-governance and E-commerce. High-tech parks constitute yet another aspect of the informational infrastructure. The state has set up TIDEL, a 93,000 m² software technology park in the heart of Chennai at a cost of US\$75 million. Similarly, IT parks of lesser dimensions have sprung up in the various districts of the state. Tamil Nadu has a high teledensity, with 75% of the rural areas having access to telephones. The government has introduced computer science as an elective in all state high schools with a view to achieving 100% computer literacy in Tamil Nadu by 2010–2012. Furthermore, the 1,000 Internet community centers being set up by Worldtel through the state will ensure that even remote areas reap the benefits of internet. The state is also working toward the adoption of a coding standard for the Tamil

font, along with major initiatives like the creation of Tamil virtual university in order to enhance its awareness among the Tamils.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES. The International Institute of Tamil Studies was established on 21 October 1970. The conceptual framework for it was established during the Second International Conference on Tamil Studies held in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1968. Scholars put forth the idea of a separate research institute exclusively for Tamil Studies, and the discussions bore fruit in the course of the Third International Conference on Tamil Studies. Housed at Taramanai in Chennai, the Institute hosts scholars and students of Tamil from all over the world. The Institute has also issued landmark publications on Tamil **religion, economy, society, and culture.**

IRRIGATION. Techniques of irrigation have been known in the Tamil country since the pre-**Christian** era. **Megalithic** sites in the State have been known to be located near irrigation tanks. An amazing piece of architecture is the grand irrigation dam known as “anicut” located in the Kaveri delta between **Tanjavur** and **Tiruchirapalli**. Measuring 329 m long, 2.18 m wide, and 4.5 m deep, it was constructed by the **Sangam** chieftain **Karikala Chola**. Traditional sources of irrigation were rivers, reservoirs, tanks, and wells. In pre-colonial India, irrigation tanks were constructed by royalty or by the nobility either to commemorate royal births, deaths, or military victories. It has been estimated that until the 18th century approximately one-third of the irrigated area of Tamil Nadu was watered by *eris* (tanks). *Eris* played an important role in maintaining ecological harmony as flood control systems, preventing soil erosion and wastage of runoff groundwater in the surrounding areas. *Eris* provided the appropriate microclimate for the local areas, without which paddy cultivation would have been impossible. From ancient times (commencing in the eighth–ninth century in the **Pallava-Chola** period) until the pre-colonial era, tanks, wells, and sluices were maintained locally with local resources. Village communities also constructed and maintained tanks out of a collective fund managed by the “tank committee” (*eri varyiyam*) of the village as evidenced by the 10th century **Ut-tiramerur inscription** of the Chola dynasty.

The British rule in Tamil Nadu brought about disastrous experiments with the land tenure system in the quest for greater revenues. The enormous extent of appropriation of local resources by the State led to the disintegration of the traditional society. The village communities could no longer construct, repair, or maintain *Eri* or other irrigation channels. As a result, these extraordinary water-harvesting systems began to decline. These findings form a part of a detailed Citizens' Report edited by Anil Agarwal and Sunita Narain submitted by the Centre for Science and Environment in 1997 under the title *Dying Wisdom*.

The first Irrigation Commission was set up in 1878—along with the Famine Commission, since the year was marked by a severe famine. The irrigation commission combined the twin tasks of disaster management and flood and famine management as well as positive schemes for increasing the amount of land under irrigation and improving productivity. The first irrigation report was published in 1903. At the beginning of the First Five Year Plan (1951–1956), 852,000 hectares were commanded by major and medium irrigation schemes. In 1967–1968, the net area irrigated increased to 2.6 million hectares. In post-independence India, an irrigation commission was set up for the first time in 1969, and since then such commissions have been a regular feature of state policy. It has been estimated that of the total area under cultivation, roughly 47.5% is irrigated land. State expenditure on irrigation has risen steadily over the last four decades, reflecting the importance attached to it in the promotion of **agriculture**. In 1997–1998, the budgetary allocation for irrigation stood at 392.2 crores or rupees 3922 million (an Indian unit of measurement, a crore is equal to 100 lakhs or 10 million) to cover not only the major and minor irrigation works but also disaster management such as flood control. The net irrigated area in the state stands at around 52.8%. *See also* LAND NANJAI; LAND PUNJAI.

IRULAR. The Irular are the second largest Scheduled Tribe of Tamil Nadu. The Irular, along with the **Toda** tribes, inhabit the **Nilgiri** hills predominantly, although they are also found in **Coimbatore**, Salem, South Arcot, North Arcot, the Ambedkar district, and the **Tiruchirappalli** and **Tanjavur** districts. They are called in these parts variously as Urali, Villiyian, and Velliyan. In Tamil history, the Irular tribesmen

are referred to as hunter-gatherers. They made a living by selling honey, eucalyptus oil, jackfruit, and other forest products usually to middlemen or traders. Nowadays, many of them work on a daily wage as construction laborers.

ISAI VELLALAR. Unlike the **Vellalar**, who are agriculturists, the Isai Vellalars are a community of **musicians**. They are associated with two ancient **musical instruments**, the **nadasvaram**, a windpipe instrument, and the *melam* (a drum). It is believed that the Isai Vellalars are the sons or brothers of **Devaradiyar** or dancing girls. In fact, among some **castes** like the **Kaikkolar**, the eldest girl was sometimes dedicated to the **temple** as a Devaradiyar. Her female offspring became musicians and dancers, and boys took to the *nadaswaram*. Many of the leading female **Carnatic music** vocalists, including **M. S. Subbalakshmi** and **M. L. Vasanthakumari**, belonged to the Isai Vellalar community.

ISLAM. Islam is the religion of the Muslims. It is believed that Islam came to peninsular India in the course of the eighth–ninth centuries along with the Arab traders. The early conversions were mainly along the Kerala coast. The conversions in the Tamil country most probably began with the establishment of the Maabar Sultanate in 1335. The Muslims of Tamil Nadu do not form a homogenous group but are divided horizontally and vertically just like the **Hindus**. Those low **castes** that converted to Islam continue to carry their low caste status into their new religion. The Constitutional Reforms Committee of 1908 recorded the percentage of Tamil Muslims as 6.2% of the total population, while the **Christians** constituted 2.2% and the Hindus were 87.9% (interestingly, the Tamil Brahmins were a mere 3.6% of this figure). According to the Tamil Nadu Census of 1911, the Tamil Muslims are broadly divided into Dudekula, Labbai, Mappila, Pathan, Saiyad, and Shaikh. As with many other parts of India, the Muslim community was backward and was largely illiterate, although the community could be proud of some very prosperous businessmen.

The Muslim demand for Communal Representation started in the beginning of the 19th century. The community newspaper, *Muslim Patriot*, maintained that communal representation was essential to

prevent members of one community from usurping the rights and appropriating the voice of another community. The Prince of Arcot provided the leadership for this movement. The Madras Muslims formed the Anjuman-i-Islamiah in 1876 and the Muhammadan Association in 1882, which merged in 1893. The Muslims also sought and gained reservations for recruitment to services under the quota system in 1925. In post-independence Tamil Nadu, with the birth of political parties along caste lines, a party that has emerged along Muslim communal lines is the Jamait-I-Millat. However, Tamil politics has not seen the kind of communal divide that is visible in northern and central India with parties like the present Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Shiv Sena. In Tamil Nadu, the Muslim community continues to prefer to fight for its rights within the mainstream political parties, whether it is the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** or the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)**. Both these parties are supporting the demand for “reservations” for ‘dalit’ Muslims.

ISMAIL, M. M. (1921–2005). When Chief Justice Ismail died, he left a great void in the sphere of Tamil spiritual **literature**. Despite his birth into an orthodox Muslim family, he is known today for his extensive commentaries on various aspects of the Hindu epic *Ramayana*. Ismail became the chief justice of the **Chennai** High Court in 1979 and held this office until 1981. He was also the founder of the **Kambar** Kazhagam, which he established in 1974.

IYENGAR (AIYENGAR)—THE VAISHNAVITE BRAHMINS.

Those who worship **Vishnu** to the exclusion of **Shiva** are known as Sri Vaishnavite **Brahmins**. The names of the followers of the Smartha Brahmins carry the suffix “**Iyer**,” while the names of the Vaishnavites carry the suffix “**Iyengar**.” The devotional tradition of Vaishnavism in early medieval Tamil country is traced to the 12 **Alvars** (also spelled Azhwar). The most important votary of the philosophy of Vaishnavism, which came to be denominated as “**Visishta Advaita**,” was Sri **Ramanujacharya** who belonged to the 11th century. After the period of Ramanujacharya, the Sri Vaishnavite Iyengars came to be divided into *vadakalai* (literally the northern branch) and *tenkalai* (the southern branch). While the *vadagalai* represented

the “northern” Sanskritic and therefore orthodox stream of Sri Vaishnavism, the *tenkalai* came to represent the “southern” Tamil and comparatively more liberal stream of Sri Vaishnavism.

All of the Iyengars believe in the worship of Vishnu in his various manifestations, and according to Vaishnavite canonical traditions their pilgrimage centers consist of 108 “Divya Desams.” The Iyengars of today are fairly eclectic in their ideas, and the two sects are no more endogamous. **C. Rajagopalachari**, the first chief minister of post-independence Tamil Nadu, was a devout Iyengar who is known for his commentary on Vaishnavite texts but more particularly the *Bhaja Govindam* of Shankara Bhagavatpada.

IYENGAR, ANANTACHARI AKOOR (1903–1966). Born in Madras, Anantachari gave up his studies after his S. S. L. C. (school leaving) examination in order to join the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**. He led the Tamil volunteers in 1923 in the Nagpur Flag Satyagraha. He was arrested and kept in the Nagpur central jail, where he came into contact with Acharya Vinobha Bhave and also the eminent educator, industrialist, and nationalist, Jamna Lal Bajaj, both of whom were fellow prisoners. In 1924, Anantachari started the Gautama Ashrama at Walajapet (near Vellore) in the heart of the Tamil country. He plunged into Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi’s program of constructive social work and took part in the Neil Statute Satyagraha in 1927. He also participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement between 1930 and 1932 and spent prison terms in the Bellary as well as in Vellore jails. Anantachari died in obscurity.

IYENGAR, ARIYAKKUDI RAMANUJA (1890–1967). He was born into an orthodox Vaishnavite family in 1890 in Ariyakkudi and thus came to be known popularly as Ariyakkudi, like his contemporary **Chemangudi Srinivasa Iyer**. In fact, the association of the tiny village of Ariyakkudi with this musical genius is its sole claim to fame. Ramanuja **Iyengar** became proficient not only in **Tamil** but also in Sanskrit, which he learned from his *guru*, Krishna Shastrigal. It is said that as a young child he was asked to render a song before the *zamindar* (big landlord equivalent to a feudal lord) by the legendary singer-composer Harikesanallur Muthaiya Bhagavathar. The patron rewarded the boy with a hundred Rupees, which in those days

was a princely amount. The boy stayed with and learned **music** from Namakkal Pallavi Narasimha Iyengar under the *gurukula* system of learning. *Pallavi* was an honorific given to his guru in recognition of his expertise in rendering this musical form. Ariyakkudi underwent further training with Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar. An interesting facet of the personality of Ariyakkudi was his deep involvement in resolving the rivalry between the *chinna katchi* (select league) and *periya katchi* (big league consisting of the hoi polloi of musicians) at the **Thyagaraja** festival in Tiruvaigar. Those musicians who were paid big money and invited for six-hour concerts constituted the select league, while the vast majority consisted of unpaid or underpaid small-time musicians. Heading the Tiruvaigar festival in 1931, Ariyakkudi brought the two warring groups together. Ariyakkudi is remembered today not only for his musical genius but also for his eminent disciple **Palakkad K. V. Narayanaswamy**. Narayanaswamy's melodious concerts immortalized the Ariyakkudi musical legacy. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N.; MUSIC; MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR; SHYAMA SHASTRI; SUBBALAKSHMI, M. S.; THYAGARAJA.

IYENGAR, K. BHASHYAM (1844–1908). Sir Bashyam **Iyengar**, a legal luminary in Madras toward the end of the 19th century and the first member of the Indian Bar to be knighted, was among those who foregrounded the nationalist movement in Tamil Nadu. He was born into the Vembakkam family that played a prominent part in the legal and social environment of the old Madras Presidency. His family was both wealthy and influential. Bashyam Iyengar got his degree in law and joined the Bar Council in 1872. Advocate General of Madras *P. O'Sullivan*, who appointed him his junior, acknowledged his skills. Iyengar acted as advocate general in 1898 and 1905. N. S. Ramaswamy, in a pen portrait of him in S. P. Sen's book, *The Dictionary of Political Biography*, describes Bashyam Iyengar as "an eminent Victorian."

In 1901, Bashyam was appointed a judge of the Madras High Court. Many of his judgments came from his sound knowledge of indigenous legal canons such as the 12th-century text, *Mitakshara*, said to have been written by the Chalukyan king Someswara. He was closely associated with the **Madras Native Association** and advocated reforms

within the constitutional framework. His moderate views and outright rejection of revolutionary ideas led to his marginalization in Tamil politics. Bashyam Iyengar died in 1908, marking the end of the era of liberal politicians and reformist politics.

IYENGAR, KASTURI SRINIVASA (1887–1959). Kasturi Srinivasa was born in **Coimbatore**, a growing industrial center, where his father, S. Kasturi Ranga **Iyengar**, was practicing as a lawyer. In 1894, he moved to Madras (present-day **Chennai**), and it was here that Srinivasa had his schooling. In 1905, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar purchased *The Hindu*. His cousin, A. Rangaswami Iyengar, was the manager and assistant editor of *The Hindu* until 1915 when Srinivasa took over and later inherited the paper on his father's death in 1923. *The Hindu* was to play a crucial role in shaping public opinion during the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**. During the years of World War II (1939–1945), Srinivasa played a crucial role as president of the All-India Newspaper Editors' conference in safeguarding the Indian press from attacks by the oppressive British regime under the Defense of India rules. He evolved the system of press advisory committees to combat censorship, and all of the Indian **newspapers**, including *The Times of India* and *The Statesman*, suspended publication for one day as a protest against government censorship.

Srinivasa Iyengar helped establish the Press Trust of India, popularly known as the PTI, immediately following independence. It is noteworthy that in 1954 he was awarded the Padma Bhushan by the Indian government in recognition of his services to the press. Soon after, the growth of trade unionism in the world of newspaper publishing resulted in a major strike, and *The Hindu* was shut down after an unbroken publication record of 80 years. The strike was a shock to Srinivasa Iyengar, who died in 1959. *The Hindu* continues to be a popular daily, with the control predominantly in the hands of the Kasturi family.

IYENGAR, N. GOPALASWAMY (1882–1953). A nephew of S. Kasturi Ranga **Iyengar** and the younger brother of A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Gopalaswamy Iyengar came from a **Brahmin** landowning family in **Tanjavur** district. He was educated at Law College, Madras (present-day **Chennai**) and served as assistant professor in Pachchayappa Col-

lege. In 1905, he joined the Madras Civil Service and served there until 1937. The greater part of his political career lay outside the borders of Tamil Nadu. In 1937, he became dewan of Kashmir. He appealed to the British for Indianization of the army. He was associated with the framing of free India's constitution. He served in the first central cabinet and was minister of railways and minister of defense until 1952.

IYENGAR, SRINIVASA S. (1874–1941). Seshadri Srinivasa **Iyengar** was born into an orthodox Sri Vaishnavite **Brahmin** family of affluent landowners of Ramanathapuram. Taking the usual route of the nationalist leaders of that era, Srinivasa Iyengar got his degree in Law from University of Madras in 1897. He married Ranganayaki, the daughter of the celebrated lawyer and High Court judge **Sir K. Bashyam Iyengar**. Srinivasa Iyengar combined his knowledge of Western jurisprudence with intimate knowledge of the Hindu legal canon embedded in the *Dharma Shastras*. He began his legal practice in the Madras High Court in 1898. His edition of Mayne's *Hindu Law* published in 1939 was regarded as a classic and is an indispensable reference book for lawyers.

He also entered the domain of Tamil politics around the same time. Besides the influence of his father-in-law, the political ideas of Srinivasa Iyengar carried the imprint of Sir **Chettur Shankaran Nair** (who presided over the Amravati session of the Congress in 1897) and C. Vijayaraghavachari (who presided over the Nagpur session of the Congress in 1920). Srinivasa Iyengar took his first major plunge into nationalist politics in 1920 after resigning as advocate general of Madras. He presided over the Madras Provincial Conference at Tirunelveli in 1920. At the same time, he gave up his bar practice, resigned the membership of the Legislative Council, and returned the title Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire (CIE), which he had received from the British government.

Throwing himself into the organizational work of the Indian National Congress, Srinivasa Iyengar participated actively in its sessions from Ahmedabad in 1921 to Lahore in 1929. As a member of the Congress Swarajya Party, he led his party to victory in Madras in 1926 and was himself elected to the Central Assembly. He was elected deputy leader of the Congress Party and presided over the Gauhati session of the Congress in 1926. In 1927, at the Madras session of the Congress

Party, he supported the move for a Congress-Muslim League pact, which was successfully carried through. He organized a boycott against the Simon Commission in Madras in 1927. His politics slowly developed Socialist leanings and he began to have major differences with Motilal Nehru who was striving for India's "Dominion Status" within the framework of British paramountcy. Challenging the senior Nehru, Srinivasa Iyengar founded the Independence League with himself as president and Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose as secretaries. Iyengar retired from active politics in the 1930s and died in 1941, six years before independence. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

IYENGAR, T. V. SUNDARAM (1877–1955). Industrialist, financier, and founder of the industrial complex of the **TVS Group of Companies**, TVS (as he came to be known) was born in 1877 at Trissur into an orthodox Vaishnavite family. His father was a lawyer, but TVS went against his family's wishes and rejected a legal career in order to embark on a career as a small-time entrepreneur. He started commercial farming in Tirukkanangudi, his mother's estate at Nerugari hills. He cultivated bamboo and several other trees and sold timber and bamboo on contract. Due to family pressure, he joined the **Tiruchirapalli** railway station as a clerk in 1903 and again as a clerk in the Imperial Bank at **Madurai**. In 1908, when his father died, he became a full-time timber merchant, getting teak and other kinds of timber from Kerala and Burma and selling it at a good profit. In 1912, Iyengar invested the profits from timber in the bus business with a transporter named Khan Bahadur Kadar in the **Tanjavur-Pudukkottai** route. This was developed as a major TVS transport industry with a fleet of over 600 buses and lorries in 1955 plying to different places from Madurai. His firm became the distributor for General Motors. From transport, he turned to the potential of business in automobile spare parts and manufacture of vehicles, especially motorcycles and mopeds, etc. Thus, from humble beginnings, he built an industrial empire now known as the TVS Group of companies. *See also* AMALGAMATIONS; INDUSTRY; MURUGAPPA BUSINESS GROUP; PARRYS.

IYER—THE SMARTHA BRAHMINS. Among the **Brahmins**, the worshippers of **Shiva**, who also accept **Vishnu** as one of the principal

deities, are called Smartha Brahmins. Their names often bear the suffix Iyer. The Smartha Brahmins are divided into four subdivisions—Vadama, Brahacharanam, Ashtasahasram, and Vathema or Chozhiya. The Smartha community usually does not encourage marriage outside its social division. For example, the Vadama (literally “Northerners” because they are supposed to have come into the Tamil country from northern India) look down on the Brahacharanam, Ashtasahasram, and others and will not give their daughters into these families. Even within the community, the others concede the Vadama to be superior. There is a subdivision within the Vadama community—the Sanketi Vadama—believed to be migrant Brahmins from Karnataka (now found mostly from the Sanskrit-speaking village of Mattur) who moved into the Tamil country around the 14th century. Due to their migrant character, the Vadama accord them an inferior position in the ritual and social hierarchy of Brahmins. *See also* IYENGAR—THE VAISHNAVITE BRAHMINS.

IYER, ALLADI KRISHNASWAMI Sir (1883–1953). Krishnaswami **Iyer** was born in Pudur in the Nellore district of the Madras Presidency. He was a member of one of the Tamil **Brahmin** communities known as Pudur Dravida, known for being well versed in Sanskrit and the Hindu scriptures. The family migrated to Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1891. Alladi completed his B. A. from the Madras **Christian** College in 1903 and took his degree in Law in 1905. He rose to become one of the most outstanding Indian lawyers of all time. Following the elevation of **K. Srinivasa Iyengar** to the legal bench in 1915, Alladi began his career as a leading counsel of Madras. In 1929, he became advocate general of Madras, a post he held for 15 years. He was a member of the Congress party from 1938 onward. He retired from active politics in 1942 but played a key role as one of the architects of the Indian Union. Several titles were conferred on Sastri, including Kaiser-i-Hind in 1926, Dewan Bahadur in 1930, and a knighthood in 1932. After independence, he became a member of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constituent Assembly. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

IYER, CHEMMANGUDI SRINIVASA (1908–2003). Born in the village of Chemmangudi near Kumbakonam in **Tanjavur** district,

Srinivasa Iyer became the grand master of **Carnatic music**, dominating the scene for nearly 80 years. His passion for music received much encouragement from his uncle, the renowned violinist Tirukkodikaval Krishnayyar. He learned vocal music from Tiruvidaimarudur Sakaram Rao, an expert at morsing (a short single-stringed percussion instrument that is plucked while being held between the teeth). He also studied music under the tutelage of the celebrated vocalist, **Maharajapuram Vishwanathan**. In 1940, he was appointed chief musician of the court of Travancore. He served for many years as the principal of the Swati Tirunal Music Academy in Tiruvananthapuram (in the State of Kerala). He was succeeded in this post by another famous musician of his era K. R. Kumaraswamy. Chemmangudi was a recipient of Padma Vibhushan, the national award given by the Indian Government. He died in 2003 at the ripe old age of 95. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N.; BRINDA, T., AND MUKTA; CHETTIAR, ANNAMALAI RAJAH; GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI; IYER, MADURAI MANI; IYER, MUSIRI SUBRAMANYA; MUSIC; MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR; RAMANATHAN, M. D.; SHYAMA SHASTRI; SUBBALAKSHMI, M. S.; THYAGARAJA; THYAGARAJA BHAGAVATHAR, M. K.; VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L.

IYER, MADURAI MANI (1912–1968). **Madurai Mani Iyer** established a niche for himself in the Tamil musical world of the 1940s and 1950s. Born in 1912 into a **Brahmin** family, he imbibed his love of **Carnatic music** from his celebrated uncle Pushpavanam. His *guru* (teacher) was the legendary Muthaiah Bhagavatar. He gave his first public concert at the age of 10 in the Alavaikkottai temple in Sivagangai. The distinctive feature of his musical renderings was his mastery over *svara* or notes and his use of tonal modulations called *gamaka*. An interesting aspect of his personality was his patriotism. He seldom wore anything but “khaddar,” the handspun cloth, which became Mahatma Gandhi’s symbol of the Indian **freedom struggle**. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N.; BRINDA, T., AND MUKTA; CHETTIAR, ANNAMALAI RAJAH; GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI; IYER, CHEMMANGUDI SRINIVASA; IYER, MUSIRI SUBRAMANYA; MUSIC; MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR; RAMANATHAN, M. D.; SHYAMA SHASTRI; SUB-

BALAKSHMI, M. S.; THYAGARAJA; THYAGARAJA BHAGAVATHAR, M. K.; VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L.

IYER, MUSIRI SUBRAMANYA (1899–1975). Subramanya Iyer was born at the turn of the 19th century in Musiri, an ancient port town in the Tiruchirappalli district. He learned music under the fiddle maestro Chinnaswami Iyer. His first major concert took place in 1917 under the patronage of M. G. Natesa Iyer. Musiri specialized in slow tempo, and he developed a distinctive style that was languorous and sweet. He was known for **Muthuswami Dikshitar** compositions such as “Palimsu Kamakshi” and “Kanja Dalayadakshi” as well as **Thyagaraja**’s “Nagumomukanaleni.” In 1940, he became the court musician of the State of Travancore. Musiri remained an active participant at the annual Thyagaraja festival at Tiruvaiyar until his death. Among his most famous disciples was Mrs. Mani Krishnaswami, who died recently. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N.; BRINDA, T., AND MUKTA; CHETTIAR, ANNAMALAI RAJAH; GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI; IYER, CHEMMANGUDI SRINIVASA; IYER, MADURAI MANI; MUSIC; MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR; RAMANATHAN, M. D.; SHYAMA SHASTRI; SUBBALAKSHMI, M. S.; THYAGARAJA; THYAGARAJA BHAGAVATHAR, M. K.; VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L.

IYER, P. S. SIVASWAMY Sir (1864–1946). P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer was one of those talented politicians from Tamil Nadu (along with the **Right Honorable V. S. Srinivasa Shastri**, T. Rangachariyar, T. V. Seshagiri Iyer, and many others) who entered India’s Central Legislative following the inauguration of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms in 1919 at the end of World War I. Consequent to the Minto-Morley Reforms in 1909, Iyer had his first stint during the war years as an executive councilor in Madras (present-day **Chennai**). Despite his cooperation with the imperial regime, Iyer used his official position to raise his voice against excessive public expenditure that led to increasing the tax burden on the Indian people. With the formation of the Chamber of Princes, the viceroy, as the representative of the British crown in India, entered into individual treaties with each princely state, ignoring the authority of the British government in India that now had some Indian representation. Sivaswamy Iyer bitterly opposed the move of the

British crown abrogating to itself all authority and ignoring the will of the government in India. He suggested instead that the representatives of the princely states could form about 5% of the Indian Legislative Assembly to ensure that their interests were properly represented. Despite his eloquence and commitment to the Indian cause, Sivaswamy Iyer and others like him were completely sidelined by the Gandhian movement. Unlike Iyer, who continued to believe in British fair play, the tide in India had turned in favor of “Poorna Svaraj,” that is, complete independence from British rule. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

IYER, RAMASWAMY C. P. Sir (1879–1966). He is known as the architect of modern Travancore (known as the princely state of Travancore in the pre-independence era) of which he was the dewan or prime minister. Known for his Machiavellian politics, Sir CP, as he came to be known, had admirers and deadly enemies, and there were multiple attempts to assassinate him. He was born in Wandawasi into a **Brahmin** family, and like his father, C. P. Pattabhiraman (who was an eminent advocate and later district judge), he studied law and began practicing in Madras (present-day **Chennai**). He won public acclaim by defending a case against **Annie Besant**, who later became his close friend.

Despite his success in law, Iyer’s true vocation was politics. He became a member of Besant’s Home Rule League. He was also general secretary of the Indian National Congress and was involved in passing the Government of India Act of 1919. In the same year, he also became a member of the Madras Legislative Council. From 1923 to 1928, he was a member of the Governor’s Executive Council. He is credited with the successful completion of the Mettur and Paikara reservoirs as well as the launching of the Vishakhapatnam, Tuticorin, and Cochin harbor schemes. He played a major role during the transitional years of India’s independence. In 1931, he became a political advisor and the dewan of Travancore. It was during his tenure that the Temple Entry Proclamation was passed in the State in 1936. He also founded the University of Travancore around the same time. The introduction of compulsory **education** for children was another of his achievements. He introduced adult franchise in the State. In 1947, when the re-organization of states was taking place, he lobbied for an independent Travancore outside the Indian Union. The futile move

earned him bitter enemies. He went into voluntary exile following assassination attempts on his life and died in political wilderness. Today, he is remembered for the modernization of Travancore State. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

IYER, SUBRAMANYA G. (1851–1921). Iyer was the putative founder of *The Hindu* (1878), a leading national English-language daily, and *Swadeshamithiran*, the first Tamil-language daily. He started the Society for the Dissemination of Useful Knowledge in 1883. The society had branches throughout Tamil Nadu, and its purpose was to create a scientific temper among the Tamils. Subramanya **Iyer** played a key role in the National Social Conference, which addressed sensitive gender issues like widow remarriage and rehabilitation of destitute **women**. It is noteworthy that he got his 12-year-old widowed daughter remarried at the fifth annual session of the Congress in 1889 in the face of orthodox opposition. The Society founded by Iyer launched a journal called *Vivekachintamani* in 1892 to promote scientific knowledge. It was devoted entirely to articles on science and technology, many of which were written by C. V. Swaminatha Iyer, the chief editor of this journal. It is interesting to note that this journal had a separate column for women as well as for students. In 1898, it also introduced a “readers’ query” column relating to scientific issues. Pamphlets were produced in simple Tamil on scientific issues and were freely distributed among the rural population. As a staunch Congressman, he also wrote and distributed two pamphlets called *Congreesin Ilatchiyangal* (The Goals of the Congress) and *Congress Vina-Vidai* (Congress: Questions and Answers). It is unfortunate that with the death of its founder, the movement for scientific knowledge also died with the closure of the society he founded. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

IYER, SUBRAMANYA S. DR. (1842–1924). Subramanya Iyer (also spelled Subramania) played an active part in establishing the Indian National Congress in 1885. A lawyer by profession, he was appointed judge of the Madras High Court. For some years, he gave up all secular pursuits and wore the ochre robe following the path of an ascetic. The only position he held during this period was in 1907 when he accepted the post of vice-president of the **Theosophical Society** of Adayar when **Annie Besant** was elected president. He was compelled to come out of

his self-imposed political exile following the arrest of Annie Besant because of her Home Rule campaign. He took charge of Besant's newspaper, *New India*, writing its daily editorials. He even wrote a letter to the United States President Woodrow Wilson in 1917 seeking American intervention in gaining freedom for India from British rule. Ironically the letter, which gained wide currency among official circles in Britain and America, provoked sharp criticism at home from both the Moderates and **Extremists** among the Indian nationalist leaders.

The government at home initiated moves to take away his title of Knight Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire (KCIE) as well as the pension being given to him. Iyer, in his defense before Secretary of State, Edwin Montague, claimed that the letter was the result of the unjust arrest of Annie Besant, G. S. Arundale, and Wadia, the office bearers of the Home Rule League. Following Besant's release, Iyer returned to his spiritual pursuits, having played a brief but significant part in drawing the attention of world leaders to the Indian freedom struggle. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

IYER, U. V. SWAMINATHA (1855–1942). Born in Uttamatanapuram in **Tanjavur**, Swaminatha Iyer had the good fortune of learning Tamil grammar and **literature** from the great Tamil scholar, **Meenakshisundaram Pillai**, who was living in Mayiladuthurai. In 1880, he was appointed Tamil Pandit at the Government College in Kumbakonam. It was around this time that he began recovering the **Sangam** texts, found in palm leaf manuscripts and scattered in many individual homes all over Tamil Nadu. The *Silappadikaram* and the *Puram Nanuru* were among the earliest texts recovered, annotated, and published by him followed by the 10th-century CE text *Jivakachintamani*. His journey of literary discovery is beautifully portrayed in his autobiography, *Yen Charitram*. *See also* ADAYAR LIBRARY.

– J –

JAYALALITHA J. (1948–). As with most successful Tamil politicians, her entry into politics was via the **Tamil cinema**. Till 2006 she was in her second term as the elected chief minister of Tamil Nadu

but lost heavily in the legislative assembly elections thereby yielding power to **M. Karunanidhi** and the **DMK**. Born Jayalalitha Jayaram in 1948 to the film star Sandhya, Jayalalitha began her film debut with C. V. Sridhar's film *Vennir Adai*. After playing vampish roles in a couple of films, she began to be paired with **M. G. Ramachandran** (MGR) steadily for a number of major hits in the 1960s and 1970s. After the death of MGR, who was chief minister of Tamil Nadu in 1987, she contested a bitter succession struggle against his wife, V. N. Janaki, and emerged the winner. Swept to power on an **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** sympathy wave, Jayalalitha ruled Tamil Nadu with an iron hand for five years. However, her subsequent crushing defeat led to the return of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** under M. Karunanidhi.

Jayalalitha was arrested, briefly imprisoned, and tried on charges of corruption. Her consummate skills as a politician led to her exoneration on most of these charges. In 2001, Jayalalitha returned to power in Tamil Nadu. It is noteworthy that her return also lay through the route of films. She used the cinematic mode for propaganda purposes, playing herself as a populist leader in the film *Neenga Nalla Erukkanam*, meaning "May you all prosper." The recent steps taken by her in arresting the **Shankaracharya of Kanchipuram** in order to cleanse rampant corruption in religious institutions have won both warm admirers and bitter critics of her administrative policies. She and her party, AIADMK, were routed by M. Karunanidhi-led DMK alliance in the 2006 Assembly elections.

JEWELRY. Heavy ornamentation is a characteristic of Tamil culture. Reference to various kinds of ornaments can be found in the *Silappadikaram*, *Manimekalai*, and other **Sangam** texts. Some beautiful descriptions of **women's** ornaments are to be found in the **Tamil Ramayanam**, written by **Kambar** in the context of the abducted heroine Sita who drops her various jewels one by one as clues to her whereabouts. Although ornaments are primarily associated with women, Tamil men also wear jewelry such as ear studs, finger rings, gold chains, etc.

Diadems called *kiritam* or *mudi/makutam* were common to both sexes and constituted a symbol of royalty. Among the ornaments worn by women is the *tailhutti* worn in the center of the forehead, the

suryaprabai and the *chandraprabai* worn on the two sides of the head, and the *rakkudi* placed at the back of the hair in the center of the hair bun. The hair itself was embellished with the *chadai* (Tamil word for hair) *nagam*, *chadai tiruguppu* and *kunjalam*. The last constitutes a bunch of silken tassels that hangs at the end of the long, plaited hair. The most important neck ornament of women was the *tali*, a flattened amulet sort of jewelry that is attached to a yellow thread and ceremonially tied to the bride's neck by the bridegroom as the most important part of the Tamil marriage ceremony. Originally the *tali* was made of tiger's nails, but now it is of pure gold. *Todu* is the common name for ear ornaments, while eardrops are called *kundalam* or *jimki*, which are usually shaped like a bell and attached to the ear with a short golden string. An unusual ear ornament worn by Tamil women is the *mattal*, attached to the lower portion of the *todu* or *kundalam*. Many Tamil women, especially in the villages, have multiple piercing of the ear with jewelry affixed to each pierced portion. Nose ornaments of the Tamils consist of *mookuthi* or *besari* worn on both sides of the nostrils that have been duly pierced and *pullakku* that is worn in the middle part of the nostril. Armlets are called *keyuram*, *tolvalai*, and *todi*, while bracelets are known as *valayal* or *kaapu*.

Murukku design is particularly popular in making of bracelets. The waistband was called *ottiyanam* or *arai pattigai*, and the waist ornament used for infants is called *araijnan*. Ornaments worn on the anklets are called *chilampu* or *chalangai*. The most famous Tamil epic, *Silappadikaram* (*silambu + adikaram*), can be literally translated as the "Story of the Anklet." Only married women wear the toe ornament, called *metti*. Unmarried girls are not allowed to wear it, and widows are divested of all their jewelry, especially the *metti*, the *valayal*, and the *tali*, which symbolize the married woman.

JIVAKACHINTAMANI. The Jain ascetic Tiruttakkatevar at **Madurai** composed this text around the 10th century CE. Nachchinarkkiniyar who lived in the 14th century wrote the commentary on it. *Jivakachintamani*, meaning "fabulous gem," is also known by the alternative name "Mananul" or "Book of Marriages." The story revolves around Prince Jivaka and his romantic/erotic encounters with **women**, most of whom become his wives. The deposed prince roams through many

kingdoms as an exile but comes back to regain his crown. The book concludes with Jivaka's realization that all the worldly pleasures he had enjoyed were nothing but illusions distracting him from the path of spiritual salvation. In the end, Jivaka finally renounces his crown and kingdom and becomes a monk. The text follows the poetic conventions established by Gunabhadra in his *Uttarapurana* written in the ninth century in the sense of voyeuristic pleasure followed by metaphysical ruminations. For today's researchers, this text constitutes an invaluable source material for studying the **religion** and culture of the medieval Tamils.

JUSTICE PARTY. The Justice Party was formed as a result of the strong anti-**Brahmin** movement that swept through Tamil Nadu in the early part of the 20th century, reflected in organizations like the Madras United League, founded in 1912 which later became the Madras Dravidian Association, popularly known as the "Non-Brahmin Association." It must be pointed out that Dravidian nationalism also found expression within the broad umbrella of the Indian National Congress in the Madras Presidency Association founded in 1917. Among its political stalwarts were **V. U. Chidambaranar** and **Thiru V. Kalayanasundaram**. The ideology of anti-Brahminism continues to shape Tamil politics even in the present times.

C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliyar, Taravath Madhavan Nair, and P. Thyagaraja Chetti founded the Justice Party in 1916–1917. Initially, the party was known as the South Indian Liberation Federation and alternately as the South Indian Peoples' Association. The party had published a periodical called *Justice*, which it decided to adopt formally as the name of the party. Adopting Tamil as its vehicle for social expression, the party started the Tamil daily *Dravidan* in 1917. The Justice Party issued the "Non-Brahmin Manifesto," listing its grievances (principally against the Brahmin community) and sought to widen social and economic opportunities for the intermediate **castes** through the system of caste quotas. The Justice Party moved in tandem with the **Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam (Self-Respect Movement)** started by **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**, popularly known as "Periyar" ("respected one" or "elder"). The party opposed self-government for Indians and expressed its loyalty to the British colonial regime in the belief that social justice, especially under the system of communal

representation and reservation quotas, would be possible only under the British government. It clearly stated in the “Non-Brahmin Manifesto” that the “British authorities alone could hold the scales even between various castes and creeds. The party did well in the Legislative Assembly elections held in 1923 and came to power in Madras State under the system of dyarchy. However, the period of its governance was comparatively unsuccessful, and in the 1937 elections the Indian National Congress came to power in the Madras Presidency, signally defeating the Justice Party. Perhaps one major reason for the defeat of the party was its failure to win the trust of the depressed castes that had banded themselves into a separate entity called **Adi Dravida** or “Panchamas.” *See also* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

– K –

KADALON. He is the god of the littoral tract and represents the forces of rain. He is, however, rarely referred to as Kadalon but is known by his Brahmanical/Sanskritic representation as Varuna.

KAIKKOLAR. The Kaikkolar constitutes a traditional weaving community dating back to the period of the **Pallavas** and **Cholas**. Today, they prefer to be known as the **Senguntha Mudaliyar**, which seems to accord them a higher status in society. They are regarded as next in rank to the **Vellalar**. The **caste** organizations of the Kaikkolar are still very strong, and the community gets together to celebrate festivals pertaining to **Murugan**, their patron deity.

KALABRA. The Kalabra are believed to be a militant tribal community originating from Andhra Pradesh. These chieftains were Buddhists, and they overran the Tamil country between the fourth and sixth centuries CE, in many places replacing the existing **religion** with Buddhism. The defeat of the Kalabras by Simhavisnu of the **Pallava dynasty** and by Kodungon of the **Pandya dynasty** marked the restoration of Saivism and Vaishnavism in the Tamil country.

KALI KANJI. A distinctively Tamil preparation referred to in ancient Tamil texts. *Kali* is a thick pasty porridge made out of rice, maize, bar-

ley, or pearl millets flour. It was the staple diet of the **Sangam** Tamils. Interestingly, today *kanji* is the food of the poor Tamilians and it is regarded as undignified to serve *kali* in the homes of the well-to-do. A watered-down version of *kali* is *kanji* usually made of rice that would roughly correspond to the term “gruel.” See also CUISINE.

KALLAR. The Kallar, like the **Maravar**, are associated with the *Tinai Palai* of the **Sangam** age. Etymologically, the word *kallan* means robber, and even today *kallan* is used as a generic term for a common thief. The Kallar refer to themselves as Mukkulathor—“the people of the three communities”—which includes not only themselves but the Maravar and the Agamudaiyar as well. Many of them are recorded as petty chieftains in the Sangam period, and the Kallar and the Maravar served in the armies of the **Chola** and **Pandya** kings. The Kallar are also agriculturists, and the **Tanjavur** Kallar today largely engage in **agriculture**. The pioneering Tamil historian, P. T. Srinivasa **Iyengar**, traces their origin to a semi-agricultural, semi-warrior group. Interestingly, they bury their dead rather than burn them, thus resisting a very essential feature of Sanskritization since **Brahmins** practice cremation. The Kallar are predominantly found in Tanjavur, **Pudukkottai**, **Madurai**, and **Tiruchirapalli** districts.

When preparing a caste based census of Tamil Nadu in the 1870s, the colonial regime classified the Kallar along with the Maravar among the so-called “criminal” tribes because of their anti-British struggle.

KALYANASUNDARAM, THIRU V. (1883–1953). Kalyanasundaram was born in 1883 into a **Vellalar** (agriculturist) family of Tiruvaroor. Thiru Vi Ka, as he came to be known, was employed by the **Spencers** Company for a while. When the British trade unionist leader Keir Hardy visited Madras (present-day **Chennai**), Kalyanasundaram used the opportunity to mobilize the employees of Spencers to seek economic equity and justice. He was fired for his sympathetic support of the workers and went on to serve as a Tamil teacher in the Wesleyan Mission School near the Government Hospital.

In 1917, when **Annie Besant** launched her Home Rule Movement, he joined the **freedom struggle**. In 1920, he became co-founder editor of *Nava Shakti* with **V. U. Chidambaranar** (Va Vu Chi). Their journal bitterly condemned the incident at Jalianwala Bagh in Punjab

when British troops under the command of Brigadier General Reginald Edward Harry Dyer fired on an unarmed gathering of Indians, killing a number of them.

Kalyanasundaram's leadership in the non-cooperation movement in the Tamil country earned for him the sobriquet "Gandhi of the South." His powerful and yet moving political speeches earned him the title "Tamizh Tendral" literally "Fresh Breeze from Tamil Nadu." Kalyanasundaram is also celebrated today as a great thinker and writer. He was the author of Tamil books, including *Gandhi and Daily Living* and *Service Is My Duty*. In 1920, he founded the Trade Union League in Madras (present-day **Chennai**), thereby earning yet another title, "Father of the (Tamil) Labor Movement."

KAMALAHASAN (1954–). One of the icons of modern **Tamil cinema** and an extremely talented actor, director, and scriptwriter, Kamalahasan was born into an orthodox **Iyengar-Sri Vaishnavite Brahmin** family. He began his career at the age of six when he acted in the film *Kalattur Kannamma*, produced in 1960. Since then, he has acted in more than 150 films in all of the South Indian languages—Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Kannada, as well as in Hindi. Kamalahasan is particularly known for his sensitive portrayal of the Bombay-based underworld don Varadaraja **Mudaliyar**'s life in his film *Nayakan* and for his production of the film *Hey Ram*, which goes into the psychosis of communalism with the partition riots of the 1940s and Gandhian politics as the backdrop.

KAMARAJ, K. (1903–1977). The life and political career of Kamaraj **Nadar** is a significant example of a socially underprivileged individual rising to heights of eminence. The Nadar community consisted of toddy tappers—specialized persons who collect toddy, the liquor fermented from coconut or palm sap—and is regarded as an "untouchable" **caste** in the social hierarchy. Kamaraj was born in 1903 in Virudunagar in **Madurai** district. He was withdrawn from school because of poverty in the sixth standard. He became a party worker of the Indian National Congress, and in 1936 was made party secretary for their Tamil Nadu wing. In 1938, he broke the caste ban on temple entry by untouchables when he walked into the **Temple of Meenakshiamman** at Madurai with party workers and other mem-

bers of the Nadar community. They offered worship amidst fierce opposition from the orthodoxy. Kamaraj won the elections from the Virudunagar constituency in 1940. He was chief minister of Madras State from 1954 to 1962. Kamaraj also had a major impact on the politics at the Center in New Delhi and earned him the title “Kingmaker.” He tried to shore up the waning popularity of the Congress party by initiating the “Kamaraj Plan” for revitalizing the party and initiating meaningful social reforms. Despite these efforts, he was defeated in the Legislative Assembly elections in 1967. Kamaraj moved to the Congress party at the center in 1969. As “Kingmaker,” he was the moving force behind the selection of Lal Bahadur Shastri as the prime minister upon the death of Jawaharlal Nehru in 1963. Following Shastri’s death, he enabled the accession to power of Indira Gandhi, the daughter of Nehru. Kamaraj died in 1977 and was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna, India’s highest civilian honor. *See also* BHAKTAVATSALAM, M.

KAMBAR (ca. 13th century). One of the greatest poets that Tamil Nadu has produced, Kambar lived in the court of the **Chola** kings, most probably Kulottunga III. He is believed to have been born in Tiruvalluntur near Mayavaram and died in Nattarasankottai in Ramanathapuram district. He belonged to the “Uvachchar,” a community of professional drummers. He is the author of the celebrated *Kamba Ramayanam*. The first major Tamil version of the great Sanskrit epic, *Ramayan*, it can be truly said that *Kamba Ramayanam* is to the Tamils what the Tulasidas-authored *Ramayan* in Awadhi is to the Hindi-speaking community. Kambar wrote the entire text of 12,000 verses of four lines each in the *viruththam* meter, a unique achievement in prosody. The *Ramayanam*, written by Kambar, however, did not include the last part known as *Uttara Ramayanam*, which was written by **Ottakkuttar**, an equally famous contemporary. Apart from this epic, *Er Ezhupatu*, literally “Seventy Verses on the Plough,” is credited to Kambar. *See also* LITERATURE.

KAMMALAR. This is the only community that actually cuts across **caste** lines. The community prefers to use the nomenclature *Viswakarma* although they are commonly known as Panchajati Kammalar. The five craft groups that collectively comprise the Kammalar

are *Karuman* (carpenter), *Kollan* (blacksmith), *Kal-tachchan* (mason), *Kannan* (brass smith), and *Tattan* (goldsmith). The Viswakarma are strongly influenced by the process of Brahmanization or Sanskritization and are by and large vegetarians. They have claimed the status of Viswa Brahmanas and trace their descent from Brahma and Manu. In fact, they filed a court case in **Madurai** during the period of the celebrated local queen, Rani Mangammal, staking their claim to **Brahminhood**.

In medieval times, the Pancha Kammalar were organized in social organizations similar to the European guilds. Collective bargaining was the most powerful weapon in the hands of these communities, and they successfully resisted heavy taxation and state oppression through strikes. However, during the colonial period, the Viswakarma unity gave way to diverse tendencies, and the goldsmiths formally split from the Kammalar collective organization in the 17th century, although they continued to function as a united lobby against the **East India Company**. Certain groups among the Kammalar also converted to **Christianity** about 300 years ago in search of privileges and better work opportunities. Today, some of the Kammalar have moved out of their traditional crafts except for the *Tattan*, *Karuman*, and the *Kollan*, most of whom continue their hereditary occupations.

KANCHIPURAM. Kanchipuram, 72 km from **Chennai**, is known as the “silk” center of the south. The place has become synonymous with handwoven silk sarees to the extent that “buying a Kanchipuram” has come to mean “buying a silk saree.” It is also an ancient city, famed even in antiquity as a great religious and cultural center. Kanchipuram is known as one of India’s seven sacred cities. Falling under the region called Thondaimandalam in ancient Tamizhaham, Kanchipuram was the capital of the **Pallava dynasty**, which ruled this region from the sixth to the eighth century. It later came under the **Chola dynasty** and became the capital of Jayankonda **Cholamandalam**.

In the medieval period, it was under the sway of the Vijayanagar kings, and the **East India Company** established its control over it in the 17th century, using the port of Sadras, also known as Chaturavachaganpattinam, as its major commercial port. In early Tamil Nadu, it was dominated by the Jain religious community and was

therefore known as Jina Kanchi. It was also the seat of great Buddhist scholars like Buddhadatta who flourished about the fifth century BCE. It is today the seat of the Hindu seer **Shankaracharya** of Kanchipuram Mutt. Its present-day political importance stems from the fact that it is the birthplace of **C. N. Annadurai**, the former chief minister of Tamil Nadu and the founder of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** Party. *See also* TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN.

KANDASAMY, S. (1940–). He was one of the avant-garde young writers who experimented with Tamil fiction in offbeat directions in the 1960s. Kandasamy has to his credit three novels and a few short-story collections, quite remarkable in themselves. The novel *Sayavanam* (1969), which he penned at the age of 20, is regarded as an ecological novel with a solid sociological background. It is based on the rich natural environment of the Kaveri delta on the brink of a great change in the early decades of the 20th century. *See also* LITERATURE.

KANNADASAN (1927–1981). Kannadasan is regarded as one of the greatest lyricists that **Tamil cinema** has produced. Born in 1927, his career spanned more than three decades. His first film as a lyricist was *Kanniyin Kadali* (The Virgin's Lover) in 1949. In 1954, in the film *Illara Jothi*, he not only wrote the lyrics but also the story and dialogue. Prior to his death in 1981, Kannadasan wrote more than 5,000 memorable songs, drawing inspiration from the **Sangam** epics, such as the *Silappadikaram* and other ancient texts on **music**. One of his last films was Balu Mahendra's *Moonram Pirai*, released in 1982. Like many of his contemporaries in the film world Kannadasan was also involved in Tamil politics. He joined the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** party in 1947 and continued membership in it till 1964. In his later years, he turned to **religion** and philosophy and wrote a 10-volume work on various practical and philosophical aspects of religion, which is widely read by the Tamils.

KANNAGI. Kannagi, an important folk deity of the Tamil country, figures for the first time in the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram*. It was probably composed around the fifth or sixth century CE. The story is set in **Kaveripumpattinam**, a bustling port town in **Tiruchirappalli**.

Both Kovalan, the hero, and Kannagi, the heroine, came from highly respected merchant families. In keeping with literary conventions, the marriage is marred by infidelity on the part of Kovalan. Kovalan eventually abandons his paramour, Madhavi, in a fit of jealousy and returns to his virtuous wife Kannagi. The epic *Silappadikaram* restarts in **Madurai**, a place to which Kovalan and Kannagi have travelled in search of livelihood. Kovalan goes to the market to sell his wife's anklet in order to start some business. Here, he is falsely implicated in a case involving the theft of the queen's anklet. Kovalan is summarily beheaded. An outraged Kannagi appears in the Pandyan king's court and proves her husband's innocence. **Ilango Adigal** writes that she cut off one of her breasts and flung it in the streets of Madurai, setting the whole city aflame.

According to popular tradition, it was King **Senguttavan**, who, along with Gajabahu of Ceylon (modern **Sri Lanka**), built the first **temple** for Kannagi in the **Chera** country, i. e., Vanji in what was the old Tamilaham. This began the cult of "Pattini Daivam," the deification of Kannagi, the chaste wife, in the Tamil country. Temples to Kannagi can be found in the South Arcot and North Arcot districts as well as in Tirunelveli district. In many of these places, Kannagi is worshipped as a five-hooded snake by the Tamils of Sri Lanka since they believed that Kannagi, in her righteous wrath, changed herself into a cobra.

KAPILAR (ca. CE 90–130). Kapilar was a **Brahmin** by birth but a court bard by choice. He is regarded as perhaps the finest of the **Sangam** poets. In the initial years, the **Chera** chieftain Athan was his patron although eventually he secured the patronage of the munificent **Pari**. After the death of Pari, he displayed his loyalty to his patron by starving himself to death. The 100 verses composed by Kapilar form a part of the *Aham Nanuru* while 10 of his verses in favor of his other patron, Cheraladan, are included in the *Paditrupathu* anthology. *See also* LITERATURE; NAKKIRAR; TIRUVALLUVAR.

KARAGA ATTAM. Karaga Attam or Karagaattam developed along with the cult of **Mariamman**. A small pot is filled with water and sealed with a coconut. Flower garlands are used to decorate it with a lime placed on top of the *karagam* pot. As a social **dance**, pots piled

up high are balanced on the head of male and female dancers, who then dance to folk instrumental **music**. The pots usually contain uncooked rice. The male dancer is bare bodied with sandal paste and sacred ash smeared on his chest with a short skirt below the waist. The female dancer wears a blouse and short skirt. The dancers jump and tumble without the tower-like pot arrangement being disturbed.

KARAIKKAL AMMAIYAR. One of the greatest **woman** saints of the Tamil country, Karaikkal Ammaiyar lived in the seventh century and is regarded as one of the foremost among the **Nayanar**. In her composition, *Urthvataṇḍavam*, describing the cosmic dance of **Shiva**, Ammaiyar introduces herself as Peyar meaning “demoness” or “female ghost” dancing in the cremation ground and as the eternal witness of Shiva’s cosmic dance:

With bulging eyes and sunken pit like mouth two protruding front teeth and long lean ankles a female demoness has established itself in the cremation grounds of Tiruvalangadu. Here dances Shiva with serenity.

Karaikkal Ammaiyar was born as Punitavati into a wealthy mercantile community of Karaikkal. She was married to an affluent merchant named Paramadatta, who was extremely suspicious of his beautiful wife. Once he returned from one of his commercial voyages with two mangoes, which he gave to his wife while he went to the river for a bath. Meanwhile, Shiva came in the form of a mendicant and asked for food and received one of the mangoes from Punitavati. Paramadatta came back and at lunch asked for the other mango after eating the first. Through her spiritual powers, Punitavati miraculously materialized the mango. Realizing the spiritual power of his wife, Paramadatta ran away from her in awe and fear and married again in Nagapattinam, deserting his first wife. He also fell at Punitavati’s feet with his second wife and daughter (whom he had named after his first wife) and sought her blessings—an amazing example of role reversal in a patriarchal society where women are expected to touch their husband’s feet. It is said that Punitavati completely renounced worldly life by assuming a skeletal form and became “Karaikkal Ammaiyar,” one who was addressed as “mother” by Shiva himself. Among her most famous compositions is the *Tiruvalankattu Mootatiruppadiḡam*. In this, she sings of herself as a ghost

(*peyar*) witnessing the cosmic dance of Shiva. **Sundarar** in his lives of saints describes himself as “the slave of the Karaikkal Peyar.” Her composition, *Arputa Tiruvandadi*, is known for its innovative meter called *Andadi*. To give an example of the ecstatic nature of her devotion to Shiva:

Let them say He is Lord of the skies: that he dwells in the heavens. But,
I say: the Supreme Being, All knowledge, dwells in my heart.

KARIKALA CHOLA (ca. 2nd century CE). A famous king of the **Sangam** age belonging to the **Chola dynasty**. He is the hero of the majority of the *Pathupattu* poems and of numerous ballads and legends in folklore and **literature**. It is said that the prince was nearly burned to death in a palace conspiracy but ultimately escaped. The only damage was to his foot, which became charred, earning him the name “Karikal,” literally “Black Foot.” Unfairly cheated out of his inheritance, Karikala regained his kingdom after inflicting a crushing defeat on his rivals—**Cheras** and **Pandyas**—at the battle of Koyil Vennil near **Tanjavur**. Karikala is credited with the construction of the Grand Anicut or dam over the **River Kaveri** and River Kollidam. The dam is an architectural wonder, measuring 329 m long, 12.18 m wide, and 4.5 m deep. It is noteworthy in that this dam has survived to the present day.

KARTHIKEYAN, NARAIN (1976–). The first Indian Formula One Race driver, Narain Karthikeyan is today the fastest Indian on the roads. Born in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1976, Narain was inspired by his father, G. R. Karthikeyan, who was a National Rally Champion himself. Narain proved his mettle when he reached the semi-finals in the Pilote Elf competition. He trained at the Elf Winfield Racing School in France and upon his return to India, he raced in the 1993 Formula Maruti. Narain worked the tracks on the European circuit through the British Vauxhall Junior Championship. In 1994, he became the first Indian to win any European Championship, with the British Formula Ford Winter series. He finished second in the Formula Asian Championship in 1995. The distinction of being the only Asian to win the Formula Asian Championship (1996) also belongs to him. *See also* AMRITRAJ, VIJAY; BHASKARAN, V.;

KRISHNAN, RAMESH; PILLAI, DHANRAJ; VISHWANATHAN ANAND.

KARTIKAI DEEPAM FESTIVAL. Kartikai Deepam is a beacon, lit on top of the Arunachalesvara hill, which is the focus of the pilgrimage town of **Tiruvannamalai** sanctified by the **Temple of Arunachalesvara** and the presence of the Ramanashram. Karthigai Deepam indicates the culmination of 10 days of hectic activity in the temple town (which usually falls in the month of December) when devotees walk around the hill and worship the Bharani Deepam, which is lit early in the morning on the final day of the festival, in the sanctum sanatorium. The lighting of the beacon on the top of the hill takes place simultaneously with “Deeparadhanam” to the five deities in the temple at the foot of the hill. The Deepam is lit in a gigantic circular metal vessel that can hold about 2,000 liters of *ghee* (clarified butter). The vessel is 1.67 m high and 1.5 m in diameter. The wick, made using 30 m of a special cloth *Ghada*, is burned with 2 kg of camphor on the night of “Karthigai Pournami.” The *Jyoti* (fire) can be seen from a distance of 35 km.

KARUNANIDHI, M. (1924–). Karunanidhi was born on 3 June 1924 in the village of Thirukuvalai, near Thiruvarur in **Tanjavur** district, the granary of Tamil Nadu. As with many political personalities in Tamil Nadu, Karunanidhi’s route to chief ministership lay through the world of **Tamil cinema**. He suspended his studies at a young age in order to join the anti-Hindi agitation. His oratory, which gave him political mileage, was first displayed in his forming the Children’s Reform Society and the rhetoric he displayed as a very young man in his speeches.

He came under the influence of **C. N. Annadurai** in 1942, and, like him, he combined scriptwriting for Tamil films with active politics. The film *Parasakti* is best known for his dialogues and for the acting of **Sivaji Ganesan**, which had strong political overtones. The film *Kagidapu* was about a young hero who becomes disillusioned with the Congress and joins the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)**. Like his mentor Annadurai, he also came under the spell of **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker** for a while and wrote for the *Kudiarasu*, the official journal/mouthpiece of the **Justice Party**. Like Annadurai again, he went to prison in the 1965 anti-Hindi agitation.

After the break with Periyar, the DMK came to power in 1967 under the leadership of C. N. Annadurai. Karunanidhi became his minister for public welfare. Following Anna's untimely death from cancer, Karunanidhi became chief minister in 1969 for the first time. He became chief minister again following the General Elections in 1971 with a massive popular mandate. The following year saw the expulsion of **M. G. Ramachandran** (MGR) from the DMK Party. The bitter feud between Karunanidhi and MGR was responsible for his temporary eclipse from politics. MGR charged him and his party with corruption and demanded a public accounting.

MGR founded his own Party, the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** in 1972. The MGR wave brought him and his party into power, which the party retained until 1987.

During those years, Karunanidhi went through a period of political exile. It was then that he wrote the novels *Ponnar Shankar*, which is a historical novel of the **Pallava** period and *Thenpandi Chingam*, which is also a patriotic historical novel. However, the novel that best typifies Tamil patriotism and by implication Tamil trans-nationalism is titled *Payum Puli Pandara Vanniyan*—the leaping Tiger Pandara Vanniyan. Karunanidhi is working with obvious parallels in his novel. The course of the novel is also connected to current developments in Sri Lanka related to moves by the LTTE. Earlier the novel described the mission of a friend of Vira Pandiya **Kattabomman** the last Tamil king who resisted the British in Tamil Nadu—to the Wannijungles in Sri Lanka. His mission was to meet Pandara Vanniyan who was also resisting the British. This part of the novel appeared when V Gopalsamy MP (popularly known as Vaiko) whom Karunanidhi once referred to as his 'sword,' visited Prabhakaran in the dense jungles of the Wannijungles. Karunanidhi returned to power in 1987 only to be dismissed within two years. In 1989–1990, Governor's Rule was imposed in Tamil Nadu. Between 1991–1995, **J. Jayalalitha**, MGR's political successor, became chief minister. The Sarkaria Commission was specially appointed to probe charges of corruption against Karunanidhi.

Karunanidhi's fourth term as chief minister was from 1996 to 2000. Jayalalitha, the former chief minister, was imprisoned and much of Karunanidhi's time was taken up in bringing charges against the AIADMK regime. Although well past 80, he was practicing his

astute political skills. He has returned as the chief minister of Tamil Nadu following his victory in the 2006 Assembly elections. *See also* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

KATTABOMMAN (ca. 18th–early 19th century). Vira Pandya Kattabomman is today celebrated in Tamil folklore as the local hero who fought against the British regime and was martyred. Kattabomman was the poligar (the actual Tamil term is Palayakkarar) or petty chieftain of the principality of Panjalankurichi. By the Treaty of 1792, the Nawab of Arcot surrendered his right over the levy of tribute from the Tamil principalities to the British. In May 1798, Collector Jackson, as the representative of the British regime, demanded that the truant poligar immediately attend upon the British agent at Ramnad with the full payment of 3,310 pagodas, although the countryside had gone through a phase of severe drought and famine. For 23 days, the poligar was compelled to follow the agent without being granted an audience. Although the agent eventually accepted the dues, the humiliation and the unfairness of the demand rankled in the minds of both Kattabomman and his mute brother, “**Oomai Thurai**” (his real name is not known, and history records his name only as “the mute Lord.”

Both brothers joined the rebel confederacy against the British led by **Marudu Pandyan**, the chieftain of Sivagangai, **Gopal Nayak**, the ruler of Dindigal and Yadul Nayak of **Anaimalai**. Preempting any concerted action by the alliance of petty chieftaincies the British led their troops against Panjalankurichi in 1799 with the proclaimed aim of eliminating the rebellious poligars. It is noteworthy that despite powerful cannon attacks the chieftains successfully defended their position. Kattabomman, Oomai Thurai, and many others were finally captured when they were betrayed by another petty chieftain loyal to the British, Vijaya Ragunatha Thondaiman, Raja of **Pudukkottai**. After a mockery of a trial Vira Pandya Kattabomman was executed by the **East India Company** representative Major Bannerman. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

KAVADI FESTIVAL. Kavadi is the most important ritual that a devotee of Lord **Murugan** can perform, usually in fulfillment of a vow. It is noteworthy that both men and **women** are Kavadi bearers. The belief is that the benefits that a devotee gains from offering a Kavadi to

the Lord are a millionfold greater than the little pain that is inflicted upon oneself. Generally, people take a vow to offer the Lord a Kavadi for the sake of tiding over a great calamity. Many devotees get god-intoxicated or possessed by the spirit of Murugan, signifying a spiritual condition that ultimately leads to the supreme state of devotion.

The “Kavadi” varies in shape and size from the simple shape of a street hawker’s storehouse (a wooden stick with two baskets at each end, slung across the shoulder) to the costly palanquin structure, profusely flower-bedecked and decoratively interwoven with peacock feathers. In all cases, the Kavadi has many brass bells adorning it. The two baskets hanging at either end of the Kavadi will contain rice, milk, or other articles that the devotee has vowed to offer to Lord Muruga. The Kavadi-bearer is required to observe various rules between the time he takes up the Kavadi and the day of the offering. He also puts on the dress of a *Pandaram*, a Shaivite mendicant. Lord **Shiva**, the Supreme *Pandaram* Himself, loves to wear this dress. The *Pandaram* lives on alms only. The Kavadi-bearer’s bare chest is covered with several *Rudraksha Malas* (rosaries). The Kavadi-bearer observes celibacy. He takes only pure, vegetarian food; he abstains from all intoxicating drinks and drugs.

The Kavadi festival is celebrated at all shrines of Lord Murugan. **Dancing** in a hypnotic trance to the rhythm of drums, devotees of Murugan carry the Kavadi all the way up the hill **temple** to fulfill their vow. The Ettukudi Kavadi Festival is a famous festival celebrated during the months of April through May at Palani in **Madurai** district. Devotees from locales and villages around this temple come here with Kavadis, milk pots, coconuts, cocks, and goats. This is a major crowd-drawing festival where one can see the true Tamil culture in its authentic habitat.

KAVERIPUMPATTINAM. A natural port-town located at the mouth of the **River Kaveri** in **Tiruchirapalli**. Roman geographers who visited the Tamil country in the second century CE have described Kaveripumpattinam as a great commercial entrepot. *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* refers to it as Kamara. The palaces and markets of this town are described in Tamil epics, including *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai*. Commercial activity in this port town reached its zenith during the reign of **Chola** king **Karikala**. The **Sangam** text

Pattinappalai speaks of horses being imported into the port and of black pepper (from the Malabar coast), gold and gems from the northern ranges, sandalwood from Podugai, pearls from **Korkai**, and precious stones and spices from Ilangai (Sri Lanka) being exported.

Kaveripumpattinam was also a celebrated religious center in the early **Christian** era, with religious structures and monasteries dedicated to Saiva, Vaishnava, Buddhist, and Jaina faiths. The Sangam epic, *Manimekalai*, is the story of a Buddhist nun that revolves around this port town. It is believed that Kaveripumpattinam was eventually submerged beneath the sea. An archaeological team from Tamil Nadu opened up the probable site of this city in 1962, followed by further intensive excavations in 1963 and 1964. The excavations revealed remnants of a great commercial center. Hoards of gold coins were unearthed and also pottery, which was typically **megalithic** black and red ware. A reservoir for storing water was dug out at Vanagiri, showing the familiarity of the ancient Tamils with the method of water harvesting.

KEPMARI. In common Tamil parlance, a dishonest person or rogue is called a “Kepmari.” The name signifies a **caste**, which was branded a criminal caste during the colonial period. They seem to have kinship ties with the Telugu group, Jebmari, which literally means “pick-pocket.” They use the surnames “Pillai” or “**Mudaliyar**.” They are now found in Chengai-MGR, South Arcot, and Chingleput but more especially in the city of **Chennai**. Since their social status was virtually that of “outcastes,” their shanties were usually on the outskirts of the village, although the policy of **Reservations** especially for the Most Backward Castes (MBC) has brought changes in their socio-economic location.

KODAIKANAL. This beautiful hill station popularly called “Kodai,” on the southern tip of the Palani hills, is located 120 km from the city of **Madurai**. A colonial summer resort, like Ooty, the town nestles around the man-made Lake Kodai. Eighteen kilometers from the lake one can see prehistoric remains, like dolmen circles. Kodai has thickly wooded slopes, well laid out pathways, and beautiful waterfalls. Kodai is rich in flora and fauna. In 1861, Major Douglas Hamilton recorded 114 species of birds and discovered two new ones, the

laughing thrush and the white-bellied shortwing. Kodai has a unique plant—the Kurinji—which blossoms once every 12 years, when the hillsides are a blaze with purple flowers. The boarding school at Kodaikanal attracts students from all over India. *See also* NILGIRIS.

KOLAM. “*Kolam*” is defined as threshold arts, since it is made and erased every day. *Kolam* refers to decorative artwork drawn on the floor in front of houses and in front of deities in *puja* rooms. Most often, finely ground rice flour is used to make these drawings on wet/moist ground previously sprinkled with water (even diluted solutions of cow-dung cake that gives a darker background to the mud floor). Coloration of the artwork with color powders enhances the beauty of *kolams*. It is a time-honored cultural tradition of south Indian families, going back many many generations. Young girls learn many of these *kolam* designs from the **women** of the household—their mothers, grandmothers, and aunts.

The drawing could start either with a certain number pattern of dots or alternately lines going around these points. Many of these are completed with a single line going in an elegant but zigzag way around the entire set of points. The Tamil month of *markazhi* (December–January) is particularly important when fairly large *Kolams* are put in front of the houses, with additional decoration of *Kolams* with yellow flowers of pumpkin. Putting *Kolams* in front of the houses is very much in practice in south Indian villages. But unfortunately the practice is becoming nearly extinct in metropolitan cities, where more and more people are living in high-rise apartment buildings.

KONGU CHOLA. The Kongu country mainly comprises the present-day regions of Salem and **Coimbatore**. For more than 270 years, that is, from 1000 to 1275, Kongunadu was under the control of the **Cholas**. The Chola feudatories who ruled over the Kongu country during this historical phase are called Kongu Cholas. The dynasty began with Vikrama Chola I and ended with Vikrama Chola III, comprising a line of 15 feudatory kings. Kongu Nadu was divided into two geographical zones, North Kongu and South Kongu, perhaps for administrative purposes or as a deliberate ploy by the Cholas to maintain balance of power in the region. A brief attempt was made by Vira Chola II to unify these two parts. As a result, both Vira Chola II and Vira Rajendra managed to rule over a united Kongu Nadu.

Epigraphists have unearthed around 300 inscriptions relating to the Kongu Cholas. These provide some idea of the extent and nature of their rule. The entire Kongu was divided into 24 administrative units. One inscription (*Annual Report of Epigraphy*, Government of India, 183 of 1920) praises the Kongu Cholas as “just rulers who took no more than 16.66% [a theoretical or notional figure found in most Hindu canonical texts] thereby keeping the peasants happy.” As Chola power waned, the Kongu Chola kings seem to have formed alliances with other powers including the Pandya king of **Madurai** against Kulottunga Chola III of the Chola dynasty. The Kongu Chola line came to an end in the 13th century.

KONGUMANDALAM. *See* MANDALAM KONGU.

KORKAI. Port town located on the eastern coast of South India, also called the Coromandel coast. Since the **Sangam** period (the classic period being from third century BCE to third century CE) this has been the seat of pearl fishery, and a major portion of the population was employed as pearl divers or chank cutters. Therefore, the area is dominated by the Paradavar who belong to the fishermen **caste**/community. Korkai is also an important site of **megalithic** culture. The town lost its importance when the sea receded and Kayal emerged to take its place as the new seaport. *See also* KAVERIPUMPATTINAM; MUZIRIS.

KORRAVAI. *Palai* represented the arid zone of the Tamil landscape. Militant tribes, marauding activities, and bloody battles characterized this inhospitable region. It is interesting that Korravai should have been regarded as the patron deity of the Palai zone. She is the only **woman** goddess in the early Tamil pantheon representing one of the *tinais*. In the *Puram Nanuru* anthology, poems refer to Korravai dancing in exaltation over a devastated battlefield. Various offerings of human blood and corn were made to her on the occasions of the beginning and end of a battle. Therefore, it can be affirmed that the worship of woman in her most fearsome aspect as Korravai, the presiding deity over death and destruction, was central to the culture of the early Tamils. Interestingly, she also represented the forces of creation and rejuvenation since ears of corn from the very first harvest are first offered to Korravai. Harvest and war were central to the life of the early Tamils, and Korravai was central to both the cultivable field and the battlefield.

With the Brahmanisation of the Tamil country, Korravai became subsumed under the cult of Kali or Durga Paramesvari. Elsewhere, she either merged into local deities like **Mariamman** or the Sanskritic “Parvati.” The Tamil epic *Silappadikaram* clearly brings Korravai into the Brahmanical tradition by identifying her as the sister of **Vishnu** and the consort of **Shiva**. *Silappadikaram* describes Korravai as a three-eyed goddess whose crown is adorned with the crescent moon, whose lips are red as coral and are parted in a smile, whose waist is encircled by a serpent, whose arm wields the trident, and whose feet, bedecked with anklets, rest upon the severed head of a demon. The text goes on to say that the devotees, in a state of frenzy, offer their own heads to her. The *Aham Nanuru* also refers to the practice of offering human sacrifice before Korravai. Korravai as Renuka Devi integrates in her persona in both the Dravidian and Sanskritic modes of representation and worship.

KRISHNAMACHARI, T. T. (1899–1974). Krishnamachari, known in political and business circles as TTK, an industrialist turned politician, is regarded as one of the founders of modern India. He was also one of the most powerful finance ministers of independent India who resigned his post in 1958 following the Mundra financial scandal. Krishnamachari began his career in business selling Sunlight soap for Lever Brothers as an apprentice of A. R. Doraisami **Iyengar**. In 1928, he secured the whole agency from Lever Brothers and also set up his own business firm T. T. Krishnamachari and Co. He developed an extremely radical style of marketing by moving the company from merely booking indents to selling directly to dealers through franchising, opening up sales depots, conducting market surveys periodically, skywriting, and sales promotion through gifts and exclusive **calendars**.

The second phase of his life began when TTK joined politics in 1936. He was a member of the drafting committee of the Indian Constitution. He was the union minister of commerce and **industry** between 1952 and 1956 and minister of iron and steel between 1955 and 1957. However, it was as India’s finance minister between 1964 and 1966 that he made his greatest contribution to the country’s **economy** marred only by the ignominy following the Mundra financial scandal and his consequent resignation. Along with Sir **C. P. Ra-**

maswamy Iyer, he played an important role in setting up the **Madras Music Academy**. The 42nd session of the Indian National Congress was held in 1927, and the foundation of the Academy was laid to coincide with the momentous occasion. In memory of his patronage of **Carnatic music**, the main auditorium is named after Krishnamachari. It is worthy of mention that his grandson, T. M. Krishna, is one of the foremost exponents of Carnatic music today. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

KRISHNAMURTHY, "KALKI" R. (1899–1954). Krishnamurthy **Iyer**, a patriot and freedom fighter, is better known as the founder of the weekly magazine *Kalki*. Born in Puthamangalam in **Tanjavur** district, he gave up his own studies in 1921 to join M. K. Gandhi's non-cooperation movement. He was imprisoned in 1922 and twice more in the following years by the British colonial regime. In 1923, he came under the influence of **Thiru V. Kalyanasundaram** and joined the staff of his journal, *Navashakti*. His pen name, "Kalki," was derived from the first two letters of his mentor's name, "Kal" with the first letter of his own name "Ki."

In 1927, his translation of Gandhi's autobiography, *My Experiments with Truth*, was published as *Sathya Sodanai*. Kalki actively participated in the anti-alcoholism campaign and wrote for *Vimochanam*, the journal started by **C. Rajagopalachari** to create public awareness of and opposition to alcoholism. In 1931, he took over as the editor of the popular magazine *Ananda Vikatan*. It was in this magazine that he published his first article *Ettikku Potti*.

The freedom movement and Gandhian principles like Harijan emancipation find places in his novels. Kalki's *Thyaga Bhoomi* (Holy Land; 1941) was an immensely popular work, second only to K. S. Venkat Ramani's *Desabhaktan Kanthan* (Kanthan, the Patriot; 1932). In this work, the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**, Harijan upliftment **in** and equality of **women** take center-stage. His historical novels, *Parthiban Kanavu* and *Sivakamiyin Sapadam*, were also written during this time. In 1941, he parted ways with *Ananda Vikatan* and started his own journal, *Kalki*. *Sivakamiyin Sapadam* was serialized in the *Kalki* from 1944 onward. The Gandhian novel, *Alai Osai*, was serialized in 1948. The socialist tones of this novel won much acclaim in the then-USSR. Kalki also wrote the dialogue and **music** for

the Tamil film, *Meera*, which brought fame to **M. S. Subbalakshmi**. *See also* LITERATURE; NEWSPAPERS; TAMIL CINEMA.

KRISHNAMURTHI, YAMINI (1940–). Yamini Krishnamurthi is one of India's top ranking **Bharatanatyam** and Kuchipudi exponents. Yamini was born in Madanapalli in Andhra into a family of scholars. She became a student at **Rukmini Arundale's** Kalashethra at the early age of five and had her initial dance training there. Her debut performance was in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1957. By 1960, she had become a foremost exponent of Bharatanatyam. Yamini received the "Padma Shri" in 1968 and the Sangeet Natak Academy Award in 1977. She has also been honored with the Padma Bhushan.

KRISHNAN, RAMESH (1961–). Eight singles titles, one doubles title, and career prize money totaling \$1,263,130 over one and a half decades on tennis courts deserves more than a mere mention. But this is hardly surprising, considering the illustrious achievements of his father, Ramanathan Krishnan. Inspired by his father, this genial and soft-spoken gentleman has kept the Indian flag flying high with his motivated performances in the Davis Cup not only as a player but also as the Indian team's non-playing captain. He may not have been equipped with the fastest serve in the world or been one of the fastest movers on the tennis court, but his lionhearted approach won him both accolades and titles. One of Ramesh Krishnan's most memorable triumphs was in the Davis Cup quarterfinals against France in 1993. It was the culmination of his career, and he signed off in style. He won the crucial doubles match in the company of the then inexperienced Leander Paes and turned the tide in India's favor. He is presently operating a Tennis academy in **Chennai** that is set up on the lines of similar institutions in the United States. He helps youngsters who are inspired by the Leanders and Bhupathis of today to realize their potential and make dreams come true. *See also* AMRITRAJ, VIJAY.

KRISHNASWAMY, K. Dr. (1954–). Dr. Krishnaswamy heads a new political party in Tamil Nadu called **Puthiya Tamizhagam** founded in 1997. The party emerged on the plank of a New Deal for the Tamil dalits, especially in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. Like the

Bahujana Samaj Party in northern India, the Puthiya Tamizhagam hopes to cut into the dalit vote banks of the major parties such as the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** and **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)**. Elected three times from Ottapidaram, a reserved seat in Tuticorin district, Krishnaswamy switched to **Andipatti** to battle with **J. Jayalalitha**, the AIADMK Supremo in 2002 only to lose to her. Puthiya Tamizhagam has been vociferous in its support of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Krishnaswamy came to prominence by espousing the cause of the tea estate laborers by organizing a successful strike in 1998 leading to an increase in their daily wages from Rs.53 to Rs.76. Subsequently, however, Dr. Krishnaswamy has been involved in a murder case concerning the death of an estate worker.

KUMARAMANGALAM, RANGARAJAN (1952–2000). Rangarajan Kumaramangalam was the son of the veteran Congressman Mohan Kumaramangalam. He came from a long line of veteran Congressmen; his grandfather, Subbarayan had also served as a minister in the Jawaharlal Nehru cabinet. Kumaramangalam first entered politics in the 1970s and was a minister of the Indira Gandhi cabinet during the years of her Emergency regime between 1975 and 1977. His voice was, however, one of cautious dissent against the excesses of the emergency. In 1998, he left the Congress-I to join the rightist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and was the minister for power in the Atal Behari Vajpayee-led National Democratic Alliance Government in 1999. A promising political career was cut short by Kumaramangalam's untimely death due to illness in 2000.

KUNDALAKESI. This is a Buddhist text (the text itself being named after the Buddhist nun, “Bhadra Kundalakesi” in the *Therigatha*) purported to have been written by Nathagupthanar (Nathagupta). The text itself has been lost to posterity, but its story is briefly narrated in the *Neelakesi*, a sixth-century text. It tells the story of Kundalakesi, an allegorical name meaning “woman with curly locks”—a merchant's daughter who fell in love with a condemned convict, Kalan. She makes her father intercede with the king and secures Kalan's pardon. However, the relationship sours, and Kalan tries to push his wife off a mountain peak. She preempts him by pushing him instead, and

killing him. Kundalakesi goes on to renounce the world and becomes a Buddhist nun, carrying on theological battles with Jains and **Hindus** and defeating them in debates. She finally attains spiritual liberation. It is even said that in her initial years, when she was a Jain, she shattered conventions by becoming a Nigrantha Jain or a naked monk. The text in terms of its storyline is not different from the Jaina text *Neelakesi* and was probably a polemical response to it. *See also* LITERATURE; RELIGION.

KURAVAR. Originally a hill tribe inhabiting the hilly regions called *Tinai Kurinji*, today the Kurava community is classified as a scheduled tribe. The Kuravar claim to be descended from *Dharmaraja Yama* (the God of Death) whom a Kurava woman enticed in the guise of a fortune-teller. In their lifestyle, they are equated with the gypsies and share many of their characteristics, including communal living. Basically hunter-gatherers during the **Sangam** period when there are extensive references to this community, the Kuravar took to basket making, fortune telling, and peddling items like salt and lime. Another interesting craft associated with the Kurava community is the making of false hair, which is plaited together, called *chavuri* in Tamil. Their tendency toward petty thieving and burglary resulted in their being classified as a criminal community during the period of British colonialism. *See also* RESERVATIONS.

KURINJIPATTU. This composition from the *Pathupattu* anthology images the mood of romantic dalliance (*Mullaipattu*) typified by the hilly tract. Beginning with courtship and secret meetings, it leads on to matrimony with parental consent. Consisting of 261 lines, the poem has been authored by the famous **Sangam** poet **Kapilar**. Being entirely in the *aham* mode or the “interior,” dealing with love and domesticity, the poem does not talk of patrons, wars, or the public domain. *See also* SANGAM LITERATURE.

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LAMBADIS. The Lambadis are said to originally belong to the north Indian state of Rajasthan. In northern India, this community is known as

Banjara who correspond more or less to the itinerant gypsies of Europe and Asia. Some time in the medieval period, this community seems to have moved into Tamil Nadu and Andhra. Today, the Lambadis in Tamil Nadu are to be found in the mountainous regions of Salem, Periyar, **Tiruvannamalai**, and Dharmapuri districts. Their maximum concentration is in Ammapettai in Bhavani taluk at a place called Chennaimalai (meaning literally “Red Mountains”). The only other communities inhabiting this area, which includes the village of Komarayanur, are the Gounden and the **Chakkiliyan**. The Lambadis speak a unique language called “Lambadi,” which is a potpourri of Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi, and Urdu, giving a flavor of their migrant past.

The Lambadis are divided into *tanda*. Chennimalai, for example, has six *tandas*, each consisting of an average of 25 families, with the largest *tanda* having 42 families. The Lambadis originally believed only in ancestor worship, their main deity being called *garu*, but as a result of the process of Sanskritization, the community now also worships Venkatchalapati, the presiding deity at Tirupati. In medieval times, the Lambadis were very important in commerce as peddlers of grain, salt, and other essential items. Now, while a few are sheepherders, the majority work as laborers on Gounder plantations. A few continue to make a living by extracting and selling eucalyptus oil and medicinal herbs.

LAND NANJAI. Nanjai is the Tamil term for wetlands used for paddy cultivation. Kerala, which used to be a part of ancient Tamilaham, is also known as Nanjanadu because of its fertility. In the Tamil country, the **River Kaveri** basin in **Tanjavur-Tiruchirapalli** belt was known for its wetland cultivation and **irrigation** tanks. Wetland crops were primarily composed of different varieties of paddy. The land was first plowed by oxen and buffaloes yoked in pairs and the paddy grains were placed in the hollow of the plowshare. The whole land was flooded, and as the plowshare was moved the paddy was placed under the flooded land. Sometimes wetlands included lands called *toppu* or *tottam*, that is gardens, in which different varieties of fruits and vegetables were grown. *See also* AGRICULTURE; LAND PUNJAI.

LAND PUNJAI. *Punjai* is the Tamil term used for hard dry lands. Paddy cultivation essentially involved **irrigation**, which transformed

dry lands into wetlands for the cultivation of food crops. Unlike **Land Nanjai** or wetland cultivation, in *Punjai* land paddy is sown by hand. While in *nanjai*, only a pair of oxen was used for plowing, in dry lands it could be two or even three pairs in very hard soil. The medieval 15th-century Sanskrit text *Parasara Madhaviyam* quotes the use of as many as eight bullocks to plow certain types of dry, practically barren lands. Varieties of millets called *ragi*, *varagu*, and *kambu* as well as maize were cultivated in *Punjai* dry lands. *See also* AGRICULTURE; LAND NANJAI.

LANGUAGE. *See* TAMIL LANGUAGE.

LE SOUX, DOM HENRI (1910–1973). A remarkable French Dominican monk who successfully embraced both **Christianity** and **Hinduism**, Dom Henri Le Soux was born in 1910 in Brittany and came to India as a missionary in 1948. His arduous training as a missionary involved reading Indian scriptures and learning the Tamil language. He came to reside in a hermitage at Kulittalai near **Tiruchirapalli** with fellow missionary, Father Monchanin. The monk who came with the intention to proselytize ended by adopting the way of Hindu renunciates. He took to wearing saffron and began sleeping on the floor in the manner of Hindus. After some initial interaction with the Ramakrishna Mission, he came to **Tiruvannamalai**, where he met sage **Ramana Maharshi**. After the death of the sage, Henri Le Soux stayed on to contemplate on and in the presence of Arunachala as “a Hindu Christian monk” as he termed himself. As **Abhishiktananda**, he endeared himself to the Tamils, earning their respect and reverence. Among his books, *The Secret of Arunachala* celebrates the mystic power of Tiruvannamalai. *See also* BESCHI, C. J.; CALDWELL, BISHOP ROBERT; NOBILI, ROBERTO DE; POPE, G. U.; XAVIER, ST. FRANCIS; ZIEGENBALG, BARTHOLOMAEUS.

LITERATURE. Tamil literature is believed to have an ancient past. It is said that the first **Sangam** met about 10,000 BCE and was convened by the celestial sage Agasthya. The first Sangam is said to have lasted 4,440 years. It is also said that the first two Sangams produced a prolific amount of literature that was destroyed by the great flood

that swept through ancient Tamizhaham—then called Kumarikandam. The book of Tamil grammar and literary styles called *Tolkappiyam* (a text still extant) is said to belong to this period. This flood theory gained currency once again in modern Tamil Nadu in the wake of the **Tsunami** disaster. The corpus of Sangam literature as we know it today was born in the third Sangam held in Madurai, which is also said to have lasted 1,850 years. **Sangam literature** essentially consisted of the three major anthologies—*Ettuthogai*, *Pathupattu*, and the *Padirrupathu*. *Padinenkizhkanakku* belongs to the later Sangam period, and its best known texts are both believed to be Jaina texts—the didactic texts *Naladiyar* and **Tiruvalluvar**'s *Tirukkural*. The oral legend of the *Naladiyar* states that about 8,000 verses were originally written by as many Jains. But when the text was floated in the waters, only 400 verses came up and this was, therefore, regarded as the best of the *Naladiyar*. It was a time-honored practice among the Tamils to test the worthiness of a literary work by casting it into water. If the text floated, it was considered to have divine sanction, but if it sank it was not considered by society as a work of merit and was disregarded. *Tirukkural* is regarded as one of the greatest works in the Tamil language. The text is normative in tone and in crisp couplets sets forth the rules for everyday living. These rules are divided into three spheres of living—*aram* (righteous living), *porul* (the earning of wealth), and *inbam* (pleasure).

The classical Sangam age was followed by the late Sangam epic texts written between the fourth and sixth centuries CE—*Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai*, the former written by **Ilango Adigal**, and its sequel *Manimekalai* by Sittalai Sattanar. In *Silappadikaram*, the story revolves around Kovalan and Kannagi, both of whom belong to seafaring Jain communities, and the courtesan Madhavi. The heroine of the epic *Manimekalai*, after whom the text is named, was the daughter of Madhavi and went on to become a celebrated Buddhist nun. Ajivika (minor sect of Jainism) philosophy is also reflected in both these texts. The two texts occupy a significant place in Tamil society, **religion**, and philosophy. They enrich our understanding of Brahmanism, Jainism, and Buddhism and their relative impact on early Tamil society.

Medieval Tamil literature was dominated by devotional literature. The **Alvar** and **Nayanar** saints wrote some of the finest innovative

poetry of that period brought together in the *Nalayira Divyaprabhandam* and the *Tevaram*. For example, Cheraman Perumal Nayanar evolved the *ula* style in his work, *Tirukkailaya Jnana Ula*, in which devotees watching **Siva** coming in a procession (literally *ula*) express their love for him. The **Pandyan** kings compiled the corpus of Saivite literature as *Tirumurai*. **Karaikkal Ammaiyar**, in her *Tiruvalangattu Mootha Tirupadigam* and *Irattaimani Malai*, made notable innovations in poetic meter. The *Tiruvachagam* as well as the *Tirukkovaiyar* of **Manikkavachagar** was the first example of the literary genre called *kovai*, which speaks of the sublimation of human love into love for the divine manifestation called **Mayon** (**Vishnu** or **Krishna** in the Sanskritic pantheon). The Alvars introduced the *manipravalam* style by fusing the **language** and literary traditions of Sanskrit and Tamil. The **Siddha** style of literary composition, permeated with devotional mysticism, commenced with the *Tirumandiram* of Tirumoolar. Another feature of Siddha compositions was that it deviated almost completely from the Brahmanical, Sanskritic style.

Two texts of this period fall outside the genre of devotional literature—the *Mattavilasaprahasana* of **Pallava Mahendra I**, written in the seventh century, and the *Nandikalambakam*, written by an anonymous poet in the court of Pallava Nandivarman III in the ninth century. The interesting folklore behind this is that the poet had loaded the seeming panegyric with inauspicious words designed to cause the death of the king. The outstanding work of the medieval period was the *Ramayanam* of **Kambar** who flourished around the 12th century. Contemporaneous with **Kambar** was the poet **Ottakkuttar**, who is best remembered for his vibrant account of the valor of the **Kaikkola** community in the text *Itti Elupatu*. In the field of Saiva Siddhanta literature, the seminal work, *Sivajnana Bodham*, was composed in the 13th century by Meykandar. A major devotional text containing thousands of songs dedicated to the god **Murugan** written in the 15th century was the *Tiruppugazh* of **Arunagirinathar**. Among the important literary works written in the 17th century were the *Pillaitamizh* by Kumaraguruparar and the *Vira Saivam* of Sivaprakasa Swamigal.

The renaissance of **Tamil language** and literature and the evolution of new literary forms took place during the colonial rule of the British. In fact, new forms of literature such as the novel, short story, and drama

were born under the inspiration of the model of English literature. *Pratapa Mudaliyar Charitram* by **Mayuram Vedanayagam Pillai** in 1879 is regarded as the first novel in the Tamil language. Christian missionaries were important in the development of Tamil language and literature, and the print media was used by them not only to propagate **Christianity** but also to bring out original texts and translations of Tamil works. The *Tevaram* was translated by **G. U. Pope**, while **Viramamunivar alias C. J. Beschi** wrote the first Tamil lexicon. **Ziegenbalg Bartholomaeus**, a German Lutheran missionary, set up a printing press at Tarangampadi and published a catalogue of Tamil literary works with a brief description of each.

In the 20th century, the development of Tamil literature became inextricably linked with the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**. The **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam** in particular played an important role in shaping nationalist literature. For the first time, autobiographies came to be written by the Tamils, **U. V. Svaminatha Iyer**'s being one of the finest examples. **V. U. Chidambaranar**, who pioneered the Tamil Shipping industry and died as a result of his internment in the Andamans for his anti-British activities, wrote *Agavarpa*—his life in blank verse, which he completed on his release from prison a few years before his death. In 1921, **C. Rajagopalachari** wrote his *Jail Life*, which can be called a partial biography. **Svamichidambaranar** wrote the first biography of **E. V. Ramaswami Naicker**.

Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai, followed by U. V. Svaminatha Iyer, was responsible for the recovery of many old manuscripts. Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai also wrote *Akhilanda Nayaki Pillai Tamil*, published in 1842. His poverty compelled him to do ghost writing for a living, and many of his works, such as *Suta Samhita* and *Kuchelopakhyanam*, do not bear his name.

With the beginning of the print media in colonial Tamil Nadu, periodicals and weekly magazines like *Kalki*, *Ananda Vikatan*, *Navashakti*, *Amudasurabhi*, *Kalaimagal*, and *Kumudam* were started in the early decades of the 20th century. Authors who wrote for them included **Kalki R. Krishnamurthi**, Kothamangalam Subbu, **V. K. Kalyanasundaranar**, and others, who went on to become household names all spheres of Tamil literature. **Mahadevan** is to the Tamil literary world what P. G. Wodehouse was to the English literary world. Mahadevan's literary creations abound with gentle humor, and his

fictional character, Tuppariyum Sambu, who is a comic detective stumbling upon solutions to crimes, is a most beloved fictional figure for Tamil readers.

Existentialism burst upon the Tamil literary scene with **S. Mani** alias Mauni, and the magazine *Manikkodi* emerged as a forum for literary experimentations, especially in short story writing. Modern trends in writing and in literary criticism such as post-modernism is also beginning to find its voice among Tamil writers. Charunivedita, Prem Brammarajan, Nagarjunan, Tamizhavan, and Konangi are some of the newly emerging writers in whose fiction one can also find traces of the literary technique called “magic realism.”

Women’s writings began first to find space in women’s periodicals and journals started in the early part of the 20th century. Rajam Krishnan, Kodainayaki, and Lakshmi deserve special mention among early women writers. Out of the modern feminist writers in Tamil, Ambai (a pseudonym for C. S. Lakshmi), Vasanthi, Sivakami, Bhama, Mangai, and Kaveri have made niches for themselves. Ambai has also started a special archive called *Sparrow* to recover and store women’s voices through their scattered or hidden writings. *See also* ARUMUGA NAVALAR; BHARATIDASAN; BHARATIYAR, SUBRAHMANYA; CHELLAPPA, C. S.; ISMAIL, M. M.; KANDASAMY, S. A.; PARTHASARATHY, INDIRA; PILLAI, DAMODARAM C. W.; SHANMUGASUNDARAM, R.

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MACKENZIE, COLONEL COLIN (1753–1821). Mackenzie was a civil engineer by profession and was the first surveyor-general of India, and his engagements in Tamil Nadu brought him into close contact with various facets of Tamil culture. Colin Mackenzie became famous as an engineer, surveyor, and cartographer. In 1815, he was appointed the first Surveyor General of India, a post he held till his death in 1821. He embarked on collecting local histories and surveying historic sites in order to better understand India’s past and make governance of the colony easier. Many of the inscriptions and palm leaf manuscripts that he unearthed or that were given to him in the course of his long professional career are preserved in the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library at **Chennai**.

MADRAS. *See* CHENNAI.

MADRAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY. The Madras Chamber of Commerce and **Industry** (MCCI), founded in 1836, is among the oldest chambers functioning in India. Since its inception, the Chamber has been actively involved in the promotion of trade and industry in the southern region, particularly Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu has also emerged as a major investment site for multinationals, especially in the **Information Technology** and automobile manufacturing sectors. The MCCI is closely associated with all of these developmental activities. A General Committee elected from among the members and Expert Committees that deal with various economic and developmental issues manages its activities. The Expert Committees are involved with the impact on trade of major sectors like **banking**, finance and insurance, environment and pollution control, sales tax, transport and communication in relation to commerce, etc. The MCCI is a promoter affiliate of the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and is also a member of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

MADRAS MAHAJANA SABHA (MMS). The Sabha was founded in 1884, and it emerged as a successor to the **Madras Native Association (MNA)**. The MMS began with a total membership of 200. The political agenda did not greatly differ from that of the MNA except that the MMS had a wider geographical and social base. Its outreach activities extended to Tirunelveli, **Coimbatore**, and Palghat. The association worked in tandem with the Indian National Congress, which was founded in 1885, a year after the inception of the MMS. Twenty-one delegates from the MMS attended the Bombay session of the Congress. Apart from its national level participation, the MMS regularly held meetings in the Madras Presidency, and in 1892 it hosted the inaugural session of the Madras Provincial Conference. Its subsequent sessions were held in Kumbakonam, Coimbatore, Calicut, and **Madurai**, showing the wide geographical base of the movement. Apart from these conferences, smaller associations were also founded at the district levels at **Tanjavur** in 1894, North Arcot in 1899, Chengelpet in 1902, and Madurai in 1904. Political activity in Salem (hometown of the celebrated Tamil politician **C. Rajagopalachari**) was held under the banner of the Salem Reading Room (!) founded in 1905. Interestingly, the

North Arcot District Association, which branched off into smaller taluka-level political associations at Ranipet, Vellore, and Sholingar was followed suit in other districts as well. However, with the rise of the **non-Brahmin movement** in South India, the association began to encounter serious criticism from its opponents who perceived the MMS as being dominated by **Brahmins** with Subrahmanya **Iyer's** *Svadeshmithiran* as its mouthpiece. The other source from which the association encountered opposition was the **extremist movement** in the South. The Swadeshi movement, which was one of the main socio-political planks of the MMS, was soon overtaken by the concerns of the extremists. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY. The foundation of the Madras **Music Academy** was a direct consequence of the holding of the 42nd session of the Indian National Congress at Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1927. A musical concert was held on the occasion to celebrate Tamil culture. The **Brahmin** lobby in the Tamil country succeeded in founding the Madras Music Academy in 1928. Culture, music and politics intertwined as nationalist leaders like Sathyamurthy and E. Krishna **Iyer** involved themselves with the academy. Despite its Brahmanical base the Academy patronized dancers like **T. S. Balasaraswati** belonging to the **Devaradiyar** community. Indira Menon in her book *The Madras Quartet* points out that it was also eclectic in its patronage of both Hindustani and Western music. It is said that the Western musician Henry Cowell wrote the “Madras Symphony,” which was performed by the Little Symphony Orchestra of New York at the Academy. Similarly, Alan Hovhaness’s “Madras Sonata” was performed at the Academy’s annual conference. The exponent of Hindustani music belonging to the Kirana gharana, Roshanara Begum, a disciple of the legendary Abdul Karim Khan, also performed at the Academy.

The Academy came under fire during the height of the anti-Brahmin movement in Tamil Nadu. At the political level this was reflected in the foundation of the **Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam** by **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker** while at the cultural level anti-Brahminism led to the foundation of the **Tamil Isai Sangam** in 1940. Madras Music Academy continues even today as one of the most prestigious institutions in Chennai and the title of “Sangeetha Kalanidhi” conferred by the Academy is still the “Oscar” of **Carnatic music**.

MADRAS NATIVE ASSOCIATION (MNA). The Madras Native Association was founded in 1852 by a body of social activists who were essentially pressing for reform within the overarching dominance of the English **East India Company**. The Association was led by **Gajalu Lakshmanarasu Chetty**, a Komati merchant dealing in textiles and indigo and other merchants like P. Appasamy Pillai and P. Veeraperumal Pillai, both partners in an agency firm, and Srinivasa Pillai. The landed interests were represented by C. Yagambaram **Mudaliyar**, a powerful *Mirasidar* or landed magnate who was made the first president of the MNA. The Association in its first petition to the Company sought British aid in public works such as roads, bridges, and **irrigation** tanks and canals. It also petitioned against the excessively heavy taxation imposed by the Company regime. However its primary attack was on what it regarded as the proselytization agenda of the British and the tacit and open support being extended to missionary activities in India. The MNA was split over the issue of continued cooperation with the Company regime. Lakshmanarasu parted ways with his friends like Srinivasa Pillai and M. Venkatarayalu Naidu who believed that social reform had to be based on British support and cooperation, unlike Lakshmanarasu who believed that it was only the collective will of the community that could end the evils in Tamil society and that freedom was a *sine qua non* for social development. The last issue in which the MNA played an active role was the 1858 Tirunelveli riots, which resulted from the local resistance to missionary activities. Riots broke out when the European magistrate allowed a **Christian** burial party to use a street occupied by high **caste** Hindus. The MNA protested against the high-handed manner in which the issue was handled in a special meeting convened in 1860. This was virtually the last political activity of the association, and the **Madras Mahajana Sabha** soon took its place. The premature demise of the MNA has been attributed to its elite base, since most of its members were drawn from the affluent social groups.

MADURAI. A capital city of the **Pandya** kings, ancient Madurai can be traced back to the **Sangam** period. What distinguished Madurai from other towns in the Tamil country were the high towers over the four gates of the fort called *koodal* in Tamil. Therefore, Madurai was also called *Koodal*. *Kalittogai*, one of the Sangam texts, addresses the

Pandya king as “Lord of the fortified city, whose walls knew of no siege by any other enemy but the waters of **River Vaigai** when it is in spate.”

Madurai was also the seat of **Tamil** learning, and the last Sangam is said to have met in Madurai. The Tamil epic *Silappadikaram* eulogizes the prosperity of Madurai and describes the principal streets such as the street of the upper class like the nobility, royal palaces, the street of the courtesans, and the market area with separate streets for goldsmiths, cloth merchants, corn dealers, etc.

Life in Madurai revolves around the **Temple of Meenakshiamman**. In fact, the Pandyan kings sought and gained political legitimacy by associating themselves with the sacred presence of Meenakshi, who is regarded as the divine ruler of Madurai born of a mythical Pandyan king called Malayadwaja. True to its character as a **temple** town, every street in Madurai radiates from and toward the temple. Despite the passage of centuries, this basic character is still preserved.

The Tamils of Madurai are said to speak pure Tamil, called *chennai-tamil*, in contrast to the Tamil spoken in other regions, which is hard, that is, *kodumtamil*. The Fifth International Tamil Conference was held in Madurai in 1981 under the aegis of the then Chief Minister **M. G. Ramachandran**.

MADURAIKANCHI. The text is the longest in the *Pathupattu* collection, consisting of 782 lines. For the first time, the Jain/Buddhist philosophy is reflected in this poem, which centers on the theme of disenchantment with worldly pleasures. The mood, therefore, contrasts with the ethos of the **Sangam** Tamils, which is celebratory. The Tamils are usually portrayed as lively and materialistic in their pursuits. The poet Mangudi Marudananar intended it as a warning to the **Pandyan** king who was steeped in worldliness. The poet describes the king as a great conqueror and a liberal patron. However, instead of merely praising his patron, the poet warns him about the transient nature of life and the need for introspection on the futility of material conquests. The poem provides valuable incidental information on the Pandyan country such as eco-types in the **Pandyamandalam**, the principal **River Vaigai**, and the means of **irrigation** such as canals and tanks. The text contains a graphic description of the city of **Madurai**—its palaces, commerce, arts, and recreation of the Tamils. *See also* LITERATURE.

MAHABALIPURAM (MAMALLAPURAM). This historic site, currently a place of great tourist interest, is also known as Mahabalipuram or the city of the “Seven Pagodas.” The town is located about 60 km south of **Chennai**. The seventh-century **Pallava** king Narasimhavarman I founded the town as a center for crafts, culture, and **religion**. The king was also known as “Mamallan,” meaning “The Greatest of Warriors,” and therefore this craft/temple town became Mamallapuram. Ancient Chinese, Persian, and Roman coins point to its earlier existence as a seaport. The town’s five *rathas* or monolithic rock-cut **temples** dedicated to the *Pancha Pandava* (the heroes of the great epic *Mahabharata*) are the remnants of the seven temples (including a *ratha* for Draupadi, the “polygamous” wife of the five Pandava princes). It is believed that the king encouraged craftsmen and artists to settle in the town, giving them economic incentives to produce exquisitely sculpted panels on the temples, the most famous of these being *Arjuna’s Penance* and *The Descent of the Ganges*. In the 20th century, this town was revived as a craft center under the guidance of Ganapati Sthapati (a traditional master-craftsman belonging to the *Viswakarma* community), and the place has an excellent College of Art, Architecture, and Sculpture.

MAHADEVAN (DEVAN) (1913–1957). Celebrated Tamil writer, Mahadevan, popularly known as “Devan,” is the author of unforgettable fictional characters and some great Tamil novels. Among these are *Mr. Vedantam*, *Miss Janaki*, *Justice Jagannathan*, *Sriman Sudarshanam*, *Gomatiyin Kadalan*, and *Rajaththin Manoratham*. Most of these were turned into dramatic scripts and were enacted onstage by the **TKS Theatrical Group**. Devan today is best remembered for his immortal detective, “Tuppuraiyum Sambu,” an amicable fool who solves the deepest of mysteries and the greatest of crimes through sheer luck. *See also* LITERATURE; THEATER.

MAKKAL KALAI ILAKKIYA KAZHAKAM. A popular activists group headed by Matutaiyan, the name of the organization can be translated as “Group for Folk Arts and **Literature**.” Its literary organs are publications such as the *Putiya kalachcharam* and the *Putiya Jananayakam*. Its members do volunteer work among the unorganized sector, the working classes, and the socially downtrodden.

MALAIPPAADUKADAM. This poem of 583 lines, composed in the first half of the third century CE, is contained in the *Pathupattu* anthology. The text is also known by the alternative name of *Koothatrupadai* because it is ascribed to the bardic tradition of the Koothar community of nomadic storytellers and dancers. The composer was Perumkausikannar, who intended it as paean of praise of his patron **Nannan**, a petty chieftain of the **Sangam** polity. It describes all of the five eco-zones of Tamilaham, focusing on the hilly terrain of Nannan's kingdom. Its description of the culture of the Malayalis drives home the fact that the ancient Tamilaham included the whole of present-day Kerala. Another interesting facet of this text is the discussion of hero stones, called *Virakkal*—memorial stones dedicated to heroes who lost their lives in preventing cattle raids. *See also* LITERATURE.

MALAYAMAN KARI. Kari was a **Sangam** chieftain who ruled over the hill country around Tirukkovalur in South Arcot district. In **Sangam literature**, he is known as Kari. He was a great patron of **Brahmins**, bestowing lands and cattle on them and in turn gaining ritual legitimacy. He was the patron of the famous Brahmin poet **Kapilar**. It is said that Kari, who was a vassal of the **Chola** king, declared his independence. The king retaliated by invading Malanadu and killing Kari. Kari's sons were, however, spared, and the kingdom was restored to them through the intervention of the bard Kovur Kilar.

MALAYSIA. *See* TAMILS IN MALAYSIA.

MANAVALA MAMUNI (ca. 1370–1450). Sri Manavala Mamuni was a disciple of Sri Pillai Lokacharya. He was born in the town of Kidaram in Tamil Nadu, in 1370. His parents named him Azhakiya Manavalan, after the Lord himself. He moved to Alvar Tirunagari and became a disciple of Tiruvaymozhi Pillai. Manavala Mamuni composed his first work, *Yatiraja Vimsati*, 20 Sanskrit stanzas in praise of **Ramanujacharya**. His teacher, Guru Tiruvaymozhi Pillai, read the work and gave him the title *Yatindra Pravanar*. After the death of his guru, Manavala Mamuni moved north to Srirangam. He went on a pilgrimage to **Kanchipuram**, Tirumalai, and Sriperumpudur. While in Kanchi, he studied *Sri Bhashya* with Kitambi **Nayanar**, a disciple of Brahamatantra Svatantra Jeeyar. After his return to Srirangam, he

renounced his householder status and became a Sanyasin. He installed an idol of the great Vaishnavite Acharya Pillai Lokacharya at the Srirangam temple.

Around 1430, Manavala Mamuni began writing commentaries on the works of earlier Acharyas, composed independent works, and compiled source documentation and cross-referencing on some important Vaishnavite works. *Yatindrapravana Prabhavam* records that Manavala Mamuni undertook many extensive pilgrimages from Tirumalai in the north to Madurai and **Alvar** Tirunagari in the south. After his return to Srirangam, a dispute over the control of the temple arose between the Saivas and Vaishnavas at Alakar Koil. The ruler settled the dispute in favor of Vaishnavas and Manavala Mamuni's appointee there, Ethiraja Jeeyar. During his last years, he dedicated one **Tamil** stanza a day, expressing to Ramanujacharya his anguish at staying in this world and his eagerness to reach heaven. These collected verses became known as *Arti Prabhantham*, his last work. Manavala Mamuni today is regarded as the founding father of the *Thenkalai* (southern) school of Vaishnavism. *See also* RELIGION.

MANDALAM CHERA. In **Sangam** texts, the region is also referred to as Kudapulam. Another name for this region found in the epigraphic records of the early medieval Tamil country is Malaimandalam. It is located on the western side of the Tamil country along what came to be called the Malabar Coast in the 16th century. It is known as Cheranadu because the **Chera** kings ruled it. The region included the present districts of **Nilgiris**, Salem, and **Coimbatore** partially, and the Malayalam region that would cover present-day Palakkad, Ernakulam-Kochi, and Trissur districts. Ancient seaports such as Tondi and **Muziris**, referred to in the Sangam texts as well as in the *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, are located in **Cheramandalam**.

Vanji was the capital of the Chera country. Therefore Cheranadu or Chera country is also referred to as *Vanji Bhoomi*. The land is defined by the Palani hills in the north, Tenkasi in the east, Kozhikode (called Calicut by the **East India Company**) on the west, and the Indian Ocean in the south. It is said that during the reign of **Senguttavan** in the Sangam period, the country also included the southern part of present-day Mysore. Although in ancient times Cheramandalam clearly formed a part of Tamilaham, today the region largely describes

Kerala, the Malayalam country. *See also* MANDALAM CHOLA; MANDALAM KONGU; MANDALAM NADUVIL; MANDALAM PANDYA; MANDALAM TONDAI.

MANDALAM CHOLA. **Cholamandalam** region is also known as Cholanadu because it was governed by the **Chola dynasty**. This is a fertile belt of the Tamil country with its heartland located in the Kaveri basin. The region comprises the modern districts of **Tanjavur**, **Tiruchirapalli**, and South Arcot. The fertile deltaic region made this the granary of Tamil Nadu. On the east, the region is bound by the Bay of Bengal while Kulittalai in Tiruchirapalli district constitutes its western extremity. The northern and southern boundaries kept shifting, although it can be broadly stated that the Chola land lay between the Vellaru River flowing from Salem district in the north to the same Vellaru bordering Tanjavur district in the south. Uraiyur, Tanjavur, and Gangaikondacholapuram were the capitals of the Chola kings at various points in historical time. **Kaveripumpattinam** was a major port town of the Chola country during the **Sangam** period. It provides the geographical setting for the epic *Silappadikaram*.

The *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* provides many examples of the commerce that flourished between Chola country and the Greco-Roman lands. The best description of the history and culture of Cholamandalam is provided in the *Cholamandala Satakam*. The author of this work, Atmanadha Desikar (1650–1728), flourished toward the close of the 17th century and the first decades of the 18th century. The work deals with Chola polity, taking it up to the period of the Maratha ruler Ekoji (1686–1710). It also describes the **religion** and mythology behind the sacred sites of Chidambaram, Srirangam, Tiruvarur, etc. It is a mine of information on celebrated figures, such as **Auvaiyar**, and religious figures, such as **Appar**, and **Tirujnanasambandar**. *See also* MANDALAM CHERA; MANDALAM KONGU; MANDALAM NADUVIL; MANDALAM PANDYA; MANDALAM TONDAI.

MANDALAM KONGU. **Kongumandalam** comprises the present-day districts of Salem, **Coimbatore**, and Dharmapuri. Kongumandalam is surrounded by hills on all sides, like the **Vallimalai** and **Nil-**

giri hills in the west, Talaimalai, Mahesvaranmalai and Toppumalai in the north, the Palani hills (the site of the famous hill temple of **Murugan**) to the south, and Pachchamalai and Kollimalai to the east. The **River Kaveri** flows in a southeastern direction through the Kongu country and crosses into **Cholamandalam**. Several political dynasties have held sway over this region, including the Ganga, **Pallava**, Rashtrakuta, Hoysala, **Chera**, **Chola**, and **Pandyas**. For a long period, this region was under the governance of the Telugu Cholas. A major text detailing the history and culture of the Kongu-mandalam was written in the 17th century. Called *Kongumandala Satakam*, it was authored by Karmegha Pulavar, a **Brahmin** who converted to Jainism. The text makes a special listing of the luminaries who hailed from the Kongu country. This includes Sangam chieftains Ori and Adigaman, the Jain lexicographer, Bhavanandi Adigal, and the celebrated medieval commentator Adiyarku Nallar. *See also* MANDALAM CHERA; MANDALAM CHOLA; MANDALAM NADUVIL; MANDALAM PANDYA; MANDALAM TONDAI.

MANDALAM NADUVIL. The region better known as Naduvilnadu is not given the status of a full-fledged *mandalam*. The region is called *Naduvil* because it literally lay in the middle of two major regions situated as it is to the north of Cholanadu and south of the **Tondaimandalam**. It was bordered on the east by the coast extending from the mouth of the south Pennar River to the point where North Vellaru joins the sea. Naduvil Nadu comprises Villupuram, Tirukkoyilur, Vriddachalam, and Kallakkurichi taluks of South Arcot district. The region was further divided into *Kurram* such as Kurrukai Kurram, Venbar Kurram, Naraiyanur Kurram, etc. Among these, Tirumunaipadi was a famous Nadu, which included the celebrated temple site of Tiruvonnainallur, which has been praised in the *Tevaram* hymns of **Appar Nayanmar**. The region, however, never gained much historical or political importance because it never came to be associated with any specific political dynasty. *See also* MANDALAM CHERA; MANDALAM CHOLA; MANDALAM KONGU; MANDALAM PANDYA; MANDALAM TONDAI.

MANDALAM PANDYA. This is also called Pandyanadu, meaning “The land governed by the Pandya kings.” **Pandyamandalam** region

comprises the present-day districts of **Madurai**, Tirunelveli, Ramanathapuram, and Kanyakumari. The region broadly covers the southeastern area of the Tamil country. The **Pudukkottai** and Sivagangai regions covered by the Sethupathis, including Tirupattur taluk, came under the geographical division called Keralasinga Valanadu of Pandyamandalam. In the late medieval period, Ramanathapuram achieved an individual identity under the Sethupathi kings who were among the first to raise the standard of revolt against British imperialism.

Pandyanaadu is famous for hosting the third Tamil **Sangam** or conclave of Tamil scholars in the pre-**Christian** era (exact period unknown). The land is said to enjoy the special protection of the deity Meenakshi, the consort of **Shiva**. Meenakshi was the daughter of the king Malayadvaja Pandya, and she married Shiva in the form of Sundaresvaranar. She, therefore, combined in her person both the sacred and the secular aspects of Pandyan polity. Popular ballads of the region also refer to an Amazonian queen, **Alli Rani**, as the ruler of the Pandyan kingdom. Madurai was at the heart of Pandya Mandalam since it was the capital city of the Pandya kings. Konadu, with its capital at Kodumbalur, was an ancient division of Pandyamandalam governed by the Irungovel chiefs.

The towns of the region—especially Madurai and port towns like **Korkai** or **Muziris**—figure as busy manufacturing and commercial centers in ancient Tamil **literature**. The poet Iyam Peruman has presented the history and culture of the region of Pandyamandalam. The *Pandyamandala Satakam* locates the region in secular terms and also in sacred geography by detailing the divine marriage of Somasundaresvarar (Shiva) with Meenakshi (Parvati). It is noteworthy that the **Temple of Meenakshiamman** in Madurai still attracts record numbers of tourists every year due both to its religious significance as a major pilgrimage site and also its value as a major center of Tamil arts and sculpture. *See also* MANDALAM CHERA; MANDALAM CHOLA; MANDALAM KONGU; MANDALAM NADUVIL; MANDALAM TONDAI.

MANDALAM TONDAI. The area called **Tondaimandalam** by the Tamils broadly covers the modern districts of Chingleput, South Arcot, North Arcot in Tamil Nadu, and parts of Chittoor and Nellore dis-

tricts in Andhra Pradesh. The region also includes **Chennai** (formerly Madras), the capital of modern Tamil Nadu. One of the five geographical divisions into which **Tamil** country was segmented, Tondaimandalam is bounded on the north and the south by the rivers North Pennar and South Pennar and had the seacoast between the mouths of the two rivers as its eastern boundary. In the west, it was bounded by Mahishamandalam or Mysore country (earlier the state of Mysore in the present state of Karnataka) and still farther south it was coterminous with **Kongumandalam**.

Tondaimandalam was governed by the **Pallava dynasty** between the fifth and ninth centuries CE, with their capital at **Kanchipuram**. When the **Chola dynasty** established its supremacy over this region in the subsequent period, the region was renamed as Jayakonda Chola Mandalam, literally “the area of conquest.”

Historically, the entire *mandalam* was divided into 24 *kottams*, among which were Eyil (Kanchipuram), Sengunram, Tiruvengadam, Paiyur, Kalattur, and Vellore. The traditional capital of this region was Polal near the Red Hills Lake, while Kanchipuram is its historical and cultural capital. The region is also famous for Mamallapuram or **Mahabalipuram**, the site of the early cave temples built by Narasimhavarman I and **Mahendrarvarman I**. Tondaimandalam assumed great importance in colonial Tamil Nadu since it became the seat of colonial administration. A comprehensive account of the history of Tondaimandalam was a part of the Ellis Report submitted to the **East India Company** in 1816. *See also* MANDALAM CHERA; MANDALAM CHOLA; MANDALAM KONGU; MANDALAM NADUVIL; MANDALAM PANDYA.

MANI, S. *alias* MAUNI (1907–1985). Mauni today is remembered for his experimental short stories that are closely modeled on existentialist writings that were in vogue in the West during his time. Most of his writings are to be found in the *Manikkodi*, a journal started in the 1930s and devoted to new trends in fiction. *See also* LITERATURE.

MANIKKAVACHAGAR (ca. 10th century CE). He is believed to be the greatest of the Saivite saints. His work, *Tiruvachagam*, is an unparalleled example of Saivite devotion. Manikkavachagar was born in the 10th century CE into a **Brahmin** family of Tiruvavur on the

River Vaigai in Pandyamandalam. From humble beginnings, he rose to be chief minister to the Pandyan king Arimartanar. A popular legend about him is that he used his official power to embezzle royal funds set aside for the purchase of horses to build a deity to **Shiva**. To cover up his act, he tied jackals in the royal stables. When charged with his crime, he prayed to Shiva who changed the jackals into horses of the finest breed, thus saving his devotee from certain death. The *Katavun Mamunivar Tiruvataavurar Puranam* is a hagiography on the life of this saint. There is a popular saying in Tamil “Can there be any *vachagam* (literally “saying”), which surpasses the *Tiruvachagam*?” It is noteworthy that the Virasaivites and Lingayats, who usually reject the votaries of orthodox Saivism, however, hold Manikkavachagar in high esteem despite his Brahmanical origins. *See also* NAYANARS.

MANIMEKALAI. This late-Sangam/post-Sangam work is ascribed to Sittalai Sattanar and was probably composed around the fifth century CE. The heroine of this Buddhist text is Manimekalai, the daughter of Madhavi, who is portrayed as the “other woman” in **Ilango Adigal’s** *Silappadikaram*. Due to the connectivity and inter-textuality between the two texts, they are known as twin epics.

The heroine, Manimekalai, belongs to the courtesan (Parataiyar) **caste** but is brought up by her mother Madhavi as a Buddhist and is trained in the path of renunciation. The epic describes the attraction of Prince Udayakumaran (who had been her husband in her previous birth) toward the beautiful Manimekalai. She is, however, saved from a life of sensual satisfaction and material pleasures through the guidance of the goddess who is also named Manimekalai. At the island of Manipallavam, the knowledge of her past and future births is revealed to her. The goddess bestows on her the *amudasurabhi*, which, like the Holy Grail, is sacred and always filled with alms. Prince Udayakumaran is murdered while he is in pursuit of Manimekalai. The epic concludes with her accepting a life of asceticism. As a wandering monk, Manimekalai defeats many Buddhist and Hindu theologians in debates. Starting out as a member of that community of courtesans who serve as objects of sexual gratification, Manimekalai transcends worldly desires and becomes the symbol of universal love and compassion. *See also* LITERATURE.

MANSINGH, SONAL (1944–). Sonal Mansingh received her training in both **Bharatanatyam** and Kuchchipudi. She has been giving performances since 1964. In 1977, she founded the Center for Indian Classical **Dances** in Delhi, which is a premier institution for performing arts. Among the many awards she has received is the coveted Padma Bhushan from the government of India in 1992. *See also* KRISHNAMURTHI, YAMINI; MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; SARABHAI, MALLIKA; SARABHAI, MRINALINI; SARUKKAI, MALAVIKA; SUBRAMANIAM, PADMA; VIJAYANTIMALA; VISHVESWARAN, CHITRA.

MARAIMALAI ADIGAL (1876–1950). Born in the small village of Kadampadi next to Nagapattinam in 1876, Swami Vedachalam became a pioneer of the Tamil Separatist Movement, literally termed **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam** or “Pure Tamil Movement.” He heralded the movement by changing his own Sanskritized name, Vedachalam, meaning the “Vedic Mountain,” to the Tamil version, “Maraimalai.” He came under the influence of Somasundara Naicker and therefore became a passionate votary of the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. He served as a Tamil teacher in the Madras Christian College for 13 years. His daughter, **Neelambikai Ammaiyar**, played an important role in the foundation of the Pure Tamil Movement, although a bitter rift developed between the two in later years due to her love for Tiruvarangam Pillai, whom she eventually married. Adigalar, as he came to be addressed with reverence, became a prolific writer, and his commentaries on the **Sangam** texts *Pattinappalai* and *Mullaipattu* are very highly regarded by Tamil scholars. In his zeal to expunge all external influences on the Tamils, he also gave the Tamil people their own **calendar** based on the birth of **Tiruvalluvar**. The calendar is still in use by the present political regimes in Tamil Nadu.

MARAVA. During the **Sangam** period, the Marava community occupied the arid zone known as the *Tinai Palai*. Their name etymologically signifies both bravery and ruthlessness. While some Maravas were chieftains, the community as a whole seems to have sustained itself by robbery. In the 19th century, they were identified and classified as a criminal tribe by the British. The **Kallar**, who are also entered as a criminal tribe by the British, are sometimes classified as a subdivision

of the Marava community. It is noteworthy that the members of this community played a stellar role in organizing the anti-imperialist struggle in Tamil Nadu. The Marava chiefs of Ramanathapuram called Sethupathis, the chiefs of Sivagangai, and those of Tirunelveli, especially **Marudu Pandyan** and his brother, led the south Indian confederacy against the British in 1896, resulting in the mass execution of the Maravas by the British High Command.

MARIAMMAN. She is a very important folk deity of the Tamils, and it is noteworthy that the worship of Mariamman is central to the religious practices of the **Tamil Diaspora**. Mariamman, also called Muthi Mariamman and Karumariamman, is believed to be the goddess who protects people against dreaded diseases like smallpox. In fact, *neem* leaves or *neem* branches are placed on the threshold of a house where someone has smallpox as a gesture of welcome to the goddess. Mariamman enters the Sanskrit pantheon as Sitala, literally “the goddess who cools,” linking her once again to smallpox since one of its symptoms is excessive body heat. *See also* RELIGION.

MARUDU PANDYAN (ca. 18th–early 19th century). Marudu Pandyan is known as the hero of the south Indian rebellion of 1800–1801. He began his life as a humble betel-leaf bearer in the service of Raja Udaya **Tevan** of Sivagangai. In 1772, the raja was killed and the state of Sivagangai came under the joint sway of the nawab of Carnatic and the British. In 1780, Marudu Pandyan led a popular movement against the invaders and proclaimed Vellachi, the daughter of the slain raja, as the ruler of Sivagangai. Marudu rapidly emerged as the leader of the local rebellion against the British. Like the Maratha ruler Shivaji, he realized the efficacy of guerilla warfare against the military might of the British. The fall of his ally, Tipu Sultan, made Marudu Pandyan realize the importance of organizing a confederacy against the British rather than offering individual resistance that invariably ended with the execution of the gallant freedom fighters. Marudu of Sivagangai allied with **Gopal Nayak** of Dindigal, on the one hand, and Dhoondaji Waug of Shimoga (Southern Karnataka), on the other, to form a confederate arc. **Madurai** country became the base of operations and the meetings of the rebels

at the Kalayarkoil **temple** brought religious zeal into the political crusade against the British.

In a unique document posted all over southern India and notably in temples like the great Srirangam, Marudu Pandyan called upon “the **castes/nations** whether **Brahmins/Kshathriyas/Vaisyas/Shudras** and the Mussalmans of Jambu Dvipa to unite against the cruel British regime.” This was perhaps one of the earliest attempts to perceive India as a nation that should offer a united struggle against a foreign regime. The freedom fighters, or “rebels” as the British perceived them, met with amazing initial success. They swept through Madurai, Ramnad, **Tanjavur**, and Kallarnadu. But in 1801 Marudu Pandyan, along with other chiefs, was captured and executed.

MARUMALARCHI DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM (MDMK). V. Gopalaswamy, known in politics by the name **Vaiko**, founded the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in 1994. The party came to be known for its radical sympathies, especially with the Liberation Tigers for Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a revolutionary terrorist group in **Sri Lanka**, which has for a long time been waging a battle for Tamil independence. The populist base of the party and the oratorical skills of Vaiko provided it with a large following, drawn primarily from the Tamil working class. Vaiko, in fact, made a “Padyatra” (a pilgrimage performed on foot) from Kanyakumari to **Chennai** giving public speeches about his party ideology.

Vaiko entered politics through the influence of **Karunanidhi**, the leader of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)**. He was elected three times to the Rajya Sabha by the DMK leadership. Vaiko briefly joined the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** in 1998 and rejoined the DMK in 1999, only to leave yet again in 2001. He and his followers, including L. Ganesan, Pon. Muthuramalingam, and Kannappan, fell out with the DMK, leading to the foundation of the MDMK by Vaiko in 1994. He also started the journal *Sangoli* to propagate the ideas of his new party. However, it continued to form electoral alliances with the DMK because of the MDMK’s intense hatred for the **J. Jayalalitha**–led AIADMK. In the 1996 general elections, the party forged an alliance with the Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Janata Dal. When the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)–led National

Democratic Alliance (NDA) came to power in 1999, the MDMK became a partner at the center and Kannappan, a senior leader with the party, was made a minister in the central government.

Given the volatile nature of Tamil Nadu politics, in 1999 Vaiko assumed leadership of the MDMK and joined his one-time adversary Jayalalitha, who had been instrumental in imprisoning Vaiko under India's most stringent anti-terrorist law, the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) With the electoral victory of the Congress I-led United Progressive Alliance at the center in May 2004, the MDMK joined with the Congress I and its old political ally, the DMK. In the 2006 Assembly elections, the MDMK allied with AIADMK but lost the elections to the DMK-led democratic alliance.

MASTAN SAHEB GUNANGUDI (1788–1835). Mastan Saheb was a Tamil **Muslim** mystic saint from Ramanathapuram who was a contemporary of the Saivite saint Tayumanavar. His poems are collected in the *Mastan Sahib Padal*. He is considered a Sufi, and his songs are almost a paraphrase of *Tayumanavar*. He was so imbued with the Hindu customs around him that he did not make much distinction between the gods of the Hindu pantheon and the Muslim saints. In fact, he worshipped Durga and wrote “*Satakas*” on Hindu gods. However, he wrote a work denouncing **Christianity**. He was also one of the earliest to translate the Koran into Tamil. He represented the syncretic face of **Islam**, and his mystic spiritual poetry has a wide readership, cutting across religion, **caste**, and community. *See also* RELIGION.

MAYON. The god of the pastoral zone, *Tinai Mullai* was the dark-complexioned god called Mayon, corresponding to the shepherd god Krishna. Krishna is regarded as one of the incarnations of **Vishnu** and belonging to the Yadava **caste** (it has also been referred to as the Yadu tribe) who were shepherds. Baladeva, said to be the stepbrother of Krishna, may also have been a part of the religious pantheon of the early Tamils perceived as “Dravida” (Dravidian) in origin. According to the pioneering historian P. T. Srinivasa **Iyengar**, who wrote *History of the Tamils: From the Earliest Times to 600 AD* (1930), Balarama as Valiyon or Vellaiyon (meaning the fair god) seems to have been the patron deity of the region between the *Tinai Mullai* and

the *Tinai Marudam*, where **agriculture** first began. An early literary reference to Mayon is in the **Sangam** poetic anthology *Puram Nanuru*, wherein a **Pandya** king is compared to Krishna both for his great knowledge and his fame. The *Puram Nanuru* also makes brief references to the miracles wrought by Krishna, which later find a place in the *Bhagavata Purana* datable roughly to the seventh century CE. Mayon as Krishna became central to the Bhagavata movement of the early medieval period, (ranging roughly from the seventh to the 11th centuries CE) and the bhakti ideology of the **Alvars**. He is portrayed in bhakti poetry as the bearer of the flute, the enchanting cowherd (Gopala) surrounded by milkmaids or *gopis*. The entire poetry of **Andal**, the seventh-century woman saint who is the only woman Alvar, deals with the physical and spiritual beauty of Krishna and her mystical marriage to the Ranganathaswami (one of the forms of Krishna) at Srirangam. *See also* RELIGION.

MEGALITHS. Megaliths define the culture of the ancient Tamils marked by huge stone burials. This culture coincided with the use of iron in the region and overlapped with the **Sangam** period commencing around the fifth century BCE. Four or five varieties of megalithic stone burials are discernable—the cist, the dolmen, stone circles, subterranean excavations or pits, and the commemorative or part-sepulchral edifices like menhirs referred to as *topikal*. These commemorative structures could in fact be non-sepulchral sites. The dolmen and cist provenance were controlled by the availability of the rocks and were therefore not cultural indices. The Chingleput district was dominated by dolmen, while **Coimbatore**, Salem, and **Tiruchirapalli** megaliths were cist-based. The region bordering Kerala has revealed both rock-cut cave tombs and urn burials.

Megalithic sites in Tamil Nadu have yielded black and red ware pottery, bronze and gold objects such as bangles, decorative vases, etc., and iron tools similar to hoes, tridents, axes, and spades. **Adichchanallur** in Tirunelveli has revealed traces of cloth, paddy husk, and remains of millets showing that both weaving and **agriculture** flourished in the area. Some of the beads and precious stones found at **Korkai** provide evidence of long distance trade with other bronze and iron civilizations. *See also* MUZIRIS; SALIYUR; VAL-LIMALAI.

METAL CRAFTS. Tamils have produced some of the most exquisite metallic icons in the world. Production of metal crafts in Tamil country goes back to the **Sangam** age when everyday situations were described in the metaphor of a blacksmith and his anvil, the sculptor and his chisel, the carding bow of the textile worker, etc. The seventh-century woman saint **Andal** relates the manner in which her love for Lord Krishna possesses her to the bronze smith pouring molten metal into a wax model, melting away the wax and leaving behind only the gleaming bronze.

All three of the early Tamil dynasties produced bronzes, but the **Chola** bronzes are regarded as superior to the others. The period of production of the Chola bronzes was roughly from the ninth to the 13th century, although a few **Pallava** bronzes have also been found for the period from the seventh to the ninth centuries. Among the Chola rulers, **Chola Rajaraja I** proved to be a great patron of sculpture and other kinds of crafts, but the outstanding historical period for the production of metal crafts, especially bronze images, was the age of Sembiyan Maadevi, the queen of Gandaraditya Chola and the mother of Uttama Chola who belonged to the 10th century. Although bronze is used almost as a generic term for these Tamil icons, the early images were usually made of copper, silver, or gold. The bronze images made by the Tamils in ancient craft centers like **Kanchipuram** and at Svamimalai in **Tanjavur** had a high content of tin along with copper and brass. Therefore, Tamil bronzes are known as bell metal, a name derived from the exquisite temple bells produced in Tanjavur, especially at Nachchiyarkoyil. Apart from bells the ornate traditional lamps of Tamil Nadu have also gained international acclaim.

In the practice of metal crafts in Tamil Nadu, craftsmen have followed the solid casting technique through the process known as *cire-perdue* or the “lost wax technique.” In this process a wax model is first prepared according to the laws of iconometry prescribed in the Sanskrit *Agama* texts. The wax is then covered with a special clay coating called *vandal* that is applied three or four times over the wax. The clay lump has a small outlet at the back. The mold is dried in the sun for two or three days and then is heated over fire. The wax runs out (and therefore the technique is called the “lost wax”) and molten metal is poured in its place. The mold is buried under earth to prevent cracking, and after the metal slowly cools down, the clay mold is bro-

ken revealing an exquisite piece of sculpture of Ganesha, Nataraja, or other gods.

Each sculpture is unique because each piece involves individual effort. The Sthapathis, or sculptors, not only start their work on an auspicious day but complete it with the ceremony known as *netra unmeelana*, literally “opening the eyes” in which the eyes of the deity are ceremonially carved and the metal image becomes charged with spiritual power and transforms into an object of worship in the temple.

MOOPANAR, G. K. (1931–2001). Moopanar had his political training under the seasoned Tamil politician **K. Kamaraj**. After the death of Kamaraj, he joined the Congress I (literally Congress Indira), founded by Indira Gandhi. An astute politician, he was the right-hand man of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, and P. V. Narasimha Rao. Moonpanar was so highly regarded by the Congress high command that he came very close to becoming prime minister in 1996. However, the immediacy of Tamil Nadu politics and his inveterate dislike of **J. Jayalalitha** and the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** caused him to break away from the Congress I.

Moopanar founded a splinter group from the Congress I, the **Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC)**, in 1996 because the Congress I joined with the AIADMK in the 1996 elections. Following the split, seasoned politicians including **P. Chidambaram**, M. Arunachalam, and S. R. Balasubramaniam joined the TMC. In 1996, following the split, the party joined with the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** and won 39 seats in the Tamil Nadu Assembly and 20 seats in the Lok Sabha, the central parliament. Apart from his premier role in politics, Moopanar was a life member of the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association and the organizational head of the Tiruvaiyaru **Thyagaraja** music festival. Since the death of Moopanar, the TMC has again merged with the Congress I, thus negating the very basis on which it was founded.

MUDALIYAR. The **caste** title Mudali or Mudaliyar is used by upper caste non-**Brahmins** like **Vellala** agriculturists and **Kaikkola** weavers. In early times, “Mudali” was a suffix used by the children of **Devaradiyar**. Like the “sheikhs” among the Muslim community of Uttar Pradesh, the title of Mudaliyar seems to have been used as a

caste title by those social groups seeking upward mobility. Thus, communities of Jains, Gadabas, Occhans, Pallis, and Vanniyans also used the title of Mudaliyar. The Pattanavan call themselves “Varunakula Mudali.”

MUDALIYAR, C. N. MUTHURANGA (1882–1949). Muthuranga Mudaliyar was born into a rich **Vellala** (landed gentry) family of Chinglepet. He graduated from the Madras Christian College but was drawn into the freedom struggle. He joined the Swarajist party and subsequently became an active member of the Indian National Congress. Working in close association with **S. Srinivasa Iyengar**, he led the Satyagraha movement in Tamil Nadu and was jailed several times. He served as secretary and later president of the **Madras Mahajana Sabha**. In 1926, he was elected to the Madras Legislative Council from the Chinglepet constituency. He was made president of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee in 1929, 1937, and 1938. In 1946, he became a member of the Central Legislative Assembly. During the crucial years of the freedom struggle, between 1926 and 1940, he led agitations, courted arrest, addressed public meetings, and wrote patriotic articles. He was one of those who raised the extremist slogan of “Poorna Swaraj” or “Complete Independence” in Tamil Nadu. He was one of the founders of the **Justice Party** although he later developed strong differences with its members whom he regarded as self-seeking, job-hunting politicians. He was a firm believer in Hindu-Muslim unity as a *sine qua non* of India’s freedom. Muthuranga Mudaliyar, in his last years, had to witness communal violence and the pangs of partition. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

MULLAIATTU. This is the shortest composition in the *Pathupattu* anthology consisting of a mere 103 lines. Its author is Nappudanar. Unlike other poems, this was not written at the behest of any royal patron. On the contrary, it reflects a commonplace situation in the life of the Tamils. The mood is one of separation and union in the *Tinai Mullai*. The husband departs for war, leaving his young wife disconsolate. Her lamentation is turned to joy when the soldier returns home victorious. The poet talks about the *mudinmagalir* or valorous **women**, many of whom were bodyguards for the king, suggesting that there

must have been a corps of women soldiers/bodyguards. It also refers to the appointment of “Mlechchas” or foreigners as royal bodyguards. The text describes the arsenal of a kingdom relating to a war situation. An interesting bit of information is the use of a sand glass to reckon time.

MURASOLI MARAN (1934–2003). Born **Thyagaraja** Sundaram at Tirukkuvalai village in the unified **Tanjavur** district, he changed his Sanskritized name to Maran, which is pure **Tamil**. He prefixed “Murasoli” to his name, as he was at that time the editor of *Murasoli*. He was handpicked by **M. Karunanidhi** to be the party’s face in New Delhi. He was continuously elected to the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha for 36 years from 1967 on the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** ticket. The Indira Gandhi government had dismissed the DMK government headed by Karunanidhi in 1976 for its opposition to the Emergency and had imprisoned DMK leaders (including Maran) under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). As a result, the DMK shied away from any political alliance with the Congress I. Maran was behind the DMK’s strategic role in the formation of the National Front in Madras on 18 September 1988; and he was an important factor in the DMK joining the United Front governments headed by H. D. Deve Gowda and I. K. Gujral at the center. In 1999, Maran suggested that the DMK would perforce have to ally with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He declared, “No party is untouchable.” Senior DMK ministers—the party was in power in Tamil Nadu at that time—were aghast at this suggestion, for the DMK was steadfastly opposed to many of the basic policies of the BJP, including its pro-Hindu tenets. The unthinkable, however, happened, and the DMK went on to partner the NDA and subsequently win the 1999 Lok Sabha elections, and Maran became Union minister for commerce and **industry** in the Vajpayee-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government.

Maran’s autobiography, *Nenjukku Needhi* (Justice to the Heart), was serialized in the Tamil daily *Murasoli*, the DMK organ. He scripted 20 Tamil films, directed two, and produced five. Maran is a writer of repute in Tamil. His book, *Manila Suyatchi* (State Autonomy), published in 1974, is a seminal work on the demand for state autonomy, federalism, and various aspects of center-state relations.

He commanded respect in New Delhi as a member of parliament and built a formidable reputation as the Union minister for commerce and industry. He was a Union minister without portfolio when he died at the age of 69, after a protracted illness, in Chennai on 23 November 2003. *See also* TAMIL CINEMA.

MURUGAN. Murugan is the only deity of the **Tamil** country who is referred to by the appellation “Tamil Daivam,” meaning “Tamil god.” He is the god not only of the Tamils but also of the **Tamil language**. Murugan is called Cheyyon in the **Sangam** texts. He was the patron deity of the **Tinai Kurinji**, representing the hilly tract. Tribes like the Kuravas believe Muruga to be special to them since he married into their tribe by making Valli his consort. **Vallimalai**, an ancient **megalithic** site in North Arcot district, is sacred to Valli and is celebrated as the site of the Murugan-Valli marriage. He is also referred to as Velan because the Vel or lance was his weapon. Steel lances found at ancient archaeological bronze sites like **Adichchanallur** have led scholars to believe that the worship of Murugan represents an ancient practice in the Tamil country.

The Sangam text, ***Tirumurugatruppada***, is entirely devoted to singing the praises of Murugan, indicating that the cult could date back to the third century BCE. One of the pioneering historians of Tamil studies, Kanakasabai, suggests in his book, *The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago* (1904), that “he [Murugan] was not entirely an imaginary being but a warlike King (petty chieftain?), who had been deified after his death.” His militant image in religious hagiographies like the *Kandapurānam* strengthens this surmise. It is noteworthy that one of his names is *Senapati*, meaning commander-in-chief, since he is said to have led the army of the celestial beings in the wars against the *asuras* or demons, especially Surapadma—the fiercest of them. He is equated with Skanda/Kartikēya in the Sanskritic-Brahmanical pantheon. In the pantheon, he is the second son of **Shiva** and Parvati and the brother of **Pillaiyar**.

In the Tamil version of the *Skandapurāna* written by Kachchiyappa Sivachariyar in the 12th century CE, Murugan is completely identified with Kartikēya. The Tamil text describes how Murugan killed Surapadma with the help of his faithful lieutenant,

Virabahu, who, is said to have belonged to the **caste** group known as **Kaikkolar** or Sengunthar, which according to oral tradition combined soldiering with weaving! The *Tirumurugatruppada*i refers to the worship of Murugan with animal sacrifices and the consumption of liquor accompanied by frenzied dancing by the priests who were said to have been possessed by the spiritual energy of Murugan.

Interestingly, today the Murugan cult among the Tamils has two parallel but very different dimensions—the Sanskrit worship of Murugan, where Brahmanical rituals are followed and the worship of Murugan as a folk deity, where animal sacrifice continue. It is noteworthy that Murugan, along with popular folk forms of Parvati, remains the favorite deity of the **Tamil Diaspora**. *See also* AMMAN; RELIGION.

MURUGAPPA BUSINESS GROUP. It was in Moulmein in Lower Burma that the Murugappa business group began its long industrial journey. S. Muthiah, the **Chennai**-based journalist and writer who is intimately connected with the Nattukottai **Chettiars**, has profiled the fortunes of the Murugappa group and its founder A. M. M. Arunachalam in his hagiography entitled, *Looking Back From Moulmein*. The Nattukottai Chettiars belong to a traditional trading community from Chettinad. Muruappa Chettiar, his eldest son, acquired the name “Take Over King,” a title often bestowed upon the north Indian business magnate, R. P. Goenka. The take over of **Parrys** was a major triumph of the Murugappa group. On the death of Murugappa Chettiar in 1995, his brother, Alagappa Chettiar, succeeded to the helm of the business. *See also* INDUSTRY.

MURUKKU. A 3/5/7 line twisted spiral shaped snack made from rice paste mixed with condiments and salt, twisted like a screw by hand with considerable skill, is partially dried in the shade and deep-fried. An ancient delicacy of the Tamil region, *murukku* making now constitutes a flourishing cottage industry, providing employment to thousands of **women**. *See also* CUISINE.

MUSIC. Tamil musical tradition boasts an ancient past. Musical compositions based on specific combinations of musical scales were known as *pann* in the **Sangam literature**. Ilango Adigal’s *Silappadikaram* reflects many of the musical traditions of the Sangam age

(ca. third century BCE to third century CE). The strong rhythmic quality of early Tamil music came from the fact that it went hand-in-hand with dancing. The *yazh*, an instrument that resembled the Western harp, is one of the earliest mentioned **musical instruments** apart from percussion instruments. The **Bhagavata Movement** saw the further development of Tamil music and acquired a strongly devotional flavor. The musical compositions of the **Alvars** and the **Nayanars** exemplified this quality of musical excellence permeated with devotion. *Tevaram*, an anthology of the musical compositions of the Saivite Nayanars, is a living tradition in Saivite **temples**, as is the *Nalayira Divyaprabhandam* or the *Tiruppavai* of **Andal**.

Tamil music took a partially secular turn under the medieval royal patrons. Courtesanal music gained ground with music and dance strictly associated with **devadasis**. A famous composition *Radhika Parinayam* by the 17th-century courtesan Muddu Palani is a case in point. This was also the period when congregational music developed as a part of the *bhajanai sampradaya*. **Thyagaraja**, **Bodendra Saraswati**, and **Sridhara Ayyaval** were saint-composers who represented the tradition of congregational music.

The contours of classical Carnatic music and its concert pattern developed in the course of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Thyagaraja, **Muthuswami Dikshitar**, and **Shama Shastri** are regarded as the trinity of Carnatic music. This system is based on 72 *melakarta Ragas*. The singing is accompanied by percussion instruments called *mridangam* with *tavil* and the violin. Since the violin is a western instrument, it is likely that it took the place of the traditional *yazh* or *veenai*.

In Tamil Nadu today, popular folk music moves in tandem with film music. Folk songs draw their relevance from everyday situations. For example, the *temmangu*, *nattra padal*, and *etra padal* relate to work situations in agriculture involving sowing and harvesting seeds and irrigating crops. Dirges or lamentation songs are called *oppari*. Another popular genre of folk songs is *talattu* or cradle-songs. The film music composer/director **Ilayaraja** was largely responsible for the renaissance of folk music in Tamil culture. The encounter between folk music and classical Carnatic music forms the theme of K. N. Balachander's film *Sindhu-Bharavi*. Currently, folk musicologists like Vijayalakshmi Navaneetkrishnan, Pushpavanam, etc., are doing the exposition of folk music as well as intensive research in this genre.

Film music has an all-pervasive hold over the Tamils in today's musical scenario. Politicians fighting bitter electoral battles blare their political messages through film songs. Temples often play devotional songs in the cinematic mode. Carnatic music also forms the substratum of many Tamil films and figures more explicitly in films like *Apoorva Raghangaal*. See also ARUNACHALA KAVIRAYAR; ARUNAGIRINATHAR; BALASUBRAMANIAM, G. N.; BRINDA, T., AND, MUKTA; DHANAMMAL, VEENAI ; GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI; IYENGAR, ARIYAKKUDI RAMANUJA; IYER, CHEMMANGUDI SRINIVASA; IYER, MADURAI MANI; IYER, MUSIRI SUBRAMANYA; MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR; NARAYANAWAMY, PALAKKAD K. V.; PATTAMMAL, D. K; PILLAI, NAINA; PILLAI, RAJARATNAM T. N.; RAMANATHAN, M. D.; SONGS IN TAMIL CINEMA; SUBBALAKSHMI, M. S.; TAMIL CINEMA; TAMIL ISAI SANGAM; TANJAVUR QUARTET; VAIDYANATHA BHAGAVATHAR, CHEMBAI; VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L; VEENAI; VISHWANATHAN, MAHARAJAPURAM AND MAHARAJAPURAM, SANTHANAM.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. As early as the time of Bharata, i.e., around the fifth century BCE, a classification of musical instruments is provided in his *Natya Shastra* as chordophones, aerophones, membranophones and autophones. The Tamil epics *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai* refer to many musical instruments in use among the **Sangam** Tamils. In commonplace vocabulary, the instruments would be string instruments, wind instruments, and percussion. The *tanpura* provides the tonal support for any concert. Earlier these were hand-made, hewn out of wood and different sorts of gourd to provide the right kind of resonance. The violin, despite its Western origin, became an indispensable part of the traditional **Carnatic music** concerts during the course of the 20th century. While violinists like T. Chowdiah, Pappa Venkataramiah, and Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu began their career playing "second fiddle" to the vocalist, in more recent times the violinist is able to hold an audience on his/her own. The best examples are Lalgudi Jayaraman, T. N. Krishnan, and M. S. Gopalakrishnan. Outstanding **women** violinists include Abhiramasundari, the granddaughter of **Veenai Dhanammal** and Kanyakumari.

Considered indispensable for concerts, is the percussion instrument, *mridangam*. This provides percussion support to the vocalist or instrumentalist. Other percussion instruments used in concerts are *ghatam* (literally and in fact an earthen pot!), the *kanjira* (a flat drum with clusters of ankle bells suspended from it), and *morsing* (known as Jew's harp in the West), which is held in the mouth and plucked with the finger. Among the string instruments the best known is the *veenai*, followed by the *gottuvadyam*, also called *vichitra veena*, which has no frets. The flute is regarded as the most popular of the wind instruments besides the *nadaswaram*, which is treated as a divine instrument. T. R. Mahalingam was regarded as a foremost player of the flute. *See also* MUSIC.

MUSICAL PILLARS. Stone pillars that resonate to musical tones constitute a unique feature of some of the ancient Tamil **temples**. To pilgrims, as awe-inspiring as the deity in the temple are the *isai thoon-gal*, meaning musical pillars in Tamil. “You can hear the *saptha swarangal* (the seven basic notes) come like a wave as it were from the stone pieces,” says a senior priest of the Nelliappar Temple at Tirunelveli. “Hardly anybody knows the intricacies of how stone pillars were constructed to resonate at a certain frequency. The more aesthetically inclined with some musical knowledge can bring out the rudiments of some rare ragas from these pillars,” he adds. In the south, several temples boast such pillars, such as those at Azhavar Thirunagari, Tenkasi, Kalakaadu, Kuttralam, Shenbagarama Nallur, Sucheendaram near Kanyakumari, Thiruvananthapuram, and **Madurai**.

However, the pillars of Tirunelveli stand out. The Nelliappar temple chronicle, *Thirukovil Varalaaru*, calls them “stone pillars that produce **music**,” which were set in place in the seventh century CE during the reign of **Pandyan** King Nindraser Nedumaran. Archaeologists date the temple before the seventh century and say it was built by successive rulers of the Pandyan dynasty that ruled over the southern parts of Tamil Nadu from Madurai. Tirunelveli, located about 150 km south of Madurai, served as the subsidiary capital of the Pandyan kings. The rulers who followed Nedumaran made some additions and modifications but left the 10 musical stone pillars in front of the main **Shiva** shrine untouched. Each huge musical pillar, carved from one piece of rock, comprises a cluster of smaller

columns and stands testimony to a unique understanding of the “physics and mathematics of sound,” temple authorities said. According to the chronicle, there are, in all, 161 such small pillars that make music in the Nada Mani Mandapam before the main shrine of Lord Nellaiyappar

MUSLIMS. *See* ISLAM.

MUTHAIAH BHAGAVATHAR (1877–1945). Born in Harikesanallur Muthaiah Bhagavathar became a leading composer of devotional musical compositions that carried his stamp “Harikesa.” His grandfather Muthu Subba Bharati was also a versatile musician. Early in his career, he was made Principal of the Swati Tirunal Academy of **Music** in Tiruvananthapuram. At the royal court of Travancore, he was given the task of restoring the works of the royal composer Swati Tirunal. From Tiruvananthapuram he moved to the royal court of Mysore in 1928. He won the favour of the ruler Krishnaraja Odaiyar, who conferred on him the title “Gayaka Shikamani” (Crown jewel among singers). He has composed more than 400 *kritis* in Sanskrit, Kannada, Tamil, and Telugu. He is credited with reviving rare ragas, such as Mohanakalyani and Bhudamanohari. In 1930, the Government of Travancore conferred on him the title “Sangeetha Kalanidhi.” It is noteworthy that this renowned musician was also popular for his *harikatha kalakshepams* or musical devotional discourses. *See also* ARUNACHALA KAVIRAYAR; ARUNAGIRI-NATHAR; BALASUBRAMANIAM, G. N.; BRINDA, T., AND MUKTA; DHANAMMAL, VEENAI; GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI; IYENGAR, ARIYAKKUDI RAMANUJA; IYER, CHEM-MANGUDI SRINIVASA; IYER, MADURAI MANI; IYER, MUSIRI SUBRAMANYA; MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR; NARAYANAWAMY, PALAKKAD K. V.; PATTAMMAL, D. K; PILLAI, NAINA; PILLAI, RAJARATNAM T. N.; RAMANATHAN, M. D.; SONGS IN TAMIL CINEMA; SUBBALAKSHMI, M. S.; TAMIL CINEMA; TAMIL ISAI SANGAM; TANJAVUR QUARTET; VAIDYANATHA BHAGAVATHAR, CHEMBAI; VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L; VEENAI; VISHWANATHAN, MAHARAJAPURAM AND MAHARAJAPURAM, SANTHANAM.

MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR (1775–1835). Muthusvami Dikshitar is one of the trinity of **Carnatic music**, the other two being **Thyagaraja** and **Shyama Shastri**. His father, Ramasvami Dikshitar, was a renowned scholar in Sanskrit and Telugu whose love for **music** brought him to Tiruvarur in **Tanjavur**. He learned music under Virabhadrayya (the court musician of the Marathi ruler of Tanjavur) and **Veenai** under Venkata Vaidyanatha Dikshitar, a descendent of Venkata-makhi (celebrated as the codifier of the grammar of Carnatic music). Muthusvami Dikshitar was also born like his two illustrious contemporaries in the village of Tiruvarur in 1775. He inherited his father’s proficiency in both singing and playing the Veenai from his father besides receiving his early musical training directly from his father. At the age of 15 he accompanied the saint Chidambaranatha Yogi to Varanasi (also known as Benaras, a famous Hindu pilgrimage center), where he spent the next five years imbibing both spirituality and Hindustani music. His use of both the slow measure and the fast measure in the same musical composition shows the influence of the Hindustani musical tradition of *vilambit* (slow) and *drut* (fast) tempos.

On his return to his own land, Dikshitar performed innumerable pilgrimages singing exquisite compositions in Sanskrit at every shrine he visited. According to oral tradition his musical career commenced when the Tiruttani deity **Murugan** put a piece of sugar candy in his mouth and commanded him to sing. Perhaps in gratitude to the Tamil god Murugan, all the compositions of Dikshitar carry the signature *Guru Guha*, which is one of Murugan’s many names. However he did not compose anything in **Tamil language** of which this god was the patron deity.

Dikshitar’s compositions are somewhat esoteric in content since he had been initiated into the esoteric worship of Devi (in his case Parvati, the divine consort of **Shiva**) in the form of Sri Vidya Upasana. He spent four years of his life in **Kanchipuram** learning philosophy from the saint called Upanishad Brahmam and set to music the songs of Rama Ashtapadi composed by his guru. His most eventful years were spent in Tiruvarur teaching music. Prominent among his disciples were Tirukkadayur Bharati, Veena Venkataramayya, Devur Subramanya Ayya and Koranadu Ramaswamy **Iyer**. The famous **dance** masters, collectively known as the “**Tanjavur Quartet**,”—Ponnayya, Chinnayya, Vadivelu, and Sivanandam—also learned mu-

sic under his tutelage. The dancing girl of the **Devadasi caste** called Kamalam was one of his disciples, and some of his most moving compositions were written as choreography for her dance numbers. Among his most famous compositions are the nine Navarathri *kritis*, called *navavarnam*, composed on the goddess Kamalamba. He spent his last years as the court musician of the Maharaja of Ettayapuram. It is said that his song “Anandamritavarshini” in the *raga* “Amritavarshini” brought rains and much needed relief to the parched countryside of Ettayapuram.

MUZIRIS. An important seaport near the mouth of the Periyar River dating back to the **Sangam** age. The poet Erukkadur Thanyankannan describes in a poem contained in the *Aham Nanuru* the commercial bustle at the port as Yavana (Greek) ships came regularly “splashing white foam on the Periyar. The local fishermen bartered fish for the paddy brought by the ships.” Trade at Muziris is also extensively referred to in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. Archaeologists today identify the fishing village called “Azhikkodu Mukku,” at the place where the mighty Periyar River joins the sea, as the site of the ancient Muziris. This is 12 km from Cranganore, another historic port town and the nearest railway station is at Trissur, which in itself is famous as a **megalithic** site. Apart from having been a major entrepot of Greco–Roman trade during the early **Christian** era, Muziris is also famous for the visit of St. Thomas to this place. It is said that the Christian saint drew his last breath here, and a basilica in this place commemorates his memory and houses his sacred bones. *See also* ADICHCHANALLUR; KORKAI; SALIYUR; VALLIMALAI.

MYANMAR. *See* TAMILS IN MYANMAR.

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NADAR (SHANAR). The community was also known as Shanar, and they are said to be professional toddy tappers (specialized persons who collect toddy, the liquor fermented from coconut or palm sap). The Nadar are today to be found primarily in the districts of Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Chidambaranar, **Kamaraj**, Ramanathapu-

ram, and **Madurai** districts. The community is mentioned in early Tamil inscriptions as Iluvan and Palaiyar. The *Pingalandai*, a 10th-century Tamil lexicon, also uses the names Tuvasar and Puduvar for this community. In the neighboring state of Kerala, the Nadar are called Tiyar. Like many other low-caste communities such as the **Vanniyar**, the Nadar began to move systematically toward Sanskritization, sometimes in the 19th century, and began to trace their lineage to **Pandya** kings of Madurai just as the Vanniyar had traced theirs to the **Pallavas**. The community participated in the Dravidian Movement in the 19th century represented by the **Self-Respect Movement** of Periyar **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**, **Justice Party**, the **Dravida Kazhagam**, and its splinter groups. Kamaraj Nadar, an outstanding political leader of Tamil Nadu, belonged to this community.

NADASVARAM. A wind instrument using a reed to blow that resembles a long pipe, the origin of the *nadasvaram* goes back to the pre-Christian era. This **musical instrument** is also called *nagasvaram* because of its snake-like shape and the hypnotic quality of its sound. The instrument is regarded as auspicious and is associated with temple rituals as well as social occasions like weddings. Nadasvaram players are depicted in the eighth–ninth century CE sculptures at the **Temple of Brahadisvaram** in **Tanjavur** and the **Temple of Nataraja** at Chidambaram. Some celebrated exponents of *nadasvaram* in the Tamil country are **T. N. Rajaratnam Pillai**, Karaikkudi Arunachalam, Vedaranyam Vedamurthy, and more recently, Shaikh Chinna Maulana. An interesting sidelight on the *nadasvaram* players concerns their social origins. It is believed that boys born into the family of dancing girls took to playing the *nadasvaram* while the girls followed the hereditary profession of becoming a courtesan. *See also* MUSIC.

NAICKER. The Naicker are primarily Telugu speaking and are believed to be migrants into the Tamil country from Andhra Pradesh. Naicker is one of the titles used by the **Vanniyar caste**. The political importance of this community derives from its undisputed charismatic leader, **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**, popularly known as “Periyar” (“respected one” or “elder”).

NAICKER, E. V. RAMASWAMY (1879–1967). Fondly referred to as *Tandai Periyar* by the Tamils, E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker spear-

headed the **non-Brahmin movement** in Tamil Nadu. He was born in Erode in 1879 into a family of Balija Naidu of Kannada ancestry who were merchants by profession. Despite his upbringing in an orthodox **Hindu** family, Ramaswamy Naicker turned out to be a thoroughgoing rationalist and iconoclast. He gave up schooling and entered politics by becoming chairman of the Erode Municipal Council. He joined the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu** under the influence of **P. V. Varadarajulu Naidu** and **V. U. Chidambaranar**. At the invitation of **C. Rajagopalachari**, he joined the Indian National Congress and played an active role in the Vaikkom Satyagraha, which was a part of the non-cooperation movement launched nationwide by Mahatma Gandhi. He left the Congress because of his frequent clashes with the **Brahmin** elements within the Party.

In 1925, Naicker launched the **Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam**—literally, Self-Respect Movement. His struggle was now not so much against British imperialism as against Brahmin domination. It was **Neelambikai Ammaiyar**, one of the founders of the **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam**, that is, “The Tamil Separatist Movement,” who conferred on him the title “Periyar” in recognition of his service to Tamil society and in particular to Tamil **women**. In 1937, Periyar was jailed by the Rajaji (C. Rajagopalachari) government for his role in the anti-Hindi agitation. In 1944, Periyar transformed the **Justice Party** founded by **C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliyar**, **Taravath Madhavan Nair**, and **P. Thyagaraja Chetti** in 1916–1917 into the **Dravida Kazhagam** (literally Dravidian Federation), which advocated the establishment of a sovereign Dravida Nadu, where no **caste** distinctions would exist. **Coimbatore**, Erode, Salem, Madras (present-day **Chennai**), and **Tiruchirapalli** were the principal centers of his political activity.

In 1949, **C. N. Annadurai**, **M. Karunanidhi**, and others left his party in disgust after Periyar’s marriage at the age of 70 to the 28-year-old party worker, Mani Ammaiyar. It was also argued that because of his Kannadiga ancestry he could not be regarded as a pure Tamilian. Nevertheless, Periyar took credit for the victory of Annadurai’s Party, the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)**, in the 1967 elections. In 1967, he organized the Superstition Eradication Conference. In a life that spanned almost a century, Periyar used fiery speeches and the written word, especially through his journals—*Viduthalai*, *Puratchi*, *Pagutharivu*, and *Kudiarasu*—to drive home his political dictums. His unconventional methods included Brahmin

baiting such as cutting of the sacred thread and tuft of Brahmins in public in order to humiliate them, putting a garland of slippers on the revered Hindu deity Ram, and other actions that were socially offensive but were effective in putting across his political message. Hated by some but adored by many others, Periyar remains the greatest symbol of the Tamil Dravidian Movement.

NAIDU, P. RANGAIYA (1828–1902). One of the architects of the **Madras Mahajana Sabha**, of which he became the president in 1884. A student of Madras Pachchayappa School and a graduate of the **University of Madras**, Naidu, like many of the contemporary politicians, became a lawyer. He was elected to the Madras Legislative Council in 1893 and held his seat for six consecutive years. He was a member of the Municipal Commission of Madras for 30 years. In the Madras Mahajana Sabha, he represented the moderate viewpoint, seeking political reforms within the constitutional framework. He died at the age of 75 and was hailed as “The Grand Old Man of Madras.”

NAIDU, P. V. VARADARAJULU Dr. (1887–1957). Born at Rasipuram in the Salem district of Tamil Nadu, Naidu grew up as an orphan and was therefore deprived of a formal education. However, he got himself trained in the indigenous system of Ayurvedic medicine and began to practice as a doctor. In the Madras (present-day **Chennai**) political scene of the 1920s, he came under the influence of **S. Srinivasa Iyengar** as well as A. Rangaswami Iyengar of *The Hindu*. At the **Adi Dravida** (depressed classes) Conference held in 1940, he called for an end to **caste** hierarchies and tried to garner support for **women’s** emancipation. In politics, he was a “Moderate” seeking “Dominion Status” rather than independence. He founded the Tamil daily, *Tamil Nadu*. He opposed **E. V. Ramaswami Naicker’s** demand for secession from the Union and the creation of a separate “Dravidistan.” Naidu was a staunch Congressman and became president of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee in 1925–1926. He was also a prominent labor leader and became a member of the All India Trade Union Congress Working Committee in 1926. He practiced *Satyagraha* and took part in Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi’s “No Tax” campaign. He parted ways with the Congress because of its policy of appeasement toward the **Muslims** and became president of the Tamil Nadu branch of the Hindu Mahasabha.

NAIR, CHETTUR SHANKARAN Sir (1857–1934). Shankaran Nair was born into the Chettur *taravad* (family) in Palakkad on the Malabar Coast. The Nairs have a matriarchal family structure. In 1885, he married Kunhammalu Ammal of the Palat family. In 1877, he received his degree in Arts from the Presidency College, Madras (present-day **Chennai**) and his law degree from the Madras Law College in 1879. He practiced as a lawyer from 1880 onward. The government of Madras appointed him government pleader and public prosecutor in 1899. From 1908, he was advocate general of Madras, a post he held till 1915. He used his position as member of the Viceroy's Council to point out the serious shortcomings in the British policy toward India and suggested reforms. Following his "Minutes of Dissent," Shankaran Nair resigned from the Council in protest against British atrocities in Punjab. Despite his open dissent, he was appointed a member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India in England. He held that post till 1921.

He played a significant part in the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**. In 1897, when the First Provincial Conference met in Madras, he was invited to preside over it. He was president of the Indian National Congress at Amravati. In 1900, he became a member of the Madras Legislative Council. In his capacity as an Indian collaborating with the British at the highest levels, he sought for India Self-government and Dominion status, thus representing the moderate viewpoint in Tamil politics. It is noteworthy that he was also an influential member of the Hindu Mahasabha and presided over its Delhi session in 1931.

NAIR, MADHAVAN TARAVATH Dr. (1868–1919). Dr. Taravath Madhavan Nair was born in Tirur in Calicut district of Kerala. He was a key figure in the Tamil **non-Brahmin movement**. Nair got his medical degree from the University of Edinburgh in 1894. His major contributions in the field of medical science in India were recognized by awarding him the "Kaiser-i-Hind" gold medal in 1913. In 1914, he wrote the book *Diabetes—Its Nature and Treatment*, which is still regarded as a classic. His political ideas were shaped during his stay in England. He was influenced both by Gladstonian liberals and by the Labor Party because of his friendship with its leader, Arthur Henderson.

His sympathy for the downtrodden and the depressed classes led him to found the non-Brahmin movement, along with P. **Thyagaraja Chetty**. He also became closely associated with the **Justice Party** (an

offshoot of the non-Brahmin movement), which he founded along with C. Natesa **Mudaliyar**. He believed that political and social awareness among the masses was possible only with the introduction of Western **education**. In pursuit of this, he supported G. K. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill. Madhavan Nair began by supporting the demand for "Dominion Status" within the principle of British paramountcy. However, he came out strongly against the colonial regime during the forced "Partition of Bengal" and veered around to the demand for complete independence from British rule. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

NAKKIRAR. The name "Nakkirar" seems to have been adopted by several poets separated by historic time and space. In fact, even the **Sangam** period may have had more than one Nakkirar, compounding the confusion. Nakkirar, the author of *Tirumurugatruppada*i, which sings of the glories of Lord **Murugan**, may have belonged to the early Sangam era. This poet seems to have been a contemporary of the woman poet **Auvaiyar**. The 14th-century commentator Nachchinarkkiniyar has written a commentary on this text.

As with Auvaiyar, multiple legends are woven around Nakkirar's confrontation with **Shiva**. As the head in the **Pandya** court, Nakkirar criticized a verse brought by a poor poet Dharmi, which had actually been written for him by Shiva himself. When a furious Shiva spouted forth flame from his third eye, Nakkirar remarked, "Even if the third eye opens, a mistake (in **Tamil** prosody) is a mistake." Shiva punished Nakkirar by cursing him with leprosy, a disease that was cured only after making many pilgrimages. Another story refers to his altercation with a potter over the superiority of Tamil versus Sanskrit, the potter lauding Sanskrit while Nakkirar exalted Tamil. Nakkirar finally cursed the potter to death in Sanskrit but restored him to life with a single blessing in Tamil.

Another Nakkirar who may have lived in the later (Kadai) Sangam period (third century CE) authored the *Nedunelvadai*. In the early medieval period, probably in the seventh or eighth century, one more Nakkirar flourished who wrote a masterly commentary on Irayanar's Sangam text *Kalaiviyal Ahapporu*. He is referred to as Kanakkayanar or accountant, a name that may indicate his hereditary profession.

NALAYIRA DIVYAPRABHANDAM. This massive tome of 4,000 hymns—literally *Nalayira Divyaprabhandam*—was compiled by Nathamuni in the 10th century. Written in chaste **Tamil**, this contains the compositions of all of the 12 **Alvars**. Its importance in Vaishnava **religion** is such that it is called “Dravida Veda,” literally “The Veda of the [Tamil] Dravida.”

NALLIS. This name today is synonymous with **Kanchipuram** silks. The founder of the Nalli Empire was Nalli Chinnasami **Chettiar** in 1923, when he sold handwoven sarees from door to door in **Kanchipuram** and Madras (present-day **Chennai**). The first Nallis saree shop began on a 20 m² shop in Panagal Park in Chennai in 1928. Today, the Nallis have a 2,000 m² three-story showroom at Thyagarajanagar in Chennai, a few kilometers from the original site. The Nallis enjoy an international reputation and have showrooms in London, New York, and other major cities. Diasporic Tamils are dependent on Nallis for their supply of sarees and other dress material. The present owner is **Nalli Kuppusami Chettiar**.

NAMMALVAR. Nammalvar, regarded by some Vaishnavite scholars as the greatest of the **Alvars**, lived some time in the seventh century CE. As with the first three Alvars and **Andal**, it is believed that he was found by his foster parent Kariyar and his wife Nandanayaki in the hollow of a tamarind tree. Nammalvar, like Andal, was a bridal mystic, and his poetry describes the passionate love between himself as the bride of the Lord and Krishna as his husband. It is interesting that the metaphysical notion of bridal mysticism cuts across gender lines so that both Nammalvar, a male, and Andal, a female, express their love for the Lord Krishna in very similar erotic poetry. Nammalvar told his 1,102 verses on the Lord to Madurakavi who wrote it down as *Tiruvaymozhi*, regarded by Vaishnavites as one of the finest examples of Madurya Bhakti. It is noteworthy that Madurakavi himself is hailed as one of the Alvars. *See also* IYENGAR-THE VAISHNAVITE BRAHMIN; RELIGION.

NANDANAR. The *Periyapuranam* refers to him as a **Nayanar**, one of **Shiva**'s greatest devotees. Nandanar was an untouchable **Parayar**. It can be said that he lived before the 12th century because he figures

in **Chekizhar**'s compilation of saints. He is also called Tirunalaippo-
var meaning "One who will go Tomorrow" because Nandanar's great
dream was to see the dancing Nataraja (signifying the cosmic dance
of Shiva) at Chidambaram. However, because of his harsh landlord
and pecuniary circumstances, he had to wait a lifetime to fulfil his
heart's wish. According to oral tradition, Nandi, the divine vehicle of
Lord Shiva, moved from its position in front of Shiva so that the un-
touchable Nayanar could view his beloved deity without hindrance
even from a distance. It is noteworthy that until the Temple Entry Act,
which was passed in the 20th century, untouchables like Nandanar
could not enter **temples**.

NANNAN. He was a **Sangam** chieftain under the **Chola** kings. Lord of
Chenkanma in the Cheyyar valley, Nannan is the subject of many of
the panegyric Sangam poems. Perumkausikanar composed the poem
Malaippadukadam in his honor.

NANNUL. Bhavanandi Adigal authored this **Tamil** lexicon. It is said to
have been written anytime between the 10th and 13th centuries. This
work is an attempt to revise the rules of Tamil grammar as laid down
in the *Tolkappiyam* in the light of new literary usages that had come
about in the course of a millennium.

NARAYANASWAMY, PALAKKAD K. V. (1923–2002). His full name
was Palakkad Kollengode Vishwanathan Narayanaswamy, but he
gained celebrity in the musical world as K. V. N. He was born in
Palakkad into an **Iyer-Smartha Brahmin** family. His ancestors were
Krishnattam (a prototype of the Kerala performing art Kathakali)
artists. After an initial period of training under his grandfather
Narayana Bhagavathar, he joined the *gurukulam* of the famous musi-
cian **Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar**. His life there tells something of
the master-disciple relationship in which the disciple had to serve with-
out expectation in return for living in the musical ambience of his guru.
In a brief biographical sketch of Narayanaswamy, Indira Menon, in her
book *Great Masters of Carnatic Music 1930–1965*, says that the de-
spondent Narayanaswamy actually ran away to Wardha to join
Gandhi's hermitage! Narayanaswamy's musical career took off after
his return. From 1954, when he gave his first successful concert, until

his death in 2002 he continued to enthrall Tamil audiences in India and abroad with his melodious voice and the spiritual quality of his **music**, a quality that distinguished him from other musicians of his time with the exception of **M. S. Subbalakshmi**. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N.; BRINDA, T., AND MUKTA; CHETTIAR, ANNAMALAI RAJAH; GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI; IYER, MADURAI MANI; IYER, MUSIRI SUBRAMANYA; MUSIC; MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR; RAMANATHAN, M. D.; SHYAMA SHASTRI; THYAGARAJA; THYAGARAJA BHAGAVATHAR, M. K.; VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L.

NAYANAR (NAYANMAR). The Nayanars are Saivite saints believed to be 63 in number. Along with the Vaishnavite **Alvars**, the Nayanar who represented the highpoint of early medieval Saivism, spearheaded the Bhakti or **Bhagavata movement** in the Tamil country. Interestingly, the hagiographical tradition of the Nayanar begins with **Sundaramurthy Nayanar**, a contemporary of the **Pallava** King Rajasimha (985–1014), who sang the lives of Saivite saints up to **Karaikkal Ammaiyar** (ca. 7th century) in 11 verses, declaring himself as the *Adiyarkku Adiyen* literally “the servant of the servants of the Lord.” The devotional outpouring of the Nayanars are contained in the poetic anthologies called *Tirumurai*. **Appar**, **Sundarar**, and **Tirujnanasambandar** are regarded as the greatest among the male Nayanars.

It is said that the celebrated **Chola Rajaraja I** (985–1014) was responsible for the codification of the *Tevaram* hymns containing their devotional verses. Nambiyandar Nambi did this at his behest. Nambi also sang 89 verses, devoting each verse to the life of one of the 63 Nayanars. **Chekizhar** in his *Periyapuranam* written in the 12th century retold Sundarar’s capsule biographies along with those written by Nambiyandar Nambi. **Manikkavachagar**, one of the greatest saints the Tamil country has produced, is not included among the Nayanar, although his compositions figure in the *Tirumurai*. The lives of three **women** Nayanars are also narrated in the *Periyapuranam*—Karaikkal Ammaiyar, Tilakavatiyar, and Mangaiyarkkarasiyar. The mother of Sundarar, named Isaijnaniyar, is also counted among the Nayanars. The powerful compositions of Karaikkal Ammaiyar are to be found in the 11th century work *Tirumurai*. *See also* NAYANAR, IYARPPA-GAIYAR; NAYANAR, TIRUNEELAKANTAR.

NAYANAR, IYARPPAGAIYAR. (fl. early medieval period). Belonging to the merchant community of **Kaveripumpattinam**, Iyarpagaiyar was known for his liberality toward devotees of **Shiva**. Once Shiva came in the disguise of a mendicant and asked for the wife of Iyarpagaiyar to fulfil his desire. It is said that not only did the saint offer his wife (without consulting her wishes, of course) but fought and killed those who opposed his action. Finally, Shiva manifested himself, bringing to life the critics and blessing the couple. *See also* APPAR; KARAIKKAL AMMAIYAR; NAYANAR; NAYANAR, TIRUNEELAKANTA; SUNDARAR; TIRUJNANASAMBANDAR.

NAYANAR, TIRUNEELAKANTA. A potter of Chidambaram, Tiruneelakantar was so lost in chanting **Shiva**'s name that he walked into the house of a prostitute in a state of god intoxication. Suspecting him of infidelity, his wife forbade him to touch her "in the name of Tiruneelakantam," the God he worshipped. As a result, the saint practiced lifelong celibacy. Shiva, in the guise of an ascetic, visited the aging couple in their home and entrusted them with his *kamandalu* or sacred bowl for safekeeping while he went on a pilgrimage. On his return, he found the bowl missing and exhorted the couple to swear their innocence by holding hands and having a holy dip in the river. When the couple came up, the ascetic had disappeared but they had regained their youth. Tiruneelakanta **Nayanar** and his devoted wife spent many years in prayer and service to the Lord's devotees. APPAR; KARAIKKAL AMMAIYAR; NAYANAR, IYARPPAGAIYAR; SUNDARAR; TIRUJNANASAMBANDAR.

NEDUMAN-ANJI ADIGAMAN (ADIYAMAN). Petty chief of the **Sangam** age. The Adigamans were rulers of Salem and Dharmampuri with Tagadur as their capital. Neduman-Anji was the patron of the celebrated **woman** poet **Auvaiyar** and he is said to have gifted her with a gooseberry fruit, which bestowed immortality on her. An important contribution of Adigaman and his tribe of Malavar was the introduction of sugarcane into southern India. Auvaiyar, in her war poems, celebrates the military prowess of Neduman Anji. He has also been the subject of poems by Paranar. Anji, in his arrogance, he aspired to control the whole of the **Chera** kingdom. He was defeated and killed by the Chera King Perum Cheran Irumporai.

NEDUNCHELIYAN. A king of the **Sangam** age, the **Pandyan** kingdom with its capital at **Madurai** rose to a zenith during his reign. He is known for his signal victory over his rapacious neighbors at the battle of Talaiyanganam near Tiruvarur in **Tanjavur** district. He is the hero of two major poems in the *Pathupattu* anthology. *See also* LITERATURE.

NEDUNELVADAI. This composition of 188 lines, contained in the *Pathupattu*, is thematically related to the *Maduraikanchi*. Its author is **Nakkirar**. It carries forward the theme of the **Pandyan** king **Nedunchelivan**'s military engagements but focuses on the pangs of separation suffered by his queen. "Northern Winds," which is a rough translation of the title, reflects the winter of separation. She is advised to worship **Korravai**, the presiding deity of the battlefield. The poem depicts two very different poetic moods—the bliss of domesticity and the pangs of separation, on the one hand, and the ambience of war, on the other. *See also* LITERATURE.

NEELAKESI. The theme of *Neelakesi* is the folk story of the Pazhayanur Neeli. The text, elucidated by its commentator Prabhachandracharya, refers to Neeli as the daughter of a Jain merchant who was married off by trickery to a **Buddhist** merchant named Sagaradatta. When asked to cook meat for a Buddhist guest (some Buddhists, unlike Jains, had become meat eaters) Neeli responded by making a dish out of a leather slipper. This was dangerously deviant behavior, and Neeli's husband and in-laws retaliated by falsely accusing her of unchastity. Eventually, the gods themselves came forth to proclaim her pure and virtuous. It is noteworthy that in the medieval commentary on *Neelakesi* by Diwakara Vamana Munivar, Neeli is reverentially addressed as *Ma daivam*, literally "the great goddess." This Neeli is then described as having won great theological battles against the Buddhists, especially at the great polemical debates held at Kampili. One of the interesting aspects of this version of *Neelakesi* is that this Neeli could be the prototype of any chaste wife within the Brahmanical patriarchal structure. Incidentally, this text also shows that unlike the period of the *Silappadikaram* when the heterodox faiths presented a joint front against Brahmanical orthodoxy, by the sixth-seventh centuries they were cutting into and destroying each other's support base.

The folk tale/ballad of *Neelakesi*, popular to this day, is encountered for the first time with some crucial variations in the story of *Neelakesi*, narrated by the saint **Chekizhar** in his celebrated *Periyapuranam*. This text is placed sometime in the 12th century. In this version, Neeli was the chaste wife of a **Brahmin** of Pazhayanur (which place is identified by this author with Tiruvalangadu) who fell into the trap of a prostitute and killed his pregnant wife, robbing her of all her **jewelry**. In the next birth, the Brahmin, now in his incarnation as a merchant (i.e., a **Chettiar** who is a non-Brahmin), came to Pazhayanur in search of trade prospects. Neeli, who had turned into a vengeful ghost (*Pey*), pursued him with a ghostly child that she had materialized. Claiming to be his wife, she appealed to the **Vellalar** (the agricultural community typifying wealthy landlords) to restore her conjugal rights. It is said that the deceitful Neeli shed copious tears to hoodwink the village elders. Despite the protests of the Brahmin that he does not know her, the Vellalar believed her story and forced them to stay together. In the night, Neeli murdered him most cruelly, thereby avenging her own murder. It is said that the 70 Vellala elders of the village who had given the judgment committed mass suicide.

NEELAMBIKAI AMMAIYAR (1903–1948). Neelambikai Ammaiyar played an important role in the years of transition to India's independence. A daughter of **Maraimalai Adigal**, she, along with her father, started the **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam**, the movement that aimed at purging **Tamil language** and culture of all extraneous influences, especially the Sanskritic-Brahmanical elements. A keen supporter of **women's** causes, she became president of the women's movement in Tamil Nadu. She is remembered today not only for her contribution to the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu** but also for her scholarly essays on Tamil language and culture entitled *Tani Tamizh Katturaigal* ("Essays on Tani Tamil") published in 1926. Equally remarkable are her biographical sketches of women, including saintly Tamil women and eminent foreigners. These biographies included the lives of Joan of Arc, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Florence Nightingale, and Queen Victoria! Neelambikai Ammaiyar's writings and political opinions have survived the cruel silencing of women's voices, thanks to her husband Tiruvaranga Pillai, who published the rest of her prolific writ-

ings (amounting to 13 books) and her brother Appar, who became her biographer. *See also* LITERATURE.

NEWSPAPERS. Newspapers in Tamil Nadu were started for the first time during the colonial period. The print media played a major role in creating patriotism and anti-colonial sentiments among the Tamils. It is interesting to note that like many of the nationalist leaders such as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Lala Lajpat Rai who owned newspapers, political leaders of the south either owned papers or journals or were intimately connected with news dissemination. In the initial years apart from *Madras Mail*, an Anglo-Indian-owned newspaper with a circulation of 5,000 copies, no other newspaper had a circulation of more than 4,000 copies. The growing role of nationalist papers in influencing mass participation in the **freedom struggle** can be seen in the dramatic increase in their circulation by the 1940s. Papers like *The New India* of **Annie Besant**, *Jayabharati*, and *Swadeshamithiran* of A. Rangaswami Iyenger, *The Hindu* of **S. Kasturiranga Iyengar** crossed the 10,000 mark in terms of their circulation. Other prominent newspapers printed in the 1920s included T. V. Kalyanasundara **Mudaliyar**'s *Deshabhaktam* and *Navashakti*, *The Indian Express* run by **K. Santanam**, *Manikkodi* of K. Srinivasan and *Dinamani* of S. V. Swamy. Papers like *The Hindu*, *The Indian Express*, and *Dinamani* continue to be leading newspapers in Tamil Nadu (the former two also have a wide circulation at the All-India level). *See also* WOMEN'S PERIODICALS.

NILGIRIS. The picturesque Nilgiris (literally Blue Mountains), which form an integral part of the plateau, stands at the junction of the eastern and western ghats at an average height of 1,980 m above sea level. The mountains are accessible by a unique toy train that runs from the little town of Mettupalayam near the major city of **Coimbatore**. Nilgiris is known for its coffee and tea plantations, while potato, cinchona, and eucalyptus oil are some of its other products. Such ancient tribes as the **Todas**, Kurumbas, Kotas, Panias, and Iru-las inhabit the area. The town of Ootacamund is the chief attraction of the Nilgiris. Like Shimla in the north, this is a colonial town, with the typical features of summer resorts of the British colonial masters such as botanical gardens and artificial lakes. It also boasts a golf

club started by an Englishman, Colonel Ross Thompson. The Lovedale School is a celebrated boarding school located in Nilgiris. *See also* KODAIKANAL.

NOBILI, ROBERTO DE (1577–1656). Nobili was born at Montepulciano in Italy and came as a missionary to **Madurai** in 1606. He had his initial training at the Missionary College of Cochin. His greatest achievement as a missionary was the foundation of the Madura Mission, which basically catered to upper **caste** converts. His predecessor, Fr. Gonzalo Fernandez, had failed because of his inability to learn the ways of the natives, as Nobili pointed out in one of his letters to his spiritual superior in Italy. Nobili's immense success lay in his ability to speak **Tamil**, Telugu, and Sanskrit fluently and in his spiritual qualities, which earned him the title "Rishi" from the local Tamils. He called himself a "Roman Brahmana Sanyasi" and completely adopted the Brahmanical way of life, including vegetarianism. He was the only **Christian** missionary to attract converts from the **Brahmin** community. They called him "Tattvabodhaka Swami" (literally the knower of the true essence) and Nobili "**Iyer**" (the suffix used by Brahmins). Although the love and reverence that Nobili commanded among the Hindus is indisputable, historians are still assessing his role in Christian proselytization, wondering whether he was a Christian who turned "Hindu," like **Abhishiktananda** several centuries later, or whether his Brahmanization was merely a clever ploy to achieve a harvest of souls. *See also* BESCHI, C. J.; CALDWELL, BISHOP ROBERT; POPE, G. U.; RELIGION; XAVIER, ST. FRANCIS; ZIEGENBALG, BARTHOLOMAEUS.

NON-BRAHMIN MANIFESTO. *See* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT. The non-**Brahmin** movement, which emerged in the early decades of the 20th century, moved in tandem with the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**. The movement came to be intertwined with social and cultural movements like the **Tani Tamzh Iyakkam**, **Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam**, and the Tamil Isai Iyakkam. Politically, the non-Brahmin movement adhered to the politics of the **Justice Party**, the **Dravida Kazhagam**, **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam**, and the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra**

Kazhagam and their various political splinter groups. The movement was also fueled by the British policy of proportional representation and the regular reports that were painstaking surveys of **caste**-wise and **religion**-wise break up of communities represented in all spheres of Tamil civil society.

There was no one non-Brahmin movement but several movements with a common plank of anti-Brahmanism combined with Tamil devotion. The Chennai Jana Sangam was formed in 1908. Public meetings began to be addressed in **Tamil language**, the language of the people, rather than in chaste English, as the members of the **Madras Mahajana Sabha** were wont to do. Toward the end of 1916 a new party, called the South Indian Liberal Federation or the Justice Party, came into existence in the Madras Presidency. Its leaders were P. Thyagaraya **Chetty**, **Taravath Madhavan Nair**, and later **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**, who came to be known as Periyar (the “respected one” or “elder”). A major landmark in the evolution of the non-Brahmin movement in Tamil Nadu can be said to have begun in December 1916 when the “Non-Brahmin Manifesto” was released. Taravath Madhavan Nair and P. Thyagaraya Chetty were the principal authors of the manifesto. The manifesto was denounced by a large section of Tamil political leaders as a document inspired by the British rulers with an aim to divide the freedom struggle. Dr. **Annie Besant**, then editor of *New India* and a prominent personality in the freedom struggle, debunked the manifesto as mischievous and unpatriotic.” Even non-Brahmins in the freedom struggle distanced themselves from it. The importance of the manifesto stems from its being the first political expression of the trajectory that the non-Brahmin movement was to take.

Ramaswamy Naicker became the torch-bearer of the non-Brahmin movement in the 1920s, and the Justice Party attracted prominent leaders from all walks of life who perceived the party as the vehicle for political interventionism. At the same time, the Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam of Naicker was seen as an effective mode of advocating social reform. The journal *Non-Brahmin* became the party mouthpiece. Later, Naicker started *Kudi Arasu* and *Viduthalai* that carried forward the Non-Brahmin ideology. In the 1930s, the Justice Party obtained the majority and formed the government under the diarchy system devised by the British. The party, however, lost much ground

in the subsequent years because it was perceived as a collaborator of the colonial regime. The Tamil separatist movement also started under Naicker's leadership, and it is noteworthy that during the transitional years of India's freedom notable leaders of Tamil Nadu like E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker began advocating an independent "Dravidisthan."

The foundation of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) under the leadership of **C. N. Annadurai** in 1949 constituted the next momentous step in the history of the non-Brahmin movement. His primary fight was against Hindi and the domination of Brahmins in Tamil culture. In 1939, at a Tamil conference in Vellore (North Arcot District) he raised the slogan, "Tamil country is only for Tamils," thereby marginalizing the Tamil Brahmins within Tamil Nadu. As general secretary of the Justice Party, he spearheaded the anti-Hindi agitation. The DMK workers and Anna courted arrest in 1965 in the anti-Hindi agitation. **M. Karunanidhi**, the present chief minister of Tamil Nadu and a great leader of the non-Brahmin movement, rose to prominence during this agitation.

The non-Brahmin movement lost its relevance when the DMK and the AIADMK began to share power in Tamil Nadu from the 1970s onward. Once the policy of affirmative action in the form of **Reservations** became an ideological plank of political parties, anti-Brahmanism became redundant. It must, however, be pointed out that the **Adi Dravida** movement has cut sharply into the electoral constituencies of the major political parties. Parties like the **Pattali Makkal Katchi** and **Puthiya Tamizhagam** have perceived the political aspirations and social demands of the Tamil "Dalits" as being distinct and different from those of the upper-caste non-Brahmins. *See also* BHARATIDASAN; GOPALASWAMY, V.; KRISHNASWAMY, K.; MARAIMALAI ADIGAL; NEELAMBIKAI AMMAIYAR; RAMACHANDRAN, M. G.; RAMDOSS, ANBUMANI.

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OOMAI THURAI (ca. 18th–early 19th century). Born mute, Oomai Thurai is today remembered by the Tamils as a hero of extraordinary valor. It is interesting that nowhere in Tamil history is his real name

mentioned, and he is adored only by the name Oomai Thurai meaning “the Mute Lord.” He was the brother of Vira Pandya **Kattabomman**, the poligar of Panjalankurichi. After his brother was summarily executed by the English **East India Company**, Oomai Thurai led the local resistance against the British in his native province of Tirunelveli. James Welsh, the collector of the district, commented with reluctant admiration that the mute man merely had to arrange little pieces of straw in his palm (representative of the English army!) and blow it off. Entire battalions would understand this as a signal to attack the enemy forces.

Disguised as ascetics, 200 rebels under his leadership made their way into Palayamkottai and freed all the political prisoners. Oomai Thurai’s army then made its way back to Panjalankurichi. Alwar Tirunagari, Srivaikuntam, Kadalgudi, Nagalapuram, Kolarpatti, and Tutukudi were reclaimed from the English by Oomai Thurai. In a deadly encounter, the rebels lost 1,000 men and the British 600. In a most romantic escapade, **women** carried away the badly wounded Oomai Thurai from the battleground right through enemy ranks, claiming that it was the body of a young man who had died of smallpox. Oomai Thurai came back with the support of **Marudu Pandyan** to offer resistance to the British once more at Sivagangai and Dindigal. The attack failed, and Ooma Thurai and his brother Sevathiah were executed by the British in 1801 in their own hometown of Panjalankurichi as an example to all Tamils who dared to defy the might of the British. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

OTTAKKUTTAR (ca. 12th century). A great medieval poet, Ottakkuttar lived in the 12th century. He is said to have been the court poet of four **Chola** kings from Kulottunga I to Rajaraja II. Like **Tiruvalluvar**, Ottakkuttar followed the weaving profession and belonged to the Senguntar community. He is known for the three *ula* (literally “Procession”), which are panegyrics on Vikrama Chola, Kulottunga Chola, and **Rajaraja Chola**. Among his most famous compositions is the *Itti Elupatu*, which tells of the warrior past of the Senguntar **caste** and how they subsequently took to weaving and came to be called **Kaikkolar**. It is said that since Ottakkuttar authored *Uttara Ramayanam*, **Kambar**, out of respect for him, confined himself to writing only six *kanda* or cantos of the *Ramayanam*. *See also* LITERATURE.

PADINENKIZHKANAKKU. This literary anthology is dated sometime in the late **Sangam** or post-Sangam period, ranging from the sixth to the seventh centuries. The collection is in contra-distinction to the Sangam anthologies *Pathupattu* and *Ettuthogai*. While the Sangam texts reveal a lively, materialistic culture, the *Kizhkanakku literature* is moral and ethical in content and therefore intended to be didactic. Many of them, probably under the Jain influence, talk about the transience of worldly possessions. The normative text *Naladiyar* is clearly a Jain composition and so perhaps is the celebrated *Tirukkural*. Unlike the Sangam texts that are mostly in the *ahaval* meter, these are set in an entirely different poetic meter called *venba*. The anthology consists of 18 texts, which are: *Tirukkural*, *Naladiyar*, *Nanmanikadigai*, *Iniyavai Narpathu*, *Inna Narpathu*, *Kar Narpathu*, *Kalavazhi Narpathu*, *Tinaimozhi Aimbathu*, *Tinaimalai Nutraimbathu*, *Ainthinai Aimbathu*, *Tirukadukam*, *Acharakovai*, *Pazhamozhi Nanuru*, *Sirupanja Moolam*, *Muthumozhi Kanchi*, *Eladi*, *Innilai*, and *Kainnilai*. Very few of these texts are remembered today either for their style or for their content with the singular exception of Tiruval-luvar's *Tirukkural* and texts like *Naladiyar*, *Eladi*, and *Acharakovai* to some extent.

PADMASALIYA. See SALIYA.

PAIYAMPALLI. This **megalithic** site is located in the Baramahal-Tirupattur region of the North Arcot district. A major significance of the site is the clear traces of cotton and the finding of whorls and spindles. The site is closely connected in terms of its cultural specificity to **Bargur** also located in the North Arcot district at a distance of 8 km to the east. Early excavations undertaken by Robert Bruce Foote followed by those of B. Narasimmaiah and S. R. Rao revealed neolithic and megalithic habitation preserving a sense of continuity. While the neolithic habitation had the typical painted gray ware, the megalithic layer had black and red ware pottery. The pit dwellings of the neolithic peoples as well as the grains, pulses and horse gram consumed by them and the mortar and pestle used for grinding and

pounding grain have been excavated from here. The **agricultural** implements found at this site testify to a settled way of life. The megalithic layer has brought up stone mould and utensils besides considerable **jewelry** and probably pans used in gold melting. *See also* ADICHCHANALLUR; ANDIPATTI; KAVERIPUMPATTINAM; KORKAI; MUZIRIS.

PALLAR. The name Pallar is derived from the term *pallam* meaning pit. This has been interpreted to mean that the Pallar like the **Parayar** come at the bottom of the social ladder. Interestingly the name Pallar may also be said to be derived from their expertise in wetland cultivation since *pallam* also means low ground. The Madras Census Report of 1891 defines the Pallar as a “class of **agricultural laborers** found chiefly in Tanjavur, **Tiruchirapalli**, **Madurai**, and **Tirunelveli** as well as in the districts of Salem and **Coimbatore**.” Socially they come just before the Parayar but due to their outcaste status their habitations called *pallacheri* are located just beside the *paracheris*. Tamil historical records provide many instances of intense rivalry between these two communities.

The Pallar agricultural laborers were similar to bonded slaves and the **women** of the **caste** were not allowed to cover the upper portion of the body. Many of this caste converted to **Christianity** and as a result the women began to wear a blouse. This led to violent opposition by the upper castes and a series of caste disturbances, the most serious one being in 1859 when the then governor of Madras, Sir Charles Trevelyan, gave the judgment that all lower-caste women, including Pallar women, could cover their breasts and shoulders. The Tamil Nadu State policy of “Reservations” for the most backward has benefited the Pallar community but only marginally because the “creamy layer” among the Parayar have tended to monopolize many of these benefits.

PALLAVA. *See* PALLAVA DYNASTY.

PALLAVA DYNASTY. The Pallava dynasty of the medieval Tamil country ruled over the region defined as Thondaimandalam, comprising essentially present-day Chingleput, **Kanchipuram**, **Chennai**,

and the North Arcot districts. Pallava rule is divided into three phases the early Pallava, middle Pallava, and the latter Pallava. This division is essentially based on the **language** used in the inscriptions. The inscriptions of the early Pallava kings were in the Prakrit language and their time frame was estimated to be 250–340 CE. The middle Pallava are said to have ruled between 340 and 575 and their records are in Sanskrit. This was the time when Sanskritization and Brahmanization were making inroads into Tamil culture. The later Pallavas ruled between 576 and 900 and their inscriptions are by and large in the Grantha script, which is a combination of Tamil and Sanskrit.

Sivaskandavarman is regarded as the virtual founder of the Pallava dynasty. He ruled between 300 and 325 CE and had Kanchipuram as his capital. Kumaravishnu's reign (340–350 CE) heralded the period of the middle Pallavas. He is also known as Vishnugopan. The reign of the middle Pallava was extremely unstable since they were engaged in constant warfare with the Chalukya, Vakataka, Gupta, Kadamba, and **Chola** kings. It was also between the fourth and fifth centuries that Thondaimandalam, the region governed by the Pallava kings, was overrun by the **Kalabras**. The later Pallava reign commenced with Simhavishnu III, who is said to be the destroyer of the Kalabras and the savior of the region. The Sanskrit poet Bhairavi, who was a contemporary of the famous Sanskrit poet and playwright Kalidasa, flourished in the court of Simhavishnu and authored the *Avantisundari Katha*. Simhavishnu's son was the celebrated **Pallava Mahendravarman I**, known equally for his military prowess and for his patronage of the arts. Mahendravarman was succeeded by his son Narasimhavarman I, who is known for his resounding victory over the Chalukyas and hence has the title "Vatapikonda," meaning "one who has conquered Vatapi" (Vatapi being the capital of the Chalukyan dynasty). *See also* CHERA DYNASTY; CHOLA DYNASTY; PANDYA DYNASTY.

PALLAVA MAHENDRAVARMAN I (590–630). This king occupies a special place in the history of Tamil art and **architecture** since he was the founder of **Mahabalipuram** (also called Mamallapuram), a

town dedicated to art and sculpture. Mahendravarman began a new technique in Indian architecture in the rock-cut cave **temples** at Mahabalipuram, Mandakapattu, Talavanur, Chingavaram, Mahendravadi, and **Tiruchirapalli**. The copper plate inscription from Mandakapattu states that “these temples were built without brick, cement or mortar.” In Mahendramangalam, founded by him, he caused a huge **irrigation** tank to be constructed. It is stated in contemporary sources that he was a patron of **music** and also adept at playing the **musical instrument** called *parivadini veenai*. This remarkable king is also credited with having written the *Mattavilasa-prahasanam*, a satirical Sanskrit play on the decadent life of Buddhist monks. The play reflects the waning prestige of **Buddhism** and Jainism and the revival of Brahmanical **Hinduism** in the Tamil country.

PANDYA. See PANDYA DYNASTY.

PANDYA DYNASTY. The Pandyas ruled over the region defined as **Pandyamandalam** comprising the districts of **Madurai**, Tirunelveli, Ramanathapuram, and Kanyakumari, apart from the many new districts that have been carved out of the older, larger districts. One of the earliest-known historical texts that refer to the Pandyan kingdom is the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya, which refers to the pearls of the Pandyan kingdom and specifically to the cotton textiles of Madurai. **Sangam literature** texts like *Pattinappalai* refers to **Muziris**, **Korkai**, and Tondai, which are ancient port-towns of the Pandyamandalam while the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram* focuses on the commercial town of Madurai. The Pandya kings were one of the three kings referred to in Sangam literature as *Muvendavelar*.

According to oral tradition, a woman founded the Kingdom of Madurai. The religious-mythological traditions talk of the marriage between **Shiva** (one of the divine trinity in Hindu **religion**) and Meenakshi, the daughter of Malayadvaja Pandya, thus suggesting a symbiotic link between the sacred and the secular in Pandyan history. Madurai was not only the political capital of the Sangam Pandyas but also the cultural capital of **Sangam polity** be-

cause most of the Tamil literary conclaves were held in this city. Among the Pandya kings who belonged to the Sangam polity were Aryapadaikkadantha **Neduncheliyan** who ruled between 50 and 75 CE and Neduncheliyan II who was a contemporary of **Karikala Chola** who was honored by the Sangam poet Mankudi Maruthanar by composing the *Maduraikanchi* in his praise. The other important Sangam Pandyas were Azhi Vandivalamba Ninra Pandyan and Palyagasalai Mudukudumi Peruvazhuthi.

Kadungon Pandyan (560–590) is regarded as the founder of the early medieval Pandyas. He is referred to as the conqueror of the **Kalabra** kings. The 12th-century hagiographical work *Tiruvilaiyadal Puranam* refers to Sundara Pandya, also called Koon Pandyan, a Jain king who reconverted to Saivism, becoming its strongest votary. He is said to have conquered the **Pallavas**. Rajasimha I, better known as Arikesari Maravarman Pandya, defeated the Pallava king Nandivarman. His son Varaguna Pandya overran **Kongumandalam**. However, the military expansion of the early medieval Pandyas reached a dead end in the ninth century with Varaguna Pandya II who lost his independence to the Pallavas becoming their feudatory.

The medieval Pandya line began with the accession of Vikrama Pandya in 1181. The chronology of the later medieval Pandyas is shrouded in mystery. The reason for this is said to be the repetitious pattern of Pandya names, which were prefixed either by the name “Jatavarman” or “Maravarman.” What is a historical fact is that the Pandya dynasty continued well into the medieval period and faded out sometime around the 14th century.

With Maravarman Sundara Pandya’s accession in 1216 began what is known as the Second Pandyan Empire. His reign came to an end in 1238. His successor Jatavarman Sundara Pandya who came to the throne in 1251 commenced the most glorious period of the Pandya dynasties with multiple political victories over the **Cholas** and the **Cheras**. The decline and fall of the medieval Pandyas began with the death of Kulasekhara Pandya in 1308–1309 and the bitter war between his sons Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya with the former seeking the help of the Delhi Sultan Alauddin Khalji. Khalji’s general Malik Kafur invaded the

Pandyan kingdom in 1310 and with the **Muslim** conquest of the region the Pandyan dynasty came to a virtual close. However, the Pandya kings themselves survived as petty chieftains in the Tamil country till the 18th century.

PANDYAMANDALAM. See MANDALAM PANDYA.

PAPANASAM SIVAN (1890–1973). This great musical genius was hailed as the “Tamil **Thyagaraja**” by Chimizhi Sundaram **Iyer** who heard him singing his Tamil composition “give me the grace to sing your praises” in the raga Kuntalavarali at the Thyagaraja festival in Tiruvarur. Born in Polagam in Nagapattinam Taluk in **Tanjavur** into an orthodox **Brahmin** family, Sivan was named “Ramaiah.” He lost his father when he was seven and went to Tiruvananthapuram to live with his uncle Rajagopala Iyer. In 1910, he acquired his degree in Sanskrit grammar from the Maharaja Sanskrit College. Ramaiah learned **music** under the famous musician Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Iyer. For the next 12 years, Sivan became a wandering ascetic. His spontaneous devotional compositions in the **Shiva** temple of Papanasam transformed Ramaiah into “Papanasam Sivan.” The saint Neelakanta Sivan was a major influence in his life. It is said that crowds danced in ecstasy when he sang. His contemporary the celebrated *nadaswaram* player Chinna Pakkiri of Mannargudi fell at Sivan’s feet overwhelmed by the emotive quality of his music.

Sivan married in 1917 and, for a brief period in the late 1920s and 1930s, composed and acted in Tamil films. His songs in the film *Sita Kalyanam* and his enactment of the role of Tiruneelakanthar in a film of the same name produced in 1939 are remembered even today. However, his best performance was in the role of Kuchela in *Sri Krishna*. He also served in the **Kalakshethra** School of Dance run by **Rukmini Arundale** at Adayar in **Chennai**. Today, his compositions, numbering more than 300, are in popular circulation, at least 10 of these songs being in the difficult melodic *raga* called Todi. See also BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N.; BRINDA, T., AND MUKTA; CHETTIAR, ANNAMALAI RAJAH; GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI; IYER, MADURAI MANI;

IYER, MUSIRI SUBRAMANYA; MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR; RAMANATHAN, M. D.; SHYAMA SHASTRI; SUBBALAKSHMI, M. S.; TAMIL CINEMA; THYAGARAJA BHAGAVATHAR, M. K.; VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L.

PARAYAR. The Parayar (plural of Parayan) come at the lowest rung of the social hierarchy along with the Pallan community. The *Paraicheri* or inhabitation of the Paraya community is usually outside the village and they are considered “untouchables,” ritually placed below all the four **castes**. Because they are regarded as a “polluting” caste, canonical **Hindu** texts specify the physical distance they have to maintain between themselves and the other castes. The name Parayan comes from the drum or *parai* because the members of this community act as drummers on funerary occasions and sometimes during festivals and weddings. But their association with death rituals renders them social outcasts. Among them those who blow the pipe called *tharai* during the funeral procession are called *Panisaivan* while those who work in the cremation ground are called *Vettiyan*. Many Parayar also form a part of landless **agricultural labor**.

In early Peninsular India, no community would accept water or food from the hands of the Parayar and they were not allowed to use the common well. Today, the Parayar are classified as a scheduled caste. The government policy of affirmative action involving **reservations** for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes at the State level has led to dramatic improvement in the socio-economic status of this community. There are, in fact, top political leaders from this community at the State level.

PARI. Pari belonged to the **Sangam** age and was a petty chieftain ruling over Parambanadu located near Piranmalai in the **Pandya** Country. The Sangam bards, especially the woman poet **Auvaiyar**, sing of the liberality and compassion of Pari because of which he was renowned as “Vallal” or “patron.” Even today in Tamil parlance, a generous man is referred to as “Pari Vallal.” The poet **Kapilar** wrote on Pari who was besieged and killed by the *Muvendar* (**Chera, Chola**, and Pandya) praising him and saying that to storm his hilly kingdom was difficult and it was his generosity that was

responsible for his downfall. He wrote in his poem: “I know by what stratagem the hill (of Pari’s kingdom) can be captured. If striking the tuneful chords of a small lute you come singing and dancing followed by the Viraliyar, he would grant to you all his land and his mountain.”

PARRYS. A company started by Thomas Parry, an intrepid businessman who landed in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1788 and started a small **banking** and trading agency. Today, Parrys is ranked as the second-oldest commercial house in India and the oldest in Tamil Nadu. The story of Parrys is also the story of Tamil Nadu in the colonial era, the story of the Carnatic wars between the French and the English, the era of rival **East India Companies**, freebooters, and carpetbaggers. Parrys in the 18th–19th centuries were involved in wine business, real estate, book distribution, and even something as petty as sale of lottery tickets. But banking continued to be their mainstay and customers’ deposits were used to lend out money at 12% interest. In the course of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Parrys also got into the textile, sugar, and indigo businesses. To Parrys goes the credit of introducing sugarcane cultivation in South Arcot in lieu of groundnut cultivation. Parrys started their fertilizer factories at Ennore and Ranipet. Parrys moved into commercial shipping and established their first warehouse at Cuddalore in South Arcot district. In 1803, Parry and Co moved into “Parry’s Corner,” a landmark in modern Chennai, a vital part of its cultural and historic landscape. Today, the ancient British (or Welsh to be accurate) firm of Parrys has been taken over by the **Murugappa Business Group**, representing the triumph of Nattukottai **Chetti** entrepreneurship over foreign industrial enterprise. *See also* ECONOMY; INDUSTRY.

PARTHASARATHY, INDIRA (1930–). He is one of the renowned writers of modern fiction in Tamil (his real name is Parthasarathy, the first name is his pseudonym). His writings include 15 novels, five novelettes, four volumes of short stories, nine plays, and a biography. Unconventional in approach, Parthasarathy’s works deal with different aspects of social existence in the North as well as the South. Among his great novels is *Kuruthi Punal* (*The River of*

Blood, 1975), which focuses on the savage burning of Dalit farm laborers. The novel is outstanding in its realistic portrayal of the rural scenario with all its petty rivalries, casteism, and vested interests. *See also* LITERATURE.

PATHUPATTU. *Pathupattu* is an anthology of 10 poems containing 3,552 lines composed by and large in the poetic meter known as *ahaval*. The period of their composition varied from 190 CE for *Porunaratruppadaï* to 400–450 CE for *Tirumurugatrupidai*. *Pat-tupattu* came to light for the first time in the 14th century, when the commentator Mayilainathar referred to it in a comprehensive manner. It was, however, **U. V. Swaminatha Iyer** who unearthed the entire collection little by little and gave to the Tamil world an invaluable literary and cultural treasure in 1889. The 10 poetic compositions contained in the *Pathupattu* are *Porunaratruppadaï*, *Perumpanatrupadaï*, *Siruppanatrupadaï*, *Tirumurugatruppadaï*, *Nedunelvadaï*, *Mullaipattu*, *Kurinjipattu*, *Maduraikanchi*, *Pattinappalai*, and *Malaippadukadam*.

PATTALI MAKKAL KATCHI (PMK). Pattali Makkal Katchi, which is a powerful party on the current political scene of Tamil Nadu, was founded in the mid-1990s by Dr. **Anbumoni Ramdoss**. Ramdoss, by training a medical practitioner, became closely involved with the **Vanniyar** Sangam, an association of the Vanniyar caste, who dominate in the regions of Vellore, Cuddalore, **Tiruchirapalli**, Salem, and **Tanjavur** districts. Vanniyars are also called Padayachi, Gounder, and Nayak in Tamil Nadu. Dr. Ramdoss used his leadership of the Vanniyar Sangam to enter politics and founded the PMK. The PMK, like the Bahujana Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh in North India, proclaimed itself the leader of all downtrodden communities but especially the Vanniyar, making heavy inroads into the lower caste “vote banks” of dominant political parties like the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** and the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)**. The PMK was one of the few parties to come out openly in support of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who constitute a revolutionary terrorist group in Sri Lanka, which has for a long time been waging a struggle for Tamil independence.

In the 1996 General Elections, the Party formed an alliance with the DMK but withdrew from the electoral alliance over the issue of seat sharing. However, in the 1999 elections the Party once again entered into alliance with the DMK and the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance securing nine seats for their party with the benefit going to the Vanniyars. Currently, the PMK has four seats in the present State Assembly (2005), which have come from Vanniyar-dominated constituencies. The PMK has suffered recently from the desertion from its ranks of veteran politicians Panruti Ramachandran and V. Krishnamoorthy. Despite its marginal presence in the Legislative Assembly, the party and its leader Dr. Ramdoss have become a key player in Tamil Nadu politics because of the political image as the party of the marginalized social groups. *See also* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

PATTAMMAL, D. K. (1919–). Damal Krishnaswamy Pattammal, known as D. K. Pattammal, was born in **Kanchipuram** into an orthodox **Brahmin** family. Her emergence on the musical firmament came at a time when **devadasis** (dancing girls) were considered the sole repositories of **music** and **dance**, being the only **women** who were “public” women. She had, therefore, to battle opposition at home as well as the broader Brahmanical norms in order to perform onstage. Technology played an important role in shaping Pattammal’s destiny because the release of her record by the Columbia Gramophone Company brought her instant recognition. Despite her deep desire, Pattammal was not allowed to learn music from the gifted Naina Pillai, from whom her contemporaries **Brinda and Mukta** received their musical training. The obstacle in her path was probably her Brahmanical origin in contrast to that of Naina Pillai who was a non-Brahmin. Because Pattammal learned music the hard way, without one proper guru, it was said of her in a humorous vein *pattukku padupatta Pattammal*, which just meant “Pattammal who struggled for her music.”

Pattammal’s unique contribution to **Carnatic** music from a gender perspective was her rendering of the musical form known as “Pallavi.” Until Pattammal took to singing Pallavi onstage, this was considered an exclusively male preserve because its rendition was strenuous. Even **M. S. Subbalakshmi** did not attempt it until much

later. Her triumphant entry into the domain of Pallavi singing earned her the title “Pallavi Pattammal.” Now an octogenarian, Pattammal is still lively and deeply involved in the teaching and singing of music. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N.; CHETTIAR, ANNA-MALAI RAJAH; GOPALA KRISHNA BHARATI; IYER, MADURAI MANI; IYER, MUSIRI SUBRAMANYA; MUTHUSVAMI DIKSHITAR; RAMANATHAN, M. D.; SHYAMA SHASTRI; THYAGARAJA; THYAGARAJA BHAGAVATHAR, M. K.; VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L.

PATTINAPPALAI. The poem is a part of the *Pathupattu* anthology of the **Sangam** age. The Pattinam referred to in the title is the **Kaveripumpattinam**, a bustling port town of the early **Christian** era. The central theme is the travails of a merchant who leaves his family in search of material wealth. The *Tinai Palai* is dominated by the mood of long separations. The poem combines the twin images of the commercial prosperity of the port town with the aridity of Palai and the barren life of the merchant’s family. The author **Urithiran Kannanar** lavishes praise on his patron **Karikala Chola**. The text contains graphic descriptions of the state of crafts and commerce in early Tamilaham.

PATTINATHAR (ca. 17th century). A famous **Siddha** saint. A Pattinathar mentioned in the 11th Tirumurai may be the same person, although folk tradition ascribes Pattinathar to the medieval period. The details of his life are known from a hagiography called *Pattinathupillaiyar Puranam* written by an anonymous author and the *Pulavar Puranam* written by Dandapani Desikar. There are many popular stories about him, such as his lamentations in a house where wedding celebrations were going on and his merriment in a house of mourning. When asked the reason for his strange behavior, Pattinathar is said to have commented that those who would soon be departing lamenting the loss of those who had departed amused him. He is credited with the works *Koviltiruvakaval*, *Kachchitiruvakaval*, and *Tiruvekambamalai*. *See also* SIDDHAR, KUDUMBALAI; SIDDHAR, PAMBATTI.

PERIALVAR. He is also known by the name of Vishnuchittar and is an important figure among the **Alvars**. He is the father of the only woman Alvar, Kodai, better known as **Andal**. Perialvar was born to Padmavati

and Mukund Acharya, a pious **Brahmin** couple of Srivilliputtur. He worshipped the Lord Krishna as an infant lying on a single leaf of the peepal (*Ficus religiosa*) tree. He addresses him as *vatapatrashayi* and his bhakti takes the form of Yashoda, the foster-mother of the baby Krishna. One of his most famous compositions called *pallandu* actually prays for the long life and prosperity of his beloved Krishna instead of seeking for himself either spiritual or material benefits from the Lord. The singing of the *pallandu* is a regular feature today in all Vaishnavite **temples**. See also NAMMALVAR; TIRUMANGAI ALVAR; TIRU-MAVISAI ALVAR.

PERIYAPURANAM. A 12th-century hagiographical account also known as *Tirutondar Puranam*. **Chekizhar**, a **Vellala** from Kunrattur, authored it. From humble beginnings Chekizhar rose to become the chief minister of Kulottunga **Chola**. **Sundarar**'s *Tirutondatogai* and Nami Andar Nambi's *Antadi* constitute inter-textual influences on the *Periyapuranam*. It is said that the work was commenced in the **Temple of Nataraja** at Chidambaram under the divine guidance of **Shiva** himself. The text narrates the lives of the 63 **Nayanars** (Sai vite saints), out of which only four were **women**. On the completion of 4,253 stanzas, the Chola king had the holy text wrapped in silk and taken in a procession. *Periyapuranam* is valorized in Tamil religious lore as the fifth *Veda* (the **Hindu** canon consists of four holy scriptures called *Vedas*). It is noteworthy that the majority of these saints were drawn from the lower **castes**: Kannappa Nayanar (a hunter), Tiruneelakantar (a potter), and **Nandanar** (a **Pulaya** regarded as an "untouchable" who usually perform **agricultural labor**). Among the women, the most famous life is that of **Karaikkal Ammaiyar**, who is said to have discarded her beautiful female form and assumed a skeletal, demonic form in her pursuit of salvation.

PERIYAR. See NAICKER, E. V. RAMASWAMY.

PERIYARIYA MARXIA LENINIYA KATCI. *Periyariya Marxia Leniniya Katci* meaning "The Party of Periyar, Marxist and Leninists," is headed by Ve. Anaimuthu. He was one of the foremost disciples of **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**. Its propaganda organ is the periodical *Chintanaiyalan*.

PERUMPANATRUPADAI. This poetic composition is a part of the *Pathupattu* anthology. Consisting of 500 lines, the poem was authored by **Urithiran Kannanar**, a contemporary of **Karikala Chola**. It can be dated to the end of the second century CE. The hero of the poem is Tondaiman **Ilandiraiyan**, the ruler of **Kanchipuram** and the legendary ancestor of the **Pallavas of Tondaimandalam**. Apart from eulogizing his patron Ilandiraiyan, the poet gives a comprehensive picture of life in the Tondaimandalam region. In modern terms, this would comprise **Chennai** (the present capital of Tamil Nadu), Kanchipuram, and most parts of Chingleput and North Arcot districts. In particular, the poet describes the highways connecting the interior with the coast, for example, Kanchipuram with Chaturavachaganpattinam. It describes **women** peddling salt and male merchants hawking pepper in bullock carts.

PERUNDEVANAR (fl. fifth century CE). Author of the Tamil *Mahabharatam*. The text was written under **Pallava** patronage. The strong Sanskritic Brahmanical influence on the **Pallava dynasty** (6th to 10th century CE) was responsible for the encouragement extended to Perundevanar to write the *Bharatam*. The author is said to be a native of **Kanchipuram**. It appears that he was a contemporary of the Pallava King Nandivarman III (830–852 CE) since the *Bharatam* eulogizes him as a great patron and king. Perundevanar figures in the Chinnamanur copper plate inscriptions. It is noteworthy that, like other literary figures, such as **Auvaiyar** and **Tiruvalluvar**, Perundevanar also may have been a name sported by more than one poet belonging to different periods in history. For instance, a Perundevanar is also mentioned as author of the **Sangam** poems and contributor to the *Aham Nanuru*, *Kurunthogai*, and *Narrinai* anthologies. It is said that he also composed the invocations for the Sangam classics *Aham Nanuru*, *Puram Nanuru*, *Aingurunuru*, *Kurunthogai*, and *Narrinai*.

Another Perundevanar seems to have flourished in the 12th century and composed the text *Viracholiyam*. It appears that there were at least four poets bearing the name of Perundevanar in different historical periods although the best known of them was the Pallava poet who authored *Bharatam*.

PILLAI, ANANDA RANGA (1709–1761). Ananda Ranga Pillai was agent, merchant, and dubash to the French government in the Tamil country. He is perhaps the first man to write an autobiographical diary running into several volumes. He was born in Ayanavaram in **Chennai** to Tiruvenkatam Pillai, a small-time businessman. Ananda Ranga Pillai migrated to **Pondicherry** in 1716 and loyally served the French in his capacity as interpreter (the name used in the company records is *dubash* literally one who is bilingual) for the next 45 years. He died four days prior to the capture of Pondicherry by the English General Eyre Coote in 1761. His diary is a fascinating record of commerce and politics in 18th-century Tamil country for a period of 24 years, from 1736 until 1760. *See also* EAST INDIA COMPANIES.

PILLAI, C. W. DAMODARAM (1832–1901). A Tamil from Jaffna in **Sri Lanka**, Damodaram Pillai is credited with the recovery and revival of **Tamil** classics. He came to India to take over as editor of *Tinavartamani*, the only existing Tamil periodical. He gained the distinction of being the first graduate of the University of Madras in 1858 and served as a civil servant both in Madras (now **Chennai**) and the princely state of **Pudukkottai**. One of his first literary tasks was to bring out the four sections of the *Tolkappiyam*—(words, substance, prosody, and rhetoric) with commentaries. Among the other classic grammatical works published by him are *Virasoliyam* by Puttamitram in 1881, *Iraiyandar Ahapporul* in 1883, and *Elakkana Vilakkam* by Swaminatha Desikar in 1889. In his later years, he also brought out the late **Sangam** poetic anthology *Kalittogai* and *Sulamani*, one of the five minor epics. *See also* LITERATURE; SANGAM LITERATURE.

PILLAI, MAYURAM VEDANAYAGAM (1826–1889). Judge Vedanayagam Pillai was one of those eminent scholars who can be called a preeminent precursor of the **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam**. Vedanayagam Pillai, a lawyer by profession, strongly advocated the use of **Tamil** in the State courts. He also went on to translate the legal code from English into Tamil. He became the official translator and interpreter in the Madras High Court in 1850. He got his first appointment as a judge in the small town of Tarangampadi. From 1860

to 1873 he served as judge in Mayuram. This long stint in Mayuram enabled him to come into contact with the Tamil scholar **Meenakshisundaram Pillai**. It is noteworthy that throughout his career, he combined his legal practice with his penchant for writing Tamil poetry. A gifted composer of Tamil lyrics, some of his songs in classical Carnatic tunes are quite popular. With Western literature behind him, Vedanayakam Pillai was eager to introduce the new literary form “novel” in Tamil. His claim to fame rests on the fact that he wrote the very first novel in the Tamil language in 1879 called *Pratapa Mudaliyar Charitram* followed by *Suguna Sundari Charitram*. He is also known for his excellent devotional musical compositions in Tamil. *See also* LITERATURE; MUSIC.

PILLAI, MEENAKSHISUNDARAM (1815–1876). The **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam** or the Pure Tamil Movement started by **Maraimalai Adigal** and his daughter **Neelambikai Ammaiyar** had many eminent precursors. The renaissance of **Tamil language** and **literature** in the 19th century is owed to scholars like Meenakshisundaram Pillai and **Mayuram Vedanayagam Pillai**. Beginning his career as a Tamil teacher in Mayiladuturai in **Tanjavur**, he went on to train many students in the craft of literary Tamil. Because of his poverty, he was compelled to do ghost writing and wrote books like *Kuchelopakhyanam* and the *Suta Samhita*. One of his first publications under his own name was *Akhilanda Nayaki Pillai Tamil*, written in 1842. He is remembered for his contribution to Tamil studies as well as **Shiva Agamas**. He was said to have composed approximately 90 *Sthalapuranas* about various **temples**. *Sthalapuranas* constitute one of the 96 minor literary genres of Tamil, which gained prominence after the 16th century and came to be recognized as an important literary text for studying temples in the context of their socio-economic milieu. The celebrated Tamil scholar **U. V. Swaminatha Iyer**, known for his discovery of the **Sangam** classics, became his student at the age of 17. Meenakshisundaram Pillai, who left behind a treasure house of Tamil palm leaf manuscripts, died in poverty in 1876.

PILLAI, NAINA (1889–1934). Naina Pillai was the son of the famous singer Kamachi (Kamakshi) and Dhanakodi. He belonged to the **Isai Vellalar** community and therefore inherited much of his

musical talent. His real name was Subramanya Pillai. He played the **nadaswaram** as well as a number of other **musical instruments**. He was a specialist in pallavi and **Brinda and Mukta** were trained in the art of pallavi singing by him. He was also a great patron of **music** and many musical soirees were held at his home in Kanchipuram. He was awarded the title “Laya Vinyasa Chakravarti” meaning “the king of melody” in recognition of his musical genius.

PILLAI, NAMAKKAL V. RAMALINGAM (1888–1972). Namakkal is the name of a place between Salem and **Madurai** and is famous for its **temple** to Anjaneya (whom Westerners describe as the “monkey god” Hanuman). Here, Ramalingam Pillai was born into a Tuluva **Vellala** community family. His father had served the British loyally as a senior police officer and in recognition of his services the regime offered the post of sub-inspector at Ramalingam, which he refused. Deeply inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, Leo Tolstoy, and **Subramania Bharatiyar**, he plunged into the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu** leading the local resistance in Namakkal and Karur. He preached non-cooperation along with leaders like Sabhapati **Mudaliyar** and Nagaraja **Iyengar**. Pillai also composed a song for the **Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha**, which had the refrain “without sword, without bloodshed, a war is coming.” He played an active role in the Tamil freedom struggle between 1930 and 1947 through his speeches, writings and sketches. In fact, his pen drawings of nationalist leaders won him many awards in independent India.

PILLAI, T. N. RAJARATNAM (1898–1956). It is said that the life of Rajaratnam Pillai is also the story of the evolution of the **Nadaswaram** into a leading wind instrument in “**Carnatic music**.” His mastery over it earned him the title “Emperor of Nadaswaram.” Born in 1898 as Balasubramaniam Pillai, his name was changed to Rajaratnam by his uncle who adopted him. He gave his first performance at the age of 15 and got his first job as a musician with a princely monthly salary of seven rupees. In 1925, his entry into Tamil films was motivated by his friendship with the legendary S. G. Kittappa. His performance in the film *Kavi Kalamegham* in 1940 came in for much praise. It is significant that he played the

Nadasvaram before Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of Independent India, and other leaders who were present on the 15th August 1947 ceremony when India gained freedom from British colonial rule. *See also* SONGS IN TAMIL CINEMA; TAMIL CINEMA.

PILLAIYAR. This deity, also known as Ganesha, is not encountered in the **Sangam** period, except in the writings of the woman saint-poet **Auvaaiyar**, who may, however, have been quite different from the Sangam Auvaaiyar because the poetry of the latter is rooted in material rather than religious or spiritual concerns. The deity, who as Ganesha is central to the Brahmanical pantheon, may have emerged in the Tamil country as a result of the process of Sanskritization, which can be said to have commenced roughly in the late Sangam or post-Sangam era. Pillaiyar is identified as the child of Parvati and according to mythological traditions, **Shiva** cut off his head in a fit of anger but repented his action and restored his son to life with the head of an elephant. Therefore, Pillaiyar is represented with an elephant head complete with trunk and massive ears but with a human body. He is regarded as the foremost of the gods because no worship or sacrifice can be commenced without propitiating Pillaiyar since he is *Vignavina*, literally “the remover of obstacles.” Today, this deity is central to Tamil religious beliefs and virtually every banyan tree in the Tamil country may be seen to have a tiny shrine to Pillaiyar under its shade because this tree is also considered sacred to him. *See also* MURUGAN; RELIGION.

POIKKAL KUDIRAI ATTAM. Poikkal Kudirai is a pseudo horse show. Earliest references seem to go back to the *Silappadikaram*, though as a regular dance or sport form, it is dated back to the **Chola** period. The dummy horse is made of straw, cardboard/bamboo strips, and even paper. The dancers are both male and female and, in fact, often perform in pairs. The dancer gets inside the dummy horse by putting his legs through two holes making it appear as if he/she is riding horseback. Wooden stilts are attached to the dancers’ feet and they usually **dance** to folk tunes and folk rhythms. *See also* KAVADI FESTIVAL.

PONDICHERY (PUDUCHERI). Pondicherry came into existence as a union territory in 1963 and its capital is Pondicherry city. A former French colony, this tiny region carries large elements of French culture both in its language preferences and in its cuisine. The Union Territory of Pondicherry consists of four small unconnected districts: Pondicherry, Karaikkal, and Yanam on the Bay of Bengal coast, and Mahe on the Arabian Sea coast. Pondicherry and Karaikal are by far the larger ones, and are both enclaves of Tamil Nadu. Yanam and Mahé are enclaves of Andhra Pradesh and Kerala respectively. The territory has a total area of 492 km. **Tamil** is one of the official languages of Pondicherry.

The importance of Pondicherry to the history of ancient Tamilaham goes back to the early centuries of the **Christian** era. The *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, an anonymous text dating back to the second century CE, mentions a marketplace named Poduke, which is most probably **Arikamedu**, about two miles from the modern Pondicherry. Archaeological excavations between 1944 and 1949 showed that it was “a trading station for the enormous commercial traffic between the **Sangam** Tamils and Rome.”

The French **East India Company** set up a trading center at Pondicherry in 1673. This outpost eventually became the chief French settlement in India. Dutch and British trading companies also wanted to control Pondicherry. The Dutch captured Pondicherry in 1693 but returned it to France in 1699. The Pondicherry, Mahe, Yanam, Karaikkal, and Chandernagar remained a part of French India until 1954. Pondicherry still has a large number of Tamil residents with French passports. Apart from the monuments pertaining to the French Period, there is the French Consulate in Pondicherry, the French Institute of Pondicherry and the Pondicherry Centre of the École Française d’Extrême-Orient. Today Pondicherry is a major site of religious tourism because of the Arobindo Ashram located in Auroville, a major center of philosophical and spiritual activities.

POPE, G. U. (1820–1908). A **Christian** missionary who came to Tirunelveli in the Tamil country for proselytization and conversion, Pope like **Robert Caldwell** ended up serving the Tamils for 60 years. He became one of the greatest votaries of **Tamil language** and culture,

earning for him the title “Pope Iyer.” It is noteworthy that **Iyer** is a term of address used only for **Brahmins**. Equally well versed in Latin, Greek, and Tamil, Pope translated major Tamil texts with his own critical commentary. Among these his best-known works are the translation of the *Tirukkural* and *Naladiyar*, both didactic texts of the late **Sangam** age. Pope in fact perceived similarities between Christian teachings and the aphorisms of the *Tirukkural*. He believes that **Tiruvalluvar** who lived in Mylapur may have come under the influence of early Christians who followed St. Thomas into this region (San Thome is another name for Mylapur). His magnum opus was the translation of the 10th-century Tamil religious text *Tiruvachagam*, which was published in his 80th year. He wrote his own epitaph in 1900 in a letter to his friend J. M. Nallasami Pillai: “Whenever I die ‘A Student of Tamil’ will be inscribed on my monument.”

PORUNARATRUPPADAI. The poem, one of the *Pathupattu*, is composed in praise of the King **Karikala Cholan**. It is said that a bard who was richly rewarded by the king requested the celebrated poet Mudathama Kanniyar to compose a text in the king’s honor. The composition consists of 248 lines in the *ahaval* and *vanji* meters. Besides eulogizing Karikala, it also provides thick descriptions of the **Cholamandalam**. This text provides valuable information on handloom weaving in the pre-**Christian** and early Christian era of the **Sangam** age. *See also* LITERATURE.

PRAKASAM, T. (1872–1957). Popularly known as “Andhra Kesari,” Tenguturi Prakasam was born at Kanuparthi village in Ongole in Andhra Pradesh. His claim to fame in Tamil history lies in the fact that he was the first chief minister of the Madras State. In his initial years, he lived in Andhra Pradesh and having obtained his degree in Law, Prakasam began practicing in Rajamundry but later moved to Madras (present-day **Chennai**). He went on to become a key figure in Madras politics and the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**. Giving up his legal practice, he took to the Gandhian path of non-cooperation, actively participating in the nationwide protest against the Simon Commission. Prakasam was the founder of the patriotic daily *Svarajya* in 1921. When the Congress came to power in 1937 under the leadership of **C. Rajagopalachari**, Prakasam became the revenue

minister. He headed the Zamindari Abolition Committee and recommended the principle of “land to the tiller.” In 1946, Prakasam became chief minister of the composite Madras State. During his tenure of 13 months he popularized cooperatives, the use of *charkha* or spinning wheel as a symbol of Indian nationalism, and schemes for Harijan (scheduled castes) upliftment. Scholars have pointed out that, in the pre-independence era, Prakasam was referred to as “premier” rather than as chief minister. It was only after the new Indian constitution came into force in 1950 that P. S. Kumaraswami Raja came to be addressed as chief minister. It is noteworthy that when the question of carving out linguistic States came up in 1949 the interests of the Telugus was represented by T. Prakasam, earning him the name “Andhra Kesari.”

PUDUKKOTTAI. Pudukkottai, located 58 km from **Tiruchirapalli**, was a major state under the Sethupathis of Ramnad and is an area of considerable historic significance. The numerous dolmens, stone circles, and other forms of **megalithic** burials indicate the antiquity of this region dating back to prehistoric and protohistorical times. This tract is also mentioned in the **Sangam** classics. The finding of major hordes of gold and silver coins belonging to the Roman emperors up to the reign of Constantine, numbering nearly 500 in each horde, proves the economic and commercial importance of this region during the ancient Greco-Roman trade with India. Narthamalai in its vicinity is also a megalithic site besides being the site of probably the oldest stone **temples** in South India, built by the Muttaraiyars. Pudukkottai was also a major seat of the Tamil opposition to the British imperial rule. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

PULAYA. The Pulayas derive their name from the Tamil word *pula* meaning pollution and were regarded historically as an “untouchable **caste**” along with the **Paraiyar**. Both communities are associated with funerary rites and therefore regarded as polluting. The community claims its origin from the epic period and believes that the Pulaya community split into two and fought on the side of the Kauravas as well as the Pandavas during the great *Mahabharata* war. The Pulayan of the Malayalam country who are predominantly found in South Malabar and Cochin, are called *Thanda Pulaya*. Interestingly,

one of the lineage myths of the Pulaya community is matrilineal and traces their origin to Kundotti, a woman belonging to the Kundan group of the Pulaya of Chirakkal who, says the myth, was a professional midwife. Today, the Pulaya are also a part of the **Adi Dravida** movement and have emerged as local leaders and members of the *Panchayats* (village-level self-government bodies). *See also* CHAKKILIYAN; PALLAR.

PURAM NANURU. Like the *Aham Nanuru*, this is a poetic anthology of 400 poems and is regarded among the finest literary collections of the **Sangam** age. The Sangam poet **Perundevanar** has composed the invocation prayer. The literary mood of the *Puram Nanuru* is “the landscape of the exterior” consisting mainly of themes of war and diplomacy. **Auvaiyar**, the woman bard has sung extensively on her patron Adiyaman while **Kapilar** has composed panegyrics on King **Pari**. This anthology is invaluable as a historical source since it gives the most detailed account of the **Chera**, **Chola**, and **Pandya** kings of the Sangam age and the many minor chieftaincies. *See also* LITERATURE.

PUTHIYA TAMIZHAGAM. The Puthiya Tamizhagam was founded by the radical politician Dr. **K. Krishnaswamy** in 1997. The party emerged on the plank of a “New Deal” for the Tamil dalits, especially in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. The party, like the Bahujana Samaj Party in the North, hopes to cut into the dalit vote banks of the major parties like the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** and **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)**. However, the party has not been able to mobilize the support of parties like the Dalit Panthers or the John Pandiyan group, which also seek and claim that they have a strong dalit base. Krishnaswamy attributed his meteoric rise in Tamil politics to the fact that he had been successful in bringing up the “submerged classes” factor everywhere, especially in **Andipatti**. Elected thrice from Ottapidaram, a reserved seat in Tuticorin district, Krishnaswamy switched to Andipatti to battle with **J. Jayalalitha**, the AIADMK Supremo in 2002 only to lose to her. Puthiya Tamizhagam has been vociferous in its support of the Liberation Tigers for Tamil Eelam (LTTE). *See also* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT; PATTALI MAKKAL KATCHI.

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RADHAKRISHNAN, SARVEPALLI Dr. (1888–1975). Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the second president of the Indian Republic, was born on 5 September 1888 in Tirutani, a well-known religious center in the erstwhile Madras State. He was the second son of Veera Samayya, a tehsildar in a zamindari. Sarvepalli Gopal, the only son of Radhakrishnan and well-known biographer-historian has written the life of his eminent father. He comments that he grew up in a house of genteel poverty. As usual in those days, Radhakrishnan was married to Sivakami amma in 1906, at the age of 18 while he was still a student. The marriage lasted half a century until her death in 1956.

It is interesting that Radhakrishnan's parents, though orthodox, thought it fit to send their beloved son to Christian missionary schools and colleges, Lutheran Mission School, Tirupathi (1896–1900), Woohris College, Vellore (1900–1904), and Madras Christian College (1904–1908). Radhakrishnan began his career as a teacher and it is important to note that throughout India his birthday is celebrated as "Teachers Day." His academic career spanned a fairly long period. He was Lecturer and then Assistant Professor of Philosophy in the Presidency College in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) for five years, Professor of Philosophy, Mysore University (1918–1921), King George V Professor of Philosophy, Calcutta University (1921–1931) and (1937–1944). In 1931 he became vice-chancellor of the Andhra University and was made Spaulding Professor of Eastern Religion and Ethics at Oxford University from 1932 to 1953 (the first Indian to be so appointed). He was made vice-chancellor of the Banaras Hindu University in 1942. Radhakrishnan was, and still is, one of the most celebrated writers of the present generation. His works are many and varied ranging from philosophy and **education** to culture. His first book, *The Ethics of the Vedanta and Its Material Presupposition*, published in 1908, at the age of 20, established his fame as a philosophical thinker. All his later works like *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore* (1918), *Idealistic View of Life* (1932), *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, *Reign of Philosophy in Contemporary Thought*, *Kalki or The Future of Civilization*, *Indian Philosophy* (2 vols.), are still widely read by scholars and laymen. In 1952 the Library of Living Philosophers, an Institute of worldwide repute, brought out a massive

volume on *The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan*, devoted wholly to a critical appreciation of his philosophical doctrines.

In the 1940s he gradually commenced his career in Indian politics. Among the political posts held by him may be specially mentioned his assignment as Ambassador and minister-plenipotentiary to the USSR between 1949 and 1952. As a foremost philosopher-statesman Radhakrishnan was chosen as the Vice-President of India in 1952, an office he held for two consecutive terms from 1952 to 1956 and again from 1957 to 1962. He became the President of India in 1962 and held the office with distinction till 1967. *See also* ABDUL KALAM, A. P. J. Dr; VENKATARAMAN, R.

RADIO. Radio transmission in the Tamil country followed closely upon the heels of the first radio transmission at Pittsburgh in America in 1920. In 1924, one C. V. Krishnaswami **Chetty** began the “Madras Presidency Radio Club,” which was taken over by the government in 1927. However, the Madras (present-day **Chennai**) station of the All India Radio commenced officially only in 1938. The **Tiruchirapalli** station commenced transmission the same year. During the post-independence era, radio stations came up in the 1960s at Tirunelveli (1963), **Coimbatore** (1966), etc. 60% of airtime was used in transmitting classical **Carnatic music** and the rest of the time was used for imparting **education**. From 1959 onward, both Delhi and Madras began transmitting programs for farmers. It was only in the 1970s that sports events found a place in radio service. The special entertainment channel called *Vividh Bharati* was launched across India in 1957 and the transmission began to broadcast commercials from 1967 onward. Today, the Chennai radio broadcast time is shared in a proportion of: music 40%; news 20%; radio talks 20%; special broadcast for farmers, **women** and children 15%, and miscellaneous 5%. This pattern prevails more or less throughout Tamil Nadu. It is noteworthy that the All India Radio’s External Service Division broadcasts programs in Tamil to cater to the **Tamil diaspora** with transmissions catering to **Tamils in Singapore, Malaysia, Myanmar**, Indonesia, England, and the United States of America, as well as the African and Australian continent. Similarly many foreign countries have set aside airtime for the Tamils such as the British Broadcasting Corporation’s *Tamil Osai*, Voice of America’s *Tamil Nigazhchi* and Moscow’s *Tamil Sevai*, etc. *See also* TELEVISION.

RAGHAVAN, V. (1908–1990). A renowned Indologist and **musicologist**, Raghavan hails from Tiruvarur in **Tanjavur**, renowned as the place of the musical trinity. He obtained his educational degrees from the Presidency College in Madras. Raghavan was actively involved in the recovery of ancient palm leaf manuscripts relating to music especially of **Thyagaraja**'s compositions. He also played a key role in the growth of the **Madras Music Academy**.

RAHMAN, A. R. (1966–). At the comparatively young age of 35, Alla Rakha Rahman has gained international acclaim as a musical prodigy. Beginning his musical career as assistant composer under the tutelage of **Ilayaraja**, he has rapidly overshadowed the great master. Rahman began his cinematic career with Mani Ratnam's film *Roja* (1992) and went on to also write the musical score for Ameer Khan's film *Lagaan* that was nominated for the Oscar in 2002. *See also* MUSIC; SONGS IN TAMIL CINEMA; TAMIL CINEMA.

RAINFALL. Tamil Nadu has a tropical climate with temperatures particularly high from January to June but not rising above 44 degree Celsius or falling below a minimum of 18 degrees Celsius. The region receives rain during both the southwest monsoon lasting from June to September, and the northeast monsoon, from October to December. The southwest monsoon brings only about 25 cm of rain—the monsoon clouds precipitating most of their water in Kerala, west of the Western Ghats. The northeast monsoon precipitates as much as 75–100 cm of rain every year. The monsoon is most irregular. Three-quarters of the State's territory lies in the rain-shadow of the Western Ghats and precipitation in these semi arid areas is only 50 cm to 100 cm. Rainfall is maximum in the two districts of the **Nilgiris** and **Kanyakumari**, where it ranges between 145 to 190 cm. In terms of annual rainfall the more fortunate districts are **Tanjavur**, South Arcot, Chingleput, and North Arcot, which get fairly well distributed rain from both monsoons.

It is noteworthy that because of lack of awareness about rain harvesting, even these areas have been going through severe drought conditions during the last decade. The districts that get less than average rainfall are Tirunelveli, **Coimbatore**, **Tiruchirapalli**, and Ramnathapuram. Purchase of water has become a familiar sight in Tamil Nadu and the situation is particularly grim in metropolitan

cities like **Chennai** and Coimbatore, where unauthorized and indiscriminate drawing of groundwater has led to the collapse of the water supply system.

RAJAGOPALACHARI, C. (1878–1975). Widely known as Rajaji, he was the first chief minister of Madras Presidency. Born in 1878 at Osur in Dharmapuri district into an orthodox **Brahmin** family, he rose to become a leading lawyer of Madras (present-day **Chennai**). He married Alamelu Mangammal and had five children. Rajaji became close to Mahatma Gandhi when he joined the Indian National Congress in 1917. Their political and personal lives interlinked when Rajaji's daughter Lakshmi married Gandhi's son Devadas. His grandchildren Ramachandra Gandhi, Gopal Gandhi, and Rajmohan Gandhi have all become renowned in their own field whether it is pedagogy, politics or **literature**.

In 1937, Rajaji headed the Congress-led government in Madras. In post-independence India, he served as governor-general between 1948 and 1950. In 1952, he served as the chief minister of Madras State. Rajaji broke away from the Congress due to his growing political differences with Jawaharlal Nehru (the first prime minister of India) and formed the Svatantira Party in 1959. The nation's highest award the "Bharat Ratna" has been conferred on Rajaji in recognition of his contributions to Tamil politics and social reform. Apart from his commitment to politics, Rajaji also wrote commentaries on religious traditions. His recounting of the Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, are considered classics, while his short stories have won much acclaim. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

RAJAM KRISHNAN (1925–). She is an eminent author of many Tamil novels that are genuine and hard-hitting pictures of life in different parts of the country. When she writes about the life of a certain people, she makes sure of gaining first-hand knowledge by observing them at close quarters. Her novels are vigorous pleas for the immediate emancipation of the oppressed as well as for the cause of **women**. Rajam's *Verukku Nir* (Water for the Roots, 1972) won her the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1973. The novel's brilliance lies in its realistic and objective portrayal of the socio-political realities of India in the late 1960s. *See also* LITERATURE.

RAJNIKANT (1950–). Born Shivajirao Gaikwad in Bangalore, this film star began his career as a bus conductor. K. Balachander's film *Apoorva Ragangal* brought him recognition and the actor who adopted the screen name Rajnikant went on to become a megastar in the 1980s and 1990s. He exploded on the Tamil screen with his macho looks and nervous energy, becoming the icon of the restless 1990s. While known primarily as a Tamil matinee idol, Rajnikant also acted in films in other languages including Hindi. Despite his avoidance of any political position, Rajnikant has been a virtual king-maker in Tamil politics. His film *Muthu* (1995) whipped up opposition to the **J. Jayalalitha-led All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** regime ensuring its defeat and the return of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** under **Karunanidhi**. Many Tamils see in Rajnikant the logical heir to the **M. G. Ramachandran (MGR)** mantle, probably as the future chief minister of Tamil Nadu although Rajnikant protests that he has no political ambitions. *See also* CINEMA.

RAMACHANDRAN, M. G. (MGR) (1917–1987). Born Marudur Gopala Menon Ramachandran, this versatile actor became a Prince of Hearts for the Tamils as MGR. His cinematic image as the friend of the poor catapulted him into chief ministership in 1977, an office he held again and again.

MGR made his screen debut in 1936 in Ellis Duncan's film *Sati Leelavati*. Like **Sivaji Ganesan** he was initially drawn to the political ideology of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** and joined the party in 1953. He worked closely with **M. Karunanidhi**, who later became his arch rival in politics and in films. He acted in *Manthri Kumari* scripted by M. Karunanidhi in 1950. He was with the DMK from 1953 to 1970 and played a major role in projecting the party ideology in his films. He was a member of the Madras Legislative Council between 1962 and 1964 and was member of the Legislative Assembly in 1967 riding on the DMK popularity wave. In 1972, he made a dramatic break with the DMK to launch his own party, the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** in 1977. He used his charismatic screen image to defeat the DMK and won the State elections in an alliance with the Congress (I). He became chief minister in 1977 and remained in power

for three consecutive terms. His populist film fantasies in which he played the roles of poor peasant, railway porter, and rickshaw puller ensured for him a demi-god status among the Tamils rivalled only by **Sivaji Ganesan**. See also TAMIL CINEMA.

RAMALINGA ADIGAL (1823–1877). This great saint and devotee of **Shiva** is better known as Vallalar or Adigalar. His celebrated composition is called *Tiruarutpa*. He was born to Ramaiah Pillai and Chinnammai in the village of Marudur in the vicinity of the famous **Temple of Nataraja** at Chidambaram where Shiva as Nataraja is engaged in his cosmic dance. Ramalinga Adigal worshipped god as his father and represented himself as his son. He is said to have invited to a debate, members of the Brahmo Samaj, a reformist organization founded by Raja Rammohan Roy of Bengal at a place called Tirupapuliur, 20 km from **Pondicherry**. He successfully challenged their atheistic reformist notions by making a powerful plea for the worship of god with form. He is said to have disappeared in his physical body through his yogic powers in 1877.

RAMAN, C. V. (1888–1970). Chandrasekhar Venkata Raman, popularly known as C. V. Raman, was born in **Tiruchirapalli**, in Tamil Nadu on 7 November 1888. He was the second child of Chandrasekhar **Iyer** and Parvathi Ammal. His father was a professor of mathematics. At an early age, Raman moved to the city of Visakhapatnam, in the present-day State of Andhra Pradesh, where his father accepted a position at the Mrs. A. V. N. College. Raman's academic brilliance was established at a very young age. At the age of 11, he finished his secondary school education and entered Mrs. A. V. N. College and two years later moved to the prestigious Presidency College in Madras (present-day **Chennai**). When he was 15, he finished at the head of the class to receive B.A. with honors in Physics and English. During that time students who did well academically were typically sent abroad (England) for further studies. Because of Raman's poor health he was not allowed to go abroad and he continued his studies at the Presidency College. In 1907, barely 17, Raman again graduated at the top of his class and received his M.A. with honors. In the same year he married Lokasundari.

At the time of Raman's graduation, there were few opportunities for scientists in India. This forced Raman to accept a position with the Indian Civil Services as an assistant accountant general in Calcutta (present-day Kolkata). While there, he was able to sustain his interest in science by working, in his spare time, in the laboratories of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science. He studied the physics of stringed **musical instruments** and Indian drums. In 1917, with his scientific standing established in India, Raman was offered the position of Sir Taraknath Palit professorship of physics at Calcutta University, where he stayed for the next 15 years. During his tenure there, he received worldwide recognition for his work in optics and scattering of light. He was elected to the Royal Society of London in 1924 and the British knighted him in 1929. The following year he was honored with the prestigious Hughes medal from the Royal Society. In 1930, for the first time in its history, an Indian scholar, educated entirely in India, received the highest honor in science, the Nobel Prize in Physics. In 1934, Raman became the Director of the newly established Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, where two years later he continued as a professor of physics. In 1947, he was appointed as the first National Professor by the new government of Independent India. He retired from the Indian Institute of Science in 1948 and a year later established the Raman Research Institute in Bangalore, served as its director and remained active there until his death on 21 November 1970. Raman was honored with the highest civilian award, the "Bharat Ratna" (Jewel of India) by the Government of India. *See also* CHANDRASEKHAR, SUBRAMANIAN.

RAMANA MAHARSHI (1879–1950). Born in 1879 in the village of Tiruchchuzhi in **Madurai**, Venkataraman evolved into one of the greatest spiritual seers of India. After an uneventful boyhood Venkataraman in his 16th year suddenly heard the name "Arunachala," the Sanskrit name for **Tiruvannamalai**, and the experience transformed his life. Tiruvannamalai is a mountain chain in the center of Tamil Nadu, a four-hour journey by bus from Madras (present-day **Chennai**). The Arunachala mountains, are said to be spiritually charged and people believe that material and spiritual benefits accrue

by circumambulating the hill, which, in effect, meant the entire hill town of Tiruvannamalai. Venkataraman came to Tiruvannamalai in 1896 and stayed there until his passing away in 1950 due to cancer. It was his disciple Ganapati Muni who bestowed on him the title “Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi.” Ramana Maharshi drew to his ashram or hermitage people of all races, religions, and creeds. His path of self-enquiry—“Who am I”—transcended the material world of names and forms since the universal “I” is boundless and all pervasive. In April 1950, Ramana Maharshi became absorbed into Arunachala Shiva. Even after his passing away, the ashram is vibrant and has developed as a great center of multi-faith dialogue. *See also* RELIGION; TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA.

RAMANATHAN, M. D. (1923–1984). A graduate in physics, Ramanathan was yet another musician who came from Palakkad. He belonged to the village of Manjapara known for its talented *vainikas* (musicians who specialized in the playing of the veenai instrument). Ramanathan’s low and apparently “unmusical” voice led his more dashing contemporaries to underrate his musical genius. It was fortunate that Varadachariyar, on whom the Maharaja of Mysore conferred the title “Tiger” because of the power of his **music**, should have recognized Ramanathan’s talent and accepted him as his disciple. One major feature of his unique style was that it was the personification of leisure and he could expound just one raga for a full one hour. Like **Palakkad K. V. Narayanaswami**, Ramanathan’s music also had a deeply spiritual quality. His illustrious contemporary **Chemmangudi Srinivasa Iyer** said of him, “Ramanathan does not sing for you or me. He sings for himself as an offering to God.” M. D. Ramanathan was a great favorite of the Maharani of Travancore State Paravati Bai and it is said that she relaxed the rigid rules of the palace to enable this musician to sing as long as he liked. Unfortunately the Music Academy chose to ignore his claim to excellence and failed to award him with the coveted *Sangeetha Kalandhi* title. But Ramanathan was perhaps the only musician to be honored with a poem written in his praise. The author of the poem was K. Satchidanandan, a leading Malayalam/English poet and secretary of the prestigious Sahitya Academy, the highest literary body in India.

RAMANUJACHARYA (ca. 1017–1137). Ramanuja was born in Sriperumbudur located 30 km southwest of Madras (present-day **Chennai**). The presiding deity of Sriperumbudur is Sri Adikesava Perumal, a manifestation of **Vishnu**. Ramanuja's father was a pious **Brahmin** named Asuri Kesavacharya and his mother was Kantimati, sister of the Vaishnavite teacher Sri Sailapurna. Ramanujacharya is the founder of the Vaishnava philosophical tradition of the South and is known for his philosophy of qualified monism called *Visishtadvaita Vedanta*. His philosophical foundations were laid out in the commentary on the *Brahmasutra* called *Sri Bhashya*. The texts of Vedanta have, in the main, given birth to two sub-systems of philosophy, namely the Non-dualism or Monism of **Shankaracharya** and the Theism of Ramanuja, defined as Qualified Monism. According to the Non-dualist, *Brahman* or Pure Consciousness is the only Reality—the universe of names and forms is unreal, and man, in his true essence, is one with *Brahman*. The Theist School led by Ramanujacharya accepts a Personal God as Ultimate Reality. He is related to the universe and embodied souls in varying degrees. According to Ramanuja, the upholder of *Visistadvaita*, or Qualified Non-dualism, the Reality is *Brahman*, but the individual souls and the universe are also real, being parts of *Brahman* or modes of His manifestation. *Brahman*, with the universe and the individual souls, constitutes the whole of Reality. This is illustrated by the philosophers of this school with the metaphor of the pomegranate fruit. The seeds are the living souls and the rind is the universe. One cannot think of the fruit without the seeds and the rind. He also uses the analogy of the reflection of the Sun in different vessels and appearing as many suns. Following the death of Ramanujacharya, a schism occurred among his followers resulting in the division of the school of Vaishnavism into the *Tenkalai* founded by **Manavala Mamuni** and the *Vadakalai* founded by **Vedanta Desika**. See also IYENGAR; RELIGION.

RAMANUJAN, SRINIVASA (1887–1920). Srinivasa Ramanujan was born in a poor Tamil **Brahmin** family in the town of Kumbakonam. He attended school there and was an average student. While in school he came across a book *A Synopsis of Elementary Results in Pure and Applied Mathematics* by George Carr. This book on integrals, infinite

series, and other mathematical entities found in analysis left a lasting impression on Ramanujan. It virtually determined his mathematical style in his later years. He would go on to write mathematics as a string of results without proof or with the barest outline of a proof. An early marriage, as was usual at those times, led to a frantic search for a job to earn an income. He became a clerk in the Madras Port Trust with the help of well-wishers. He spent all his time with his head over a slate working with problems in number theory that interested him. Ramanujan kept showing his results to various people who he thought would be interested or would help him get a job that would give him a lot of time to do mathematics. He wrote to a couple of well-known British mathematicians giving a list of some of the results he had obtained. They ignored him except for one crucial response, a letter that was to turn the tide of his life. This was the letter he wrote to one of the most distinguished English mathematicians of the time—a person who had done a lot of work on number theory—G. H. Hardy. Hardy arranged for Ramanujan to come to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he and Ramanujan met almost daily discussing mathematics for about three years. Ramanujan died shortly after at the age of 33. The mathematical theories formulated by Ramanujan are still being worked on not only in Cambridge but also virtually all over the world. Ramanujan today is acknowledged to be a mathematical genius of all times.

RAMDOSS, ANBUMANI Dr. (1939–). Dr. Ramdoss, addressed respectfully by his followers as “Ayya,” is considered the founder of the **Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK)**. PMK has become a powerful party in the current political scenario of Tamil Nadu. Ramdoss, a doctor by training and the current Union minister for health and family welfare, became closely involved with the **Vanniyar Sangam**, an association of the Vanniyar **caste**, who dominate in the regions of Vellore, Cuddalore, **Tiruchirapalli**, Salem, and **Tanjavur** districts. Vanniyars are also called Padayachi, Gounder, and Nayak in Tamil Nadu. Dr. Ramdoss used his leadership of the Vanniyar Sangam to enter politics and founded the political party in the mid-1990s. He proclaimed himself the leader of all downtrodden communities but especially the Vanniyar thereby making heavy inroads into the lower caste “vote banks” of dominant political parties like the **Dravida Munnetara Kazhagam**

(**DMK**) and the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetara Kazhagam (AIADMK)**. The agitation tactics of Ramdoss lies in roadblocks and tree barricades on highways in imitation of the “Barricaders” of the French Revolution. Ramdoss is one of the few politicians to come out openly in support of the Liberation Tigers for Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who constitute a revolutionary terrorist group in Sri Lanka, which has for a long time been waging a struggle for Tamil independence. In the 1996 general elections, Dr. Ramdoss formed an alliance with the DMK but withdrew from the electoral alliance over the issue of seat sharing. His party has four seats in the 2005 assembly, which have come from Vanniyar-dominated constituencies. The PMK has suffered recently due to the desertion from its ranks of veteran politicians Panruti Ramachandran and V. Krishnamoorthy. Despite its marginal presence in the legislative assembly, the party and its leader Dr. Ramdoss have maintained a high profile because of their volatile political stances and dramatic styles of political agitation. *See also* NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT; RESERVATIONS.

RAMESHWARAM. A small island in the Gulf of Mannar, this constitutes the vital bridge between India and **Sri Lanka**. Rameshwaram is considered a most holy city because Sri Rama the divine hero of the epic *Ramayana* halted here after defeating Ravana and humbling Sri Lanka. It is said that he performed penance before the Sivalinga here because he had incurred great sin by killing Ravana who was said to be a **Brahmin**. The Ramanathaswami **temple** is renowned for its magnificent corridors and sculptured pillars. Hindus believe that one must visit Rameshwaram at least once in one’s lifetime. It is believed that one’s pilgrimage circuit is complete only if the water from the sacred River Ganges at Varanasi is used for the worship of **Shiva** at Rameshwaram.

RASAM. A souplike preparation made out of lentil. Tamarind, tomatoes, or lemon can be used to get the slightly sour taste. The condiments used are somewhat similar to those used in preparing **Sambar**. Rasam made with pepper called “*Mulagurasam*” has passed into the English vocabulary and figures in the Hobson-Jobson Dictionary as well as the Oxford English Dictionary as “Mulligatawany” soup. *See also* CUISINE.

REDDY, MUTHULAKSHMI Dr. (1886–1968). Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy belonged to the former **Pudukkottai** State. Her father Narayanasamy Ayyar was the grandfather of celebrated cinema actor **Gemini Ganesan**, and the principal of H. H. The Rajah's College in Pudukkottai town. Her mother Chandrammal belonged to the **Devadasi** community and was married to him as his second wife. **Music** bonded the couple. Muthulakshmi was a classmate of **Sathyamoorthy** and his rival in the Madras Assembly. She was married to Sundar Reddy, a surgeon. As the first **woman** to be elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly, she played a major role in the passage of the Devadasi Bill putting an end to the Devadasi system that was seen as the cause of the degradation of women. Her autobiography throws invaluable light on the role of women in the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**.

RELIGION. The earliest evidence of Tamil religious beliefs comes from the *Tolkappiyam* and the entire corpus of **Sangam literature**. Each of the Sangam **tinai** was represented by a deity—Kurinji by Seyon or **Murugan**, Mullai by **Mayon** or **Vishnu** also referred to as Mal, Marudam by **Senon** called Indra in the Sanskritic pantheon, Neydal by **Kadalon**, and Palai by **Korravai**. One of the earliest devotional tracts written during this period was the *Tirumurugattrupadai* of **Nakkirar**. Religion in the Sangam age was by and large rooted in material concerns and was unconcerned with larger metaphysical issues. Murugan exemplifies the spirit of the Sangam age, which was dominated by the twin discourses of love and war. The cult of Murugan and that of Korravai (who becomes his mother Parvati in the Sanskritic pantheon) indicates the broad contours of spirituality in the Sangam age. The cult of Murugan in fact can be said to go back to the **megalithic** period since megaliths have yielded spear-like objects, which is a symbol of Murugan. The question has been raised whether there were **temples** during the Sangam age. There are references to *poduyil* or *ambalam* located usually in the center of the village. However these did not house a deity but a stone or a wooden stump to which people offered worship. This may therefore be described as a proto-temple structure. The classical form of the temple was to evolve from the seventh century onwards with the **Pallava**, **Chola**, and **Pandya** dynasties.

The religion of the early Dravidians was, by and large, an animistic one in which divine forces were conceived of as vested in objects. The worship of *nadukal* or hero stones exemplifies this belief in animism. *Nadukal* were built in memory of kings or commoners who had saved their land from cattle raids. Later such memorial stones were also built for chaste women who had become deified. The *nadukal* to **Kannagi**, which eventually became a shrine, is the best example of a sati stone. Worship of the Sangam Tamils was born out of fear and the worship of **Ananku** is the best example of this. The worship with flowers, toddy (liquor distilled at home from old rice or fruits), and peacock feathers of the Ananku in which power, essentially destructive, was supposed to reside, is a hallmark of early Tamil culture. Possession was another feature of early Tamil religion and continues to occupy a key place in their beliefs. In Tamil **literature**, this was called *veriyattam*. It was essentially **women** who became possessed by some spirit, usually by Murugan, and danced in the state of possession. The Velatti and Pulatti (female for **Pulaya**) women particularly are mentioned in the *Puram Nanuru* as performers of the *veriyattam*. One of the verses from the *Puram Nanuru* refers to “a bull that dances and frolics like a Pulatti possessed by Murugan.” They also acted as diviners and priestesses who could foretell the future.

Two major religions made their presence in the Tamil country at this time—Buddhism and Jainism. The late Sangam period was dominated by these heterodox sects. The *Silappadikaram* was a Jain text authored by **Ilango Adigal** while *Manimekalai* was written by Sittalai Sattanar who was probably a Buddhist. The region of **Kanchipuram** grew into a famous Buddhist center by the fifth century CE. According to Hiuen Tsang, who visited the court of Narasimha Pallava of Kanchipuram in the seventh century, the region boasted of 100 Buddhist monasteries and over 10,000 monks. The great Buddhist scholar Buddhadatta refers to Kanchipuram, Puhar (**Kaveripumpattinam**) and **Madurai** as the three great centers of Buddhist religion. Tiruparuttikunram in the same region has a number of Jain religious relics. Buddhist and Jain caves bearing inscriptions in Tamil Brahmi have been found from many places in Madurai, **Pudukkottai**, and Ramanathapuram and particularly Azhagarmalai and Vallimalai. Until the seventh–eighth centuries, there were strong clashes between Buddhism and Jainism on the one hand and Saivism and Vaishnavism on

the other, particularly in regions like Kanchipuram. King **Mahendra Pallava**'s *Mattavilasa Prahasana* was a hard-hitting satirical play on the lax ways of the Buddhist monks. Two literary texts dating back roughly to the fifth–sixth centuries, which portray the deep-rooted religious tensions and rivalries, are *Neelakesi* of the Jains and *Kundalakesi* of the Buddhists. Jainism seems to have enjoyed preponderance over Buddhism in both Tamil Nadu and Andhra. However, in course of time, probably by the eighth–ninth centuries, both these religions ceased to have any relevance for the Tamil country. Buddhism seems to have faded out from the religious landscape of the Tamils while Jainism was gradually absorbed into Vaishnavism and Saivism.

The period from the seventh century onward was the period of the great **Bhagavata movement**. The various devotional streams of the Bhagavata movement within Tamil Nadu had many different strands to it. These were completely disparate, such as the orthodox devotional stream of Vadagalai Vaishnavism, the comparatively liberal Tegalai Vaishnavism, the orthodox Saivism of **Shankaracharya**, as opposed to the radical Siddha philosophy and the tantric cults of the Kapalikas, Kalamukhas (folk forms of **Shiva** worship), and Shaktas (worshippers of the goddess Parvati usually within the prescribed rules of tantricism). Tantricism believes in reaching godhead through the performance of esoteric rituals that involved use of skulls as sacred vessels, sex, liquor, and the agency of women.

The **Nayanar** and **Alvar** saints represented various theological positions within the Bhagavata movement, which represented the popular phase of Hinduism. The umbrella term of Hinduism is only a descriptive category and not an analytical one since the term had no existence within the Tamil (in fact all India) cultural fabric till the **Muslims** used it as a term to describe the religion of the people. What existed were sectarian movements like Vaishnavism and Saivism, which were further divided into distinct ideological groups. They were united in their opposition to the heterodox faiths but antagonistic towards, each other at other times, which can therefore be treated as the secondary contradiction in medieval Tamil society.

The Alvars were Vaishnavite saints who are defined as god-intoxicated mystics; the term “alvar” means “immersed in” the divine. Alvars are 12 in number. They constituted one of the major devotional stream of the Bhagavata movement, the other being the

Nayanar. It is said of the Alvar saints that each one of them was an incarnation of one or the other morphological aspects of Vishnu. For example, Poygai Alvar, the first of the Alvars, was considered to be the *sangu* that is the conch of Vishnu while Bootha Alvar, the second of the Alvars, represented Vishnu's *kowmodhakam* or spiritual mass. Pey Alvar, the third of this trinity, was the incarnation of the Nandaka weapon of the Lord. Nammazhwar and Tiruppanazhar were both low **castes** and the latter was an untouchable, that is one who is below all the four castes and hence an outcaste. Other prominent Alvars include **Tirumangai Alvar** and **Tirumavisai Alvar**. In the 11th century, Vaishnavism came under the influence of **Ramanujacharya**. He was the most important votary of the philosophy of Vaishnavism, which came to be denominated as "Visishta Advaita" meaning "qualified monism." After the period of Ramanujacharya, the Sri Vaishnavite Iyengars came to be divided into *vadakalai* (literally the northern branch) and *tenkalai* (the southern branch). Although the vadagalai represented the northern Sanskritic and therefore orthodox stream of Sri Vaishnavism, the tenkalai came to represent the southern Tamil and comparatively more liberal stream of Sri Vaishnavism. All Vaishnavites believe in the worship of Vishnu in his various manifestations and according to Vaishnavite canonical traditions their pilgrimage centers consist of 108 "Divya Desams." The Brahmin followers of Vaishnavism are called **Iyengar**.

The Nayanars are believed to be 63 in number. The Nayanar who represented the highpoint of early medieval Saivism spearheaded the Bhagavata movement in the Tamil country along with the Alvars. The devotional outpouring of the Nayanars are contained in the poetic anthologies called *tirumurai*. **Appar**, **Sundarar**, and **Tirujnanasambandar** are regarded as the greatest among the male Nayanars. It is said that the celebrated King **Rajaraja Chola I** (985–1014) was responsible for the codification of the *Tevaram* hymns containing their devotional verses. Sundararar's capsule biographies of these saints along with those written by Nambiyandar Nambi, were retold by **Chekkizhar** in his *Periyapuranam* written in the 12th century. **Manikkavachagar**, one of the greatest saints the Tamil country, has produced is not included among the Nayanar although his compositions figure in the *Tirumurai*. The lives of three women Nayanars are also narrated in the *Periyapuranam*—**Karaikkal Ammai**yar, Tilaka-

vatiyar, and Mangaiyarkkarasiyar. Karaikkal Ammaiyaar took the form of a demoness, giving up her femininity; her powerful poems on Siva have as their setting the cremation grounds of Tiruvalangadu. Perhaps more than popular Vaishnavism, the Saivite movement seems to have had strong lower caste representation. **Nandanar** was a **Pulaya**, **Tiruneelakantar** was of the kuyavan or potter caste, Nesar was a weaver, Tirukuripputondar was a *vannan* (washerman) caste while Kannappar was a low caste tribal who was by occupation a hunter. At the level of folk religion, popular Saivism gets reflected in the cult of **Aiyanar**, **Draupadiamma**, **Mariamman**, etc.

The **Siddhas** were mystical in their approach to religion. The Siddha tradition is said to have commenced with Tirumoolar and his work *Tirumandiram* is regarded as extremely esoteric and a masterpiece of Tamil devotional writing. **Kudumbai Siddhar**, who wrote 32 mystical songs, is remembered best for the composition *man-gaipalundu*, which often forms a part of the Carnatic music repertoire. The close relationship between Siddhas and ecology led to their earning a reputation as medicine men and alchemists. Even today, the Siddha system of medicine constitutes a mode of alternative medicine. *Sivavakkiyam* is regarded as a great Siddha text. In the 17th century, the Siddha religious ideology became associated with anti-Brahmanism because of its anti-orthodox stance.

Islam came to south India in the eighth–ninth centuries through the route of Arab trade. Its presence in the Tamil country (therefore, influence over the Tamils) was far less than in the neighboring states of Karnataka and Andhra, which came under the five Deccani Sultanates—Golconda, Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Bidar, and Berar (in the order of their political importance) in around the 15th century. However, the direct impact of Islam on the Tamil country was felt with the establishment of the Maabar Sultanate under Jalaluddin Ahsan Shah in 1535. The dynasty lasted only 40 years and was not successful in conversion or in good governance. The *Madhura Vijayam* of Ganga Devi is extremely critical of the Islamic rule over Madurai but her relationship to the Vijayanagar court makes her account biased and untrustworthy. Major conversions to Islam took place in the 17th–18th centuries under the Arcot Nawabs. As a result of these conversions, large numbers of Muslims can be found in Parangi Pettai (Porto-Novo), Nagapattinam, Tuttukkodi, etc. The emergence of convert Islamic com-

munities along the sea coast could also be because of significant Muslim participation in the commerce of that period. Even today, ship ownership is largely in the hands of the Muslim Marakkayar. Other important Muslim communities are Kayalar, Labbai, and Rawoother. Apart from their contribution to commercial prosperity, Islam in Tamil Nadu has also produced some exceptional poets and thinkers. Umara Pulavar (who flourished sometime in the 17th century) and **Gunangudi Mastan Saheb** (ca. 18th century) being two outstanding examples. The Muslim community is governed by its own religious laws laid down by its Shariat. Today, their party called Muslim League is trying to make a dent in Tamil electoral politics.

Unlike Islam, **Christianity** has had a more powerful presence in the Tamil country. It is even believed that Christianity in the Tamil country is as old as Christianity itself. St. Thomas, the apostle, is believed to have visited this land in around the first century CE and San Thome in Chennai is named after him. It was, however, only in the 16th century when Vasco da Gama landed at Calicut, that Christianity began to make active inroads into the Tamil country. It is said of the Portuguese that they came with sword in one hand and bible in the other to win over the native populace using the language of both force and religiosity. The Setupatis of Ramanathapuram tried to stem the tide of Christianity and executed its leading votary De Brito. However, the flow of missionaries steadily continued. The Jesuit Mission at Madurai played an important role in the process of proselytization. **Roberto de Nobili**'s immense success, as a notable figure among the early Christian missionaries, lay in his ability to speak Tamil, Telugu, and Sanskrit fluently and his spiritual qualities, which earned him the title "Rishi" from the local Tamils. He called himself a *Roman Brahmana Sanyasi* and completely adopted the Brahmanical way of life, including vegetarianism. He was the only Christian missionary to attract converts from the Brahmin community. They called him "Tattvabodhaka Swami" (literally the knower of the true essence) and Nobili "**Iyer**" (the suffix used by Brahmins). He was followed by **St. Francis Xavier** who, according to Tamil Christian, is endowed with both divinity and miraculous powers, as was St. Thomas.

The Catholic missionaries were followed by the Protestants in the 17th–18th centuries who used no force but won over the native populace through social service. Missionary schools were established by

the efforts of one Rev. Schwartz while Ida Scudder was instrumental not only in starting mission schools but the now world renowned Vellore Medical College. **C. J. Beschi** *alias* **Viramamunivar**, who lived toward the close of the 17th and early 18th century, spread Christianity in Tamil and retold biblical tales in a simple, charming style in his book *Tembhavani*. Beschi was a Christian missionary best known for his translation of the *Tirukkural* into Latin. Other well-known Christian missionaries are **G. U. Pope**, who was called by the Tamils as Pope Iyer because of his fluency in Tamil and knowledge of Hindu scriptures. **Bishop Robert Caldwell** was largely responsible for Christian conversion in the Tirunelveli and Nagercoil regions. In the 20th century, mass conversions to Christianity have taken place among backward castes like the **Kaikkolar**, **Shanar**, and **Kammalar**, as well as the untouchable castes like the **Pallar**, **Parayar**, and **Mukkavar**. The Constitutional Reforms Committee of 1908 recorded the percentage of Tamil Muslims as 6.2 of the total population while the Christians constituted 2.2% and the Hindus were 87.9% (interestingly, the Tamil Brahmins were a mere 3.6% of this figure). Unlike the Muslims, the Christian Tamils, despite having a distinct religious and being comparatively well off due to the heavy inflow of money from missions at home and abroad, have made no attempt to form political parties or create a political identity. The 2002 anti-conversion bill of the **J. Jayalalitha**-led **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** government (which she subsequently withdrew), has left the Christian community with some degree of uncertainty about their future. Christian organizations are now beginning to function with redoubled vigor and the withdrawal of the anti-conversion is a proof of their lobbying abilities. *See also* AIYANAR; ANDAL; BHODENDRA SATGURU; NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT; PATTINATHAR; PERIALVAR; PILLAIYAR; RAMALINGA ADIGAL; RAMANA MAHARSHI; SIDDHAR, PAMBATTI; SRIDHARA AYYAVAL.

RESERVATION. *See* RESERVATION POLICY.

RESERVATION POLICY. Reservation Policy in India comprises of preferential schemes for Scheduled **Castes** (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), BC (Backward Castes), and Other Backward Castes (OBC).

This system, termed “affirmative social action” by policy makers, is intended to bring the unprivileged sections of Indian society on a par with the historically and culturally privileged groups like the **Brahmins**. The policy of “Reservations” in the **educational**, economic, and social and employment spheres has been practiced with the greatest zeal by every government in Tamil Nadu, cutting across ideological and party differences. The reservation in all spheres—education, employment, etc., totals 74%. Besides the usual 15% quota for SC and 7.5% for the ST, there is a quota of 30% for OBC and BC. There is now an additional 10% reservation for the Most Backward Castes (MBC), including the communities de-notified in the 1950s by the Krishnaswami **Iyengar** committee. The reservation includes a quota for the physically handicapped of 2.5%. The percentage of reservation in educational institutions is perhaps higher than even 74%.

The alarming decrease in the number of open posts available to persons with merit with the looming threat of even more quotas has led to some protests. Although the reservation policy has greatly benefited the upper strata of the socially underprivileged groups who are now being termed the “creamy layer,” the benefits of reservation have not really percolated down to the truly deprived groups living below subsistence level. Second, the high level of reservation, resulting in poverty and unemployment among the Brahmins, has also led to the exodus of Brahmin intellectuals from Tamil Nadu to more open societies in the West. *See also* ADI DRAVIDA; CHERUMAN; IRULAR; KEPMARI; KURAVAR; LAMBADI; MARAVAR; NADAR; NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT; PALLAR; PARAYAR; PULAYA; TODAS; VANNIYAR.

REUNION ISLANDS. *See* TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS.

REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM IN TAMIL NADU. Brutal suppression of extremist patriots led to the beginnings of revolutionary terrorism in Tamil Nadu. Two organizations—Anushilan Samiti, of which Aurobindo Ghosh and Sister Nivedita were members, and Abhinav Bharat of Veer Savarkar and Madam Cama—inspired the Tamil revolutionaries. Madras (present-day **Chennai**), Tiruppur, Vellore, Salem, **Tiruchirapalli**, Tirunelveli (especially Krishnapuram), and Kallikottai in Tamil Nadu became hotbeds of revolutionary activity. It

is ironic that the British regime used the Malabar police to *lathi* charge or shoot the patriots. Another direction of patriotic protest was to remove the British flag and hoist the Congress flag atop important official buildings. A revolutionary youth, **Tiruppur Kumaran**, died defending the Indian flag.

Following the harsh punishment meted out to intellectuals and professionals in the “Tirunelveli Riots,” revolutionaries made **Pondicherry** the base of their anti-British operations. M. P. Tirumalachari, the proprietor and editor of the Tamil paper *India*, fled to London following the official attacks on his paper and became a member of the Indian revolutionary group based at India House. The group had a strong **Brahmin** component, including in it leaders like Varaganeri Venkatesa Subramanya Iyer (V. V. S. Iyer) from Tiruchi and Tillaisthanam Sessa Sundararajan (T. S. S. Rajan), a native of **Tanjavur** in the Brahman orthodox belt. V. V. S. Iyer was a lawyer T. S. S. Rajan was a medical practitioner. In London, Veer Savarkar was their close associate. The *History Sheet of V. V. S. Aiyer* (sic) F. D cataloged as General B, 1910 No. 43, NAI, preserved now in the India Office, London, carries his proclamation that India’s political freedom “could be achieved in the short period of ten years when the Indians, well provided with the latest arms and ammunitions, would rise in a body.” Pondicherry-based revolutionaries also published a number of papers and periodicals, including *Vijaya*, *Suryodayam*, and *Independent*. **Subramanya Bharati**, the voice of the revolutionaries, spent many years in political exile in Pondicherry, from where he published the *Independent* and also wrote highly inflammatory poetry. Bharati also came out with another revolutionary paper *Bala Bharati*. It is noteworthy that not only revolutionary periodicals but even Bharati’s poems were banned and confiscated by the British government as “seditious” literature.

Both Tirunelveli and Tutucorin became centers of revolutionary activity under the inspiration and active guidance of Neelakanta Brahmachari, a Brahmin from Sirkazhi in Tanjavur district. Under Bharati’s influence, he joined his paper *India* as assistant editor. In 1909–1910, Neelakanta Brahmachari founded the Bharata Mata Association in Chenkottai. The association had esoteric and bloody rituals to initiate young men into the revolutionary path, including the signing of oaths in blood and the drinking of kumkum (vermilion) water symbolic of the

blood of the British. **Vanchinathan Iyer** was chosen by the Association to eliminate the District Collector of Tirunelveli, E. W. D. Ashe. After assassinating Ashe on 17 June 1911, Vanchinathan Iyer shot himself. Two others accused in the Ashe conspiracy case—Punalur Venkatesa Iyer and Chenkottai Dharmaraja Iyer also committed suicide.

In Pondicherry, Aurobindo Ghosh became the nucleus of revolutionary conspiracies. Ghosh's involvement in the Lahore conspiracy case is well-known. However, the revolutionary tide in Tamil Nadu began to ebb by the late 1930s. Aurobindo Ghosh completely left politics and turned to the spiritual path, eventually founding the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry. However, the most important reason for the fading of revolutionary fervor was the outbreak of World War II in 1939 in which France and Britain became allies. As a result, Pondicherry was no longer available to revolutionary politicians. In conclusion, it can be said that the revolutionary movement in Tamil Nadu was confined to a few pockets and had a limited outreach. However, the romantic fervor of the revolutionaries and their tragic deaths did provide inspiration to Indian nationalists. *See also* EXTREMISTS IN THE TAMIL FREEDOM STRUGGLE.

RICE. *See* CHORU. *See also* AGRICULTURE; CUISINE.

RIVER KAVERI. The river Kaveri is celebrated in Tamil song and legend as “Ponni” meaning “Lady of Gold.” The river is usually coupled with the River Kollidam, which also flows through the region called **Cholamandalam**. The Kaveri basin is one of the most fertile deltaic basins in South India. It was, therefore, the seat of many ancient cultures. The **Chola dynasty**, in particular, is associated with the Kaveri delta in terms of its geographical location. **Irrigation** in the Kaveri delta seems to have been in existence since the early days of settled **agriculture**. Water bodies served the twin purpose of holding in check the floodwaters as well as harnessing it for paddy cultivation. The best-preserved reservoir in the Cholamandalam region, still extant, is attributed to **Karikala Chola** (50–95 CE). Known as the grand *anicut* (this term roughly corresponds to a weir), it is located on the road from **Tanjavur** to **Tiruchirapalli** over the Kaveri and the Kollidam rivers. The *anicut* is said to have measured 29 m long, 12–18 m wide, and about 4.5 m deep.

In the course of centuries the Kaveri has changed its course frequently. Today the Kaveri flows by the region famous in ancient Tamil literature as **Kaveripumpattinam**. In recent times the sharing of the Kaveri waters is a major source of dispute between the States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, where the river is called Talakaveri meaning “the source of Kaveri.” Another State that lays claims to the Kaveri waters is the southern State of Kerala.

RIVER PALAR. Palar is an important non-perennial river of the Tamil country, which tends to run dry during the major part of the year. It rises near the Ponnaiyar River, southwest of Chintamani in Karnataka, and flows 295 km southeastward through Tamil Nadu toward the Bay of Bengal, south of Madras (present-day **Chennai**). Its major tributaries are the Ponnai and Cheyyar rivers. The River Pennar also links with the Palar. The flow of the River Palar is irregular although the river generally does not flood. The major problem today with Palar is acute river pollution. The pollution is caused primarily by the tanneries located in the Vellore district of Tamil Nadu.

RIVER TAMRAPARANI. River Tamraparani rises among the wooded hills of the Western Ghats and benefits from both the monsoons. It flows through the modern district of Tirunelveli and its immediate surroundings. At its mouth in the Gulf of Mannar are the pearl fisheries described by the **Sangam** texts as well as the accounts of the Greco-Romans. The river, also known as Sembil in Tamil, is referred to by the Roman geographer Ptolemy in the early **Christian** era by the name of Solen. The only ancient water-harvesting system, which rivalled that of the **River Kaveri**, are the numerous big and small check dams constructed over the Tamraparani by the **Pandya** kings. An important medieval Sanskrit text called *Maduravijyam* by Queen Ganga Devi describes how the **Muslim** conquest of the South and the establishment of the Madura Sultanate over the erstwhile Pandyan kingdom led to natural calamities, such as the repeated flooding of River Kaveri and the famed Tamraparani flowing red with the blood of cows slaughtered by Muslims.

RIVER VAIGAI. The River Vaigai is located in the **Pandyaman-dalam** or what used to be the land of the **Pandya** dynasty. The

famed temple city of **Madurai** came up on the banks of the Vaigai. Like the **River Kaveri**, this river also has a long history of being harnessed for **irrigation**. From the early inscriptional records, it is likely that the Vaigai waters were used to irrigate the dry lands of Ramanathapuram and **Pudukkottai**, the landscapes of which were and to some extent, still are, dotted with tanks and channels. However the Vaigai, which would run dry during the greater part of the year, continues to plague Madurai and its surroundings with acute water scarcity. The fact that there was no perennial flow of the river (although Vaigai is deemed to be a perennial river) meant that Vaigai could only sustain fringe irrigation along its banks. *See also* AGRICULTURE.

RIVERS OF TAMIL NADU. The rivers of Tamil Nadu flow eastward from the Western Ghats and are entirely rain fed. The perennial river fed by both the monsoons is the **Kaveri**, which flows across Tamil Nadu cutting the State into two halves. The other perennial rivers are Cheyyar, Ponnaiyar, Meyar, Bhavani, Amaravati, **Vaigai**, Chittar, and **Tamraparani**. The non-perennial rivers are the **Palar**, Velluru, Noyal, Gundar, Suruli, Vaipar, Valparai, and Varshali. The 760-kilometer long Kaveri is the longest and largest river in the Tamil Nadu.

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SALIYA. A weaving **caste** of great antiquity. An inscription of Uttama **Chola** refers to the settlement of Saliya weavers in the precincts of the **temple at Kanchipuram** who had been appointed trustees by the king. The Saliya are divided into the *Pattu Saliya* and *Padma Saliya*. They have strong links with the Telugu *Sale* community. **Nalli Kuppusami Chettiar**, who is the king of the **Nallis** silk empire with a business that has a turnover of several hundred million Indian Rupees, belongs to this traditional weaving community.

SALIYUR. A port town of the **Sangam** Pandya kings. Saliyur is also a **megalithic** site. Located on the Arkali coast of the ancient Pandya kingdom, it is referred to as Salour by Ptolemy, who says it was located on the Orgalic Gulf. His description of Saliyur as a busy commercial

port of the 1st–2nd century CE is worth quoting: “the far famed port of Salour, ever crowded with ships which have crossed the perilous dark ocean and from which costly articles of merchandise are landed. . .” See also ADICHCHANALLUR; KORKAI; MUZIRIS; VALLI-MALAI.

SAMBAR. This is a must in any traditional meal in southern India, whether it is Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, or Andhra Pradesh. Vegetables are cooked in tamarind juice, turmeric powder, and asafetida with a mixture of condiments (roasted Bengal gram, fenugreek seeds, whole coriander seeds, and dried red chilies). Cooked pigeon pea is added after the vegetables are cooked to thicken it (condiments can also be ground with fresh coconut to give it a special flavor). Once boiled, the dish is garnished with curry leaf and seasoned with mustard seeds popped in hot oil. It is usually had with rice but is also regularly served with *Idli* and *Dosai*. The condiments used in Sambar vary from region to region but tamarind, red chili, seeds of fenugreek, and coriander are a must. See also CUISINE.

SAMSON, LEELEA (1951–). Padmashri Leela Samson, a representative of Kalakshetra style, is one of the most popular and leading exponents of the **dance** form **Bharatanatyam**. Apart from her performances in India, she is known to have given innumerable performances at the international level.

SANGAM LITERATURE. Sangam **literature** gets its name from a college or *Sangam* of **Tamil** poets who flourished under the patronage of the Pandya kings of **Madurai**. Sangam literally means a gathering or assembly. It is believed that three Sangams were held in antiquity at which thousands of poets, male and female, presented their compositions and debated over style, syntax, and the attainment of excellence in Tamil. Tamil, in the course of time, came to embody the spirit of the mother tongue and be called *Tamil Tai* (*Tai* means mother).

The literature is divided into three phases—the First Sangam (*mu-dal Sangam*) was supposed to have met about 10,000 BCE convened by the celestial sage Agasthya. The middle or *idai Sangam* is believed to have lasted 3,700 years, the only extant literature of this period be-

ing the *Tolkapiyam*. Tamils believe that literature of the first two Sangams was lost in the Great Flood that spread through Ancient Tamilaham called Kumarikandam. The Third Sangam or *Kadai Sangam* is said to have lasted 1,850 years and the entire body of Sangam literature as we know it today belongs to this period. A critical analysis of this corpus is crucial to an understanding of the processes, which brought about societal transformation, whether in terms of tribe to **caste**, in terms of the emergence of patriarchy, or changes in **religion** and the Dravidian worldview. Sangam literature consists of an enormous body of texts that range chronologically from the third century BCE to the first century CE. It is noteworthy that the earliest work on Tamil grammar, the *Tolkappiyam*, may even extend back into the fifth century BCE although major parts of this text were written much later. Sangam texts are conflated into anthologies, which sometimes share broad ideas. For example, the *Puram Nanuru* is a collection of poems by different authors, which deals with public spaces such as war, diplomacy, and royal deeds. *Aham Nanuru*, on the other hand, deals with interior spaces relating to domesticity and love.

The credit for the recovery of the Sangam classics goes to **U. V. Swaminatha Iyer**. An exciting account of how in the year 1888, he came upon these texts in the personal libraries of many old families living in Tirunelveli district is found in his autobiography. This recovery began with *Pathupattu* and culminated with *Manimekalai*.

The main Sangam anthologies are: *Pathupattu*, *Ettuthogai*, *Padirrupattu*, and the later-Sangam anthology *Padinenkizhkanakku*. *Ettuthogai* comprises the following eight anthologies: *Narrinai*; *Kurunthogai*; *Aingurunuru*; *Padirrupattu*; *Paripadal*; *Kalittogai*; *Aham Nanuru*; and *Puram Nanuru*. The second major collection, *Pathupattu*, comprises the following ten: *Tirumurugatrupalai*; *Porunaratrupalai*; *Siruppanatrupalai*; *Perumpanatrupalai*; *Mullaipattu*; *Maduraikanchi*; *Nedunelvadai*; *Kurinjipattu*; *Pattinappalai*; *Malaippadukadam*. The names of 473 poets are recorded as the composers, out of which 27 can be clearly identified as **women**; 103 of the Sangam poems are anonymous. A significant fact about these poets is the colophon they provide at the end of their poems enabling them to be situated in historical time and space to the extent possible.

The last category consists of the 18 works known as *Padi-nenkizhkanakku*. These are by and large didactic in nature and characterized by the prominent presence of Jain and Buddhist theology and ethics. The most celebrated ethical text from the last category is the *Tirukkural*, which among other things can be treated as a catechism of patriarchy and its author **Tiruvalluvar** is believed to have been a Jain. The authors of the didactic texts *Naladiyar* and *Palamoli Nanuru* (400 proverbs) were also Jains. As a part of the same collection, **Kapilar**, said to have been a **Brahmin**, wrote *Inna Narpathu*, literally, 164 maxims enumerating the things to be avoided in one's life.

The chronological categorization of the plethora of Sangam texts is, however, fraught with difficulties. Dates for the *Tolkappiyam*, a detailed work on Tamil grammar and poetics, range from the pre-Panini dating (ca. fourth century BCE) assigned to it by the celebrated Tamil scholar **Maraimalai Adigal** and following him E. S. Varadaraja **Iyer** who give 450 BCE as a rough date, to P. T. Srinivasa **Iyengar** who prefers to ascribe it to the first or second century CE. At the end of the spectrum is George Hart who is inclined to date it to the fifth century CE. The range of dates for the *Tirukkural* is no less, stretching from the pre-**Christian** era to the sixth–eighth century CE. Another major problem is that even within a particular anthology, such as the *Puram Nanuru*, there could be later interpolations. Again, even the *Ettutogai* group that is generally taken to be the earliest one contains texts like the *Kalittogai* and the *Paripadal* that have been dated to the fifth century CE.

Given all of these problems of dating and chronology, Tamil scholars are now looking at this literature in terms of not only its language and style but also the social context in an effort to situate the early Tamils. Sangam poems stylistically conform to the literary convention of the five *tinai*s or literary landscapes/moods—*tinai kurinji* (hilly tract), *tinai mullai* (pastoral tract), *tinai marudam* (agricultural tract), *tinai neydal* (coastal region), *tinai palai* (arid zone)—*kurinji* is associated with romantic dalliance, *mullai* with patient waiting, *marudam* with domesticity and infidelity (and here the presence of the *parataiyar* or courtesan is ubiquitous), *neydal* with separation and union (in a sea-faring economy men sailed away from their homes for long periods) and *palai* with loneliness. Other literary conventions are well-matched love and marriage in *aham*, *kaikkilai* or one-sided love and *peruntinai* as mismatched love.

The Sangam age was a golden age in terms of the efflorescence of **Tamil language**. The Sangam poets ranged from potters to kings. The information in these texts has a wide trope, ranging from love and marriage to religion and ritual, war and death. This unwieldy corpus of **literature** is the only source for the 700 years of the early historic period in the Tamil country. *See also* AUVAIYAR; CHEKIZHAR; ILANGO ADIGAL; NAKKIRAR, PERUNDEVANAR; URITHIRAN KANNANAR.

SANGAM POLITY. There were three main kingdoms—**Chera**, **Chola**, and **Pandya**—in addition to the innumerable petty Chieftaincies who owed allegiance to one or the other kingdom. Extensive information about the politics of the Sangam age comes from the compositions of the bards who enjoyed royal patronage and in return sang about the many virtues and achievements of their patrons. These panegyrics form a part of Sangam anthologies. Some outstanding names in the **Pandya dynasty** were Ilampperu Vazhuti, Nalvazhutti, Perum Kadungon, Bhuta Pandiyan, and Arivudai Nambi. The later kings were also renowned as poet-composers. Karikalan, Nalluruttiram, and Kanaikkal Irumporai are some well-known Chola kings. The most celebrated Chera king was **Senguttavan**. Among the lesser Chieftains, seven have been singled out for praise in the Sangam anthologies. These were Kari, **Pari**, Pekan, Ay, Adigaman, Ori, and Nalli. *See also* SANGAM LITERATURE.

SANTANAM, K. (1895–1980). Kumattithidal Santanam was born into a rich family of **Brahmin** landowners in **Tanjavur**. He got his degree in Law from the Madras Law College and started his practice in the Madras High Court in 1919. Responding to Mahatma Gandhi's call, he gave up his legal practice and joined the non-cooperation movement. In 1923, Santanam, along with Jawaharlal Nehru and G. T. Gidwani, was falsely implicated in a conspiracy case in Nabha, where the jail conditions were so bad that all three contracted typhoid. Between the 1930s and the 1940s, Santanam was in and out of jail. In 1923, he joined the Gandhi *ashram* at Tiruchengodu founded by **C. Rajopalachari** on a small salary of Rs.75 per month. He left the *ashram* in 1930 to participate in the salt Satyagraha. Santanam was also a journalist and became editor of the Madras-based *Free Press Journal* in 1942. In 1948, he joined Nehru's cabinet as minister of

state for Railways. In 1960, he was elected to the Rajya Sabha. In 1962, he wrote the Santanam Committee report on an enquiry into corruption. He was deeply interested in the welfare of *khadi* and village industries and Santanam's 1970 report made a significant contribution to the needs of the textile industry—especially in the establishment of cooperatives. He also tried to work out a balance between patronage extended to powerlooms and handlooms. Santanam authored many books on political economy including *India's Ride to Freedom* and *Ambedkar's Attack or the Fight Against Untouchability*. He also brought out a unique anthology of Indian (predominantly Sanskrit) literature published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

SANTHANAM, MAHARAJAPURAM (1928–1992). *See* VISHWANATHAN MAHARAJAPURAM.

SARABHAI, MALLIKA (1950–). Mallika, a distinguished **Bharatanatyam** dancer, is the daughter of **Mrinalini Sarabhai**, the well-known Bharatanatyam dancer and Vikram Sarabhai, a legendary name in the field of Indian science. Mallika started her dancing career when she was 15 and received her first major award in 1971. She is known as an accomplished artist—a Bhartanatyam and Kuchipudi dancer, a theater maker, and an excellent choreographer. *See also* DANCE.

SARABHAI, MRINALINI (1928–). The wife of the distinguished scientist Vikram Sarabhai, Mrinalini won great acclaim as a **Bharatanatyam** dancer. Mrinalini Sarabhai has founded the Darpana Institute for Performing Arts. She has also received many distinguished awards and citations for her contribution to the preservation of Indian **dance**. *See also* SWAMINATHAN AMMU.

SARASWATI MAHAL LIBRARY. Situated in **Tanjavur**, this ancient library was founded by the Tanjore-Maratha King Sarfoji Maharaj. It houses innumerable palm leaf manuscripts in Sanskrit and Tamil and also has in its collection some rare textile pieces. The library is a must for scholars working on any aspect of Tamil culture. *See also* ADAYAR LIBRARY.

SAROJA DEVI, B. (1945–). She was a top star in Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada cinema in the 1960s and, like her contemporaries **Vijayantimala** and Padmini, she was also successful in the Hindi film world. Her major Tamil hit was *Nadodi Mannan* in which she co-starred with **M. G. Ramachandran** in 1958. In a long career spanning 30 years, she acted in as many as 160 films in four languages. Refusing to take the usual route to Tamil politics, Saroja Devi became Chairperson of Karnataka Film Corporation. *See also* SAVITHRI GANESAN; TAMIL CINEMA.

SARUKKAI, MALAVIKA (1959–). Malavika is an accomplished dancer in **Bharatanatyam**, as well as Odissi. She has performed in the Festivals of India in France, Japan, Switzerland and London besides achieving many other accolades. *See also* DANCE.

SATYAMURTHY, S. (1887–1943). Freedom fighter and scholar in Sanskrit and **Tamil**, Satyamurthy was born in **Pudukkottai** and educated at Madras (present-day **Chennai**). He acquired a degree in law but chose to enter the political struggle against the British rather than practice law. He was a member of the delegation led by Balgangadhar Tilak and **Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Shastri** in 1919 that went to explain the position of India and the views of the Indian National Congress to the British parliamentarians. He was a member of the Congress committee for two terms, after which he joined the Svarajya party. In 1935, he entered the Imperial legislature and also went on an extensive tour of England to project the cause of India. He served as the secretary and vice president of the All India Congress Committee. He was for a while the president of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee and became the political mentor of **K. Kamaraj**. He was made mayor of the Madras Corporation in 1939. During his tenure, the Poondi Reservoir Scheme was launched. He was involved with **music** and the **theater**. In his last years, he went to prison during the Quit India Movement of 1942. Satyamurthy did not live to see India's independence. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU; SUNDARAMBAL, K. B.

SAVITHRI GANESAN (1937-1981). Born into a Telugu family, Savithri became a leading actress in **Tamil cinema**. Trained in both

music and **dance**, Savithri acted with the leading actor of her time **Sivaji Ganesan**, but went on to marry another well-known actor, **Gemini Ganesan**. Her last years were spent in abject penury. It is a sad commentary on an actress's life that her funeral was conducted on public charity.

SCUDDER, IDA (1870–1960). She was a Christian missionary who came to the Tamil country at the turn of the previous century and established herself at Vellore in North Arcot district. She became a medical missionary, a line followed by her parents, Dr. John Scudder and Mrs. Sophia Scudder. In 1900, she founded the Vellore Christian Medical Center, which is regarded today as one of the premier hospitals and medical research centers in India. The city of Vellore boasts of a statue of Ms. Scudder and the town council has named one of its leading schools as Ida Scudder School in memory of her many contributions as a missionary and educationist.

SELF-RESPECT MOVEMENT. *See* SVAYA MARIYADAI IYAKKAM.

SENGUTTAVAN. Also known as **Cheran Chenguttavan**, he is an important **Chera** king of the **Sangam** period. He is known as the brother of **Ilango Adigal**, the Jain monk who authored the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram*. According to popular tradition, it was he who, along with Gajabahu of Ceylon (modern Sri Lanka), built the first temple for **Kannagi** in the Chera country, i. e., Vanji, in what was the old Tamilaham. This began the cult of *Pattini Daivm* the deification of Kannagi, the chaste wife. Senguttavan is known for his great victory at the battle of Nerivayil near Uraiyur against his **Chola** adversaries.

SENON. God of the **Tinai Marudam** tract, where the process of Brahmanization in the Tamil country actually began, was called Senon, although even Tolkappiyana in the *Tolkappiyam* refers to him as Indra and not by his corresponding Tamil name. Indra is said to be the God of the Gods and the term *Vendan* used for him also began to be used for the king in the *Tamil language* implying a transference of power and legitimacy from the divine patron god of Marudam to the early political authority symbolized by the monarch. *See also* RELIGION.

SHANKARACHARYA, ADI (ca. 8th century). Shankara, the founder of Vedantic Monism or the *Advaita* philosophy, belonged to Kalady, which falls today in the State of Kerala and was at one time part of the ancient Tamilaham. It is believed that he became a renunciate at the age of eight and, in his short life span of 32 years, traveled widely to the four corners of India (going as far north as Srinagar in the Himalayan mountains) and spread the message of the oneness of all creation since they emanated from the one universal monad. Shankara philosophy is also known by the name of *Uttara Mimamsa*. One of his missions was to oppose the heterodox philosophies of Buddhism and Jainism that had gained much ground throughout the country. Shankara's texts such as his commentaries on the *Brahma Sutra*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Bhagavad Gita* specially responded to the logic of Nagarjuna, the great logician and exponent of the Madhyamika School of Buddhism. Shankara's role as a great teacher and preacher earned him the honorific "Shankaracharya" meaning "Teacher Shankara." He established four monastic institutions in the four cardinal directions located at Sringeri (south), Dwaraka (west), Puri (east), and Jyotirmath (north) to carry on his life mission of spreading the message of *Advaita Vedanta*. See also RELIGION; SHANKARACHARYA OF KANCHIPURAM.

SHANKARACHARYA OF KANCHIPURAM. The Shankaracharyas of **Kanchipuram** represent a hoary monastic tradition within the orthodox stream of Saivism begun by **Adi Shankaracharya**. According to some oral traditions, the Shankaracharya of Kumbakonam in **Tanjavur** district moved to Kanchipuram in the 17th century due to the uncertain and unsafe political climate of Tanjavur. The Shankaracharyas of Kanchipuram *mutt* (monastic institution) worship Goddess Kamakshi. Sri Chandrasekhara Saraswati, who lived for more than 100 years, was regarded as one of the greatest sages of the 20th century. Since September 2004, the Shankaracharyas of Kanchi, both Jayendra Saraswati, the incumbent Shankaracharya, and his successor Vijayendra have been embroiled in an unseemly controversy involving the gruesome murder of the **Brahmin** accountant of the ancient **Temple of Varadaraja Perumal** at Kanchipuram. Both the Acharyas were in prison as prime accused in the murder trial. The case has given a blow to the Tamil Brahmin

community as a whole and more specifically to the Shankaracharyas' vast following. *See also* TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN.

SHANMUGASUNDARAM, R. (1918–1977). Shanmugasundaram belonged to the Manikkodi group of writers who ushered in the modern era in Tamil fiction. But unlike the other writers in the group who specialized in the short story genre, Shanmugasundaram distinguished himself in the novel genre. *Nagammal* (1941) is his first novel and also the first realistic novel in **Tamil**, a novel acclaimed for its artistic rendering and mastery in craftsmanship. It pays testimony to Shanmugasundaram's native genius for he has no knowledge of the English language and its **literature**, which was the role model for his predecessors. *Nagammal* is perhaps the only novel that revolves around a character that is almost totally negative except for some phases of goodness cropping up occasionally. Another first for the novel lies in the fact, that it was the harbinger of the so-called *Vattara Ilakkiam* (Regional Literature) genre in the Tamil novel. The novel deals with the poor, farming classes and possesses a distinct flavor of the soil.

SHARMA, KRISHNASWAMI (fl. early 20th century). The name of Krishnaswami Sharma occurred in the Tamil press of the first decades of the 20th century quite often as a revolutionary and spell-binding speaker of the nationalist cause. Today, he has been confined to the shadows of history. This subaltern figure in Tamil politics is, however, worthy of recall. The **extremists in Tamil Freedom Struggle** emerged on the scene around 1907, led by personalities like Ethiraj Surendranath Arya, Varadaraja Sharma (a Sanskrit pundit of **Tanjavur** college), V. Chakkarai **Chetti**, C. S. Bharati, and K. Venkat Rao. In 1908, they formed the Chennai Jana Sangam. Public meetings began to be addressed in **Tamil**, the language of the people rather than in chaste English as the **Madras Mahajana Sabha** were wont to do. One such fiery speaker was a young lecturer from Mylapore called Krishnaswami Sharma who preached the cause of Svadeshi not only in the Marina beach in Madras (the Hyde Park of **Chennai**) but also in the provincial towns of Salem, Tanjavur, and Erode, which were traditional weaving centers most acutely affected by the commercial onslaught from the Lancashire and Manchester

mill cloth. The lecturer was arrested and tortured in prison by the British regime, as a result of which he went insane and was sent to a lunatic asylum. It is sad that hardly anything is known of this young man of 25 who succeeded in rousing the patriotic sentiments of common people like weavers, tanners, and barbers. Although a very popular votary of extremist ideas in the early part of the 20th century, one does not know what happened to Krishnaswami Sharma after he was interred in the asylum in 1910. *See also* REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM IN TAMIL NADU.

SHASTRI, V. S. SRINIVASA, Right Honorable (1869–1946). Valangaiman Sankaranarayana Srinivasa Sastri, known as V. S. Srinivasa Shastri, was born third out of six children, at Valangaiman near Kumbakonam in **Tanjavur** to V. Shankaranarayana Shastri, an impoverished Sanskrit scholar and Valambal. He was a friend and contemporary of eminent leaders like **Annie Besant**, **C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer**, T. R. Venkatarama Shastri, V. Krishnaswami Iyer, and above all, Gopala Krishna Gokhale. Shastri looked upon Gokhale, the founder of the Servants of India Society, as his guru. Shastri joined the Society in 1907 and succeeded Gokhale as its president in 1915. Shastri believed in self-government within the framework of British paramountcy. He pushed forward his ideas, including a Congress-Muslim League pact, at the Madras (present-day **Chennai**) session of the Indian National Congress in 1908 of which he was the secretary.

He was a nominated member of the Madras Legislative Council in 1915 and was elected to the Central Legislature in 1916. Elected to the new Council of States established under the reforms, he found himself increasingly out of sympathy with the dominant group in the nationalist Congress Party, which declined to cooperate on the reforms and preferred methods of civil disobedience. He therefore left the Congress Party in 1922 and founded the Indian Liberal Federation, of which he was president. Despite opposition from the Congress, he collaborated unofficially with Edwin Montague in the formulation of the Montague-Chelmsford reforms in 1919. He was elected to the Council of States in 1919, where he openly condemned the Jalianwala Bagh massacre.

Under the joint invitation of the Governments of India and **South Africa**, Shastri became the Agent of the Government of India in

South Africa for one year. He participated in the Round Table Conferences between India and Britain in 1930 and 1931 and also took part in the India–South Africa Round Table Conference in 1932. He was one of the few Indians to attend the League of Nations in Geneva in 1921 as a member of the Indian delegation. He took the opportunity to present India’s case at the international forum. Shastri was an embodiment of the Indian tradition with a capacity for expressing it in any universal language. He was one of the greatest ambassador and interpreter of Indian culture abroad and has been rated next to Rabindranath Tagore. From 1935 to 1940, he served as the vice-chancellor of **Annamalai University**. Shastri passed away missing both the agony of the partition and communal riots, as well as the joy of freedom. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

SHIVA (SIVA). Many orientalist believed that the worship of Shiva is Dravidian in origin. This is however not substantiated in terms of Tamil evidence since Shiva does not constitute one of the five *Tinai* deities. In the **Sangam** context, Jainism and Buddhism contended with Brahmanism for religious space, but the deities who enter the Sanskritic–Brahmanical pantheon through the process of acculturation and assimilation are **Murugan**, **Mayon**, and **Korravai**, rather than Shiva, who is conspicuous by his absence. However, in the 7th century CE, during the beginning of the **Bhagavata movement**, Shiva and the cult of Saivism had gained great significance and the 63 **Nayanars** were all propagators of Saivism. The doctrine of Shiva Siddhanta was founded on the metaphysical elements of Saivism. Worship of Shiva in the Tamil country has also involved forms of ritualism, which were far removed from the Brahmanical ideals. The ancient sects of the *Kapalikas* and *Kalamukas*, which were part of the early Tamil cultural landscape, lasted virtually into the late-colonial era, practicing human and animal sacrifices as well as fearsome tantric rituals, such as skull-worship and black magic. *See also* AM-MAN; PILLAIYAR; RELIGION.

SHYAMA SHASTRI (1762–1827). Like **Thyagaraja** and **Muthusvami Dikshitar**, Shyama Shastri was one of the trinity of **Carnatic music**. He was born in Tiruvarur like the other two (an extra-ordinary coincidence!) into an orthodox **Brahmin** family. In his childhood, he

was called Shyama Krishna and this is the pen name he uses in his musical compositions. The family had moved from **Kanchipuram** to Tiruvarur carrying their beloved deity “Bangaru Kamakshi” when political turbulence compelled them to leave their hometown Kanchipuram. Shyama Shastri learned music from the *veenai* maestro Pachchimiriyam Adiyappaiyar who composed the famous *viriponi varnam* in the raga Bhairvi. Due to his guru’s training Shyama Shastri, like Muthusvami Dikshitar, attained proficiency in playing the veena and vocal **music**. 300 of his compositions, composed mostly in chaste Sanskrit, have come down to us. A deeply spiritual saint composer, his musical compositions, especially the nine songs composed on the nine planets, is believed to remove evil planetary influences. It was widely believed that his songs had healing qualities. Oral traditions talk of the interaction between the trinity and their friendship. His famous disciples include Subbaraya Shastri, Alasur Krishnayyar, Perambur Krishnayyar, Sangeetha Svami, and Dasari. *See also* BRINDA AND MUKTA; DHANAMMAL; NAINA PILLAI.

SIDDHAR, KUDAMBAL. One of the well known **Siddhar** saints he got his name “Kudumbai,” meaning an ear ornament of **women**, because he addressed all women as “Kudumbai.” He has to his credit 32 deeply spiritual songs of which “Magaipalandu” is very often a part of the repertoire of the Tamil classical concert singer. In his compositions he relates the characteristics of the realized souls called “Jivan Mukta.” *See also* MUSIC; SIDDHAR, PAMBATTI.

SIDDHAR, PAMBATTI. A celebrated **Siddha** saint, he is mentioned by Nachinarkkiniyar, the 12th-century commentator on the Jaina text *Jivakachintamani*. This reference makes him roughly contemporaneous with the commentator that is either the 11th or early 12th century. Belonging to the **Pandya** country it is said that Pambatti Siddhar was initiated by Chattaimuni. He is the author of 129 songs, all of them with a deep philosophical and metaphysical content. Every song begins with the words *Adu Pambe* literally “dance, snake, dance.” The dancing snake is the *kundalini*, which in spiritual terms is divine energy surging within the human body in the form of a coiled snake. He believed that it is only by raising this *kundalini*

shakti or spiritual energy, that one can attain the realization of god. *See also* MUSIC; SIDDHAR, KUDUMBALAI; SIVAKKIYAR.

SIDDHAS. The Siddhas are a particular sect of Saivites who are said to be masters of Yoga (a spiritual path that blends control over body, mind, and intellect). The Siddhas have been described as spiritual free thinkers because they were against idol worship and **caste** distinctions. They derived their philosophical system from Tirumoolar who flourished in the 10th century. Tirumoolar's work called *Tiru-mandiram* is included in the Tamil Saivite canonical collection called the *Tirumurai*. Miraculous powers are attributed to the Siddhas, such as the power of becoming big or small called *anima*; the power defined as *lahima* that enables one to float in the air; *prapti*, the supernatural power to obtain anything one desires; *vashitvam*, which roughly corresponds to the power of hypnotism; etc. The Siddhas are also said to have been alchemists, capable of converting base metals into gold. In terms of their social impact, the Siddha School of medicine has carried great weight over the centuries because of their familiarity with medicinal plants and herbs, arising out of their prolonged association with nature and living in the forests. Even today, the Siddha system of medicine is the only indigenous system that takes on the cure of fatal diseases like cancer. *See also* SIDDHAR, KUDUMBALAI; SIDDHAR, PAMBATTI; SIVAKKIYAR.

SILAPPADIKARAM. *Silappadikaram*, meaning "The Story of the Anklet," is an epic written by **Ilango Adigal**. It is regarded as the most celebrated work of the **Sangam** age. It was probably composed around the fifth or sixth century CE. The story is set in **Kaveripumpattinam**, a bustling port town in **Tiruchirappalli**. Both Kovalan the hero and **Kannagi** the heroine came from highly respected merchant families. In keeping with literary conventions, the marriage is marred by infidelity on the part of Kovalan. He falls in love with Madhavi, a dancer belonging to the courtesan caste. She has a child by him who is named **Manimekalai** (the heroine of the sequel, Sattanar's epic *Manimekalai*). Kovalan abandons Madhavi in a fit of jealousy and returns to his virtuous wife Kannagi. The epic restarts in **Madurai**, a place to which Kovalan and Kannagi have traveled in search of livelihood. Kovalan goes to the market to sell his

wife's anklet in order to start some business. Here, he is falsely implicated in the case involving the theft of the queen's anklet. Kovalan is summarily beheaded. An outraged Kannagi appears in the Pandyan king's court and proves her husband's innocence. Ilango Adigal writes that she cut off one of her breasts and flung it in the streets of Madurai, setting the whole city aflame. At the conclusion of the epic, the royal couple dies of remorse and Kannagi wanders off into seclusion. *Silappadikaram* is remarkable not only for its literary style and rich story content but also for the wealth of information on the history and culture of the ancient Tamils and the influence of Jain, Buddhist, and Brahmanical **religions** on the kings and the common people. *See also* SANGAM LITERATURE.

SIMPSONS. Like **Parrys**, Simpson and Co. has had a long history of nearly two centuries in Tamil Nadu. The company has had the longest association with road transport and was the first to get involved in railways. The Madras Railway Company was formed in London in 1845 and the idea was to facilitate the commerce of the British Empire by connecting interior manufacturing centers of the Madras Presidency and the port towns by providing a grid of railway lines. A. M. Simpson, an English craftsman, arrived in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1840 and started a small-time business in coach building. In 1856, when Lord Harris opened the first railway line in Madras, the Simpsons built its first railway carriages. In 1844, Higginbothams started as "Booksellers and Publishers." Both were to become major wings of the Simpsons Business Empire. In 1861, the Stanes Coffee Curing Works began its operations leading on to Simpsons' involvement in rubber, coffee, tea, and sugar plantations. S. Ananthakrishnan and his sons Shivasailam and Krishnamoorthy today control the operating part of the Simpsons Empire, which has merged with **Amalgamations**. *See also* EAST INDIA COMPANIES; INDUSTRY.

SINGAPORE. *See* TAMILS IN SINGAPORE.

SIRUPPANATRUPPADAI. This is a bardic poem written under the royal patronage of the **Sangam** chieftain Nalliyakodan of Oymanadu. The poem consists of 269 stanzas and was composed between 250

and 275 CE by a *Siruppanar*, meaning a poet of the minstrel **caste**. The poet Nallur Nathanar is said to have composed it in gratitude toward King Nalliyakodan in order to acknowledge his bounty and to spread the fame of his patron. The poet compares him to **Pari**, the legendary chieftain of Parambunadu famed for his charity and valor. The text is a mine of information on the Muvendavelar (**Cheras**, **Cholas**, and **Pandyas**), as well as the petty chieftains like Pari, Kari, Ori, Pegan, and Ayi. *See also* SANGAM LITERATURE.

SIVAJI GANESAN (1927–2001). *See* GANESAN, SIVAJI.

SIVAKKIYAR. Sivakkiyar was a **Siddha** leader known for his work *Siva Vakkiyam*. His period is shrouded in uncertainty because while Sivakkiyar is mentioned in the 10th century, another Sivakkiyar flourished in the 14th century. The latter date seems more probable for the Siddha saint since the cult started only with Tirumoolar in the 10th century. Marajjnana Sambandar, the famous 15th century Tamil poet, refers to Sivakkiyar in his work *Sivajnana Siddhiyar*. *See also* SIDDHAR, KUDUMBAL; SIDDHAR, PAMBATTI.

SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES. According to the *Annual Survey of Industries*, large-scale industries account for only one-fourth of the organized workforce that was employed in the manufacturing sector in Tamil Nadu. This suggests that most of the people are employed in the small-scale sector. A large population and a vast geographical area with varying levels of prosperity in the different pockets have induced Indian planners to lay special emphasis on the development of small-scale industries. This helps to ease the population pressure on land and clears the way for partial decentralization of industrial clusters in favor of rural areas. Tamil Nadu has therefore equally encouraged both large and small-scale industries. Small industry was the particular focus of the Third Five Year plan (1961–1966). *See also* INDUSTRY.

SMARTHA BRAHMINS. *See* IYER.

SONGS IN TAMIL CINEMA. It can be said that to a large extent **Tamil cinema** took off from the Tamil stage. Since **music** was a pri-

mary component of early Tamil **theater**, it was but natural that music, especially **Carnatic music**, should have been an indispensable part of cinema. The first Tamil film *Kalidas* had a total of 50 songs. Classical musicians like **G. N. Balasubramaniam** and **M. S. Subbalakshmi** (recipient of India's highest honor—the Bharat Ratna) sang romantic duets in many films like *Shakuntala*. The respected Tamil composer **Papanasam Sivam** has 500 film songs to his credit. In the initial years of cinema, many actors and actresses were chosen for their singing talent rather than for their acting abilities. Two names that come immediately to one's mind are K. L. Saigal from Hindi films and **M. K. Thyagaraja Bhagavatar** from Tamil films. The film *Meera*, in Tamil, became a hit because of M. S. Subbalakshmi's unforgettable music while **K. B. Sundarambal's** resonant voice immortalized the film *Auvaiyar*. Both Dandapani Desikar (especially as **Nandanar**) and T. R. Mahalingam (most notable being Sri Valli) gained renown for their devotional renderings.

A unique feature of Tamil songs in the pre-independence era was that they were songs by exponents of classical music and concert artists like G. N. Balasubramaniam, M. S. Subbalakshmi, **M. L. Vasanthakumari**, **D. K. Pattammal**, and others. A recent work by Vamanam (R. N. Krishnaswami) provides pen portraits of many of these personalities. A major change occurred with the beginning of playback singing, which replaced the requirement that actors also be good singers, a carryover from stage conventions. Actors began to mime the songs while somebody else sang for them. In Tamil cinema this innovation occurred in 1937 during the filming of *Chintamani*. The hero was the singing sensation M. K. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar (MKT) while the heroine was Ashwathama. In the course of the filming a serious rift occurred between the two. As a result Ashwathama refused to further sing any duets with MKT. A Carnatic musician, Rajagopala Sharma, lent his voice for the hero and the songs were recorded in the studio. The first instance of female playback was in 1939 in the film *Shanta Chakubai* the heroine of which was, once again, Ashwathama. Since the actress was very ill, her numbers were recorded in the voice of V. R. Dhanam. Incidentally, this was also the first time that a double was used in film shooting. The director Nadkarni used another woman in the long shots due to the indisposition of the heroine. This major change that took place in the late 1930s

was accompanied by the cutting of disks in studios so that songs of a film began to be popularized even before the release of the film. With improved technology, crooners took over and a loud and resonant voice was no longer a requisite for success in the world of music.

The past four decades have changed the style of film music, which is losing its pure classical flavor. Film music especially with the coming of **Ilayaraja** and **A. R. Rahman** has been molded to blend classical and folk in a new sort of music, which modifies classical music to suit the lighter mood, dictated by popular tastes. The result is kitsch, which has been commercially very successful. Voice training required for this genre was very different from the rigorous training demanded of concert artists. Playback singers like P. Susheela, L. R. Ishwari, T. M. Sударарajan, and more recently S. P. Balasubramaniam have captivated audiences both in North and South India. The South Indian **diaspora** has also given them a chance to go global and participate in recent experiments like fusion music sometimes called *chutney* music.

SOUTH AFRICA. *See* TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

SPENCERS. Spencers is now a household name in Tamil Nadu. Direction to any place in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) is prefixed by references to Spencer Plaza, Connemara Hotel (a Spencers' concern), or the Spencers Stores. Spencers began as a small business venture by two intrepid Englishmen in 1863—John William Spencer and Charles Durant. They started their business as Auctioneers and Commission Salesman at shop number 187 on Mount Road. The Oakshot family bought up their business in 1882 and turned it into a huge department store selling everything from biscuits to soaps and cigars. In 1895, apart from their retail stores, the Spencers began their own cigar factory at Dindigul in **Madurai**. Spencers entered the catering and restaurant business in the early 20th century expanding a business, which spread from Chennai southward into Tutucorin and northward right up to Peshawar in northwest Pakistan. Southern Indian Railways were said to have the best catering service provided by Spencers. Spencers became big time hoteliers with the establishment of the Connemara Hotel in then Madras in 1934. The other milestone in the Spencers Hotel business was the acquisition of Ameer Bagh,

where Elphinstone Hotel had stood since 1909. In 1911, Spencers acquired the West End Hotel in Bangalore and in 1943 secured control of the Savoy Hotel in Udagamandalam, better known as the colonial hill station of Ooty. Spencers suffered an enormous financial loss when their Mount Road Stores was gutted by fire in 1981. The 1980s witnessed a gradual (some have even called it insidious) takeover of the Spencer group of companies including their liquor business of McDowells by Vittal Mallaya and “liquor baron” Vijay Mallaya. In the 1990s, Spencers passed into the hands of the North Indian business giant R. P. Goenka. The past decade has witnessed a revival in Spencers’ fortunes with the starting of the chain of “Food World” stores throughout Tamil Nadu.

SRIDHARA AYYAVAL. Ayyaval’s name is a household name in the **Tanjavur** district. He was a great saint composer of the late 18th–early 19th century in the mould of **Thyagaraja** and Ramaswami Kavirayar. He composed a work on *Nama Siddhanta*, literally “the glory of the Name of the Lord.” His songs are sung in devotional singing called *Hari bhajan*. He composed the *Sahendra Vilasam*. See also MUSIC.

SRI LANKA. See TAMILS IN SRI LANKA.

STUDENTS AND THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU. The British government in India was most apprehensive of the tendency of Tamil youth to turn to revolutionary politics. In 1910, Dr. Bourne, the Director of Public Instruction at Madras (present-day **Chennai**), was asked by the government to enlist the cooperation of principals and teachers in schools and colleges to find out why political sedition held so much attraction for the student community. One feedback from J. D. W. Sewell, Manager of St. Joseph’s College, **Tiruchirapalli** was that the students believed that “the British are ruling India with a rod of iron solely in their own interests.” H. H. Risley, followed by another administrator E. Carlyle, issued circulars that forbade students from attending political meetings thereby pointing to student activism. Military police were deployed against students who participated in the *swadeshi*, non-cooperation and civil disobedience movements. The circulars

were issued in 1905, the year when Bengal was partitioned and extremist nationalists emerged on the political scene. G. Subramanya **Iyer** held a meeting at the Marina beach in 1905 to condemn British imperialist politics and the meeting was attended by no less than 3,000 students from various Colleges and University of Madras and its outskirts.

Bipan Chandra Pal, after his visit to Madras in 1907, came to be looked upon as the harbinger of the radical phase of Indian political struggle. The Students' Literary Association in 1886 in **Coimbatore** and the Young Men's Hindu Association in Salem in 1903 marked the beginning of students' political mobilization. The Nellore Progressive Union, Young Men's Association of Dindigal, **Madurai**, etc., followed these. J. Ramachandra Rao, a B.A. student from Rajamundry, inspired students to come to class wearing *vande mataram* (patriotic slogan of the nationalists) badges as well as shouting *vande mataram* in the class in unison so that individual culprits could not be identified and punished.

Annie Besant, the founder of the Home Rule Movement, a leading light of the **Theosophical Society** and a well-known educationist, became a rallying point for students in the early part of the 20th century. The students endearingly addressed her as *Annai*, meaning "mother." In order to train the students, she started the Orders of the Sons and Daughters of India, the Order of the Rising Star, and the Indian Boy Scouts Association. Under her inspiration, the Madras Students Convention came into being in 1916. However, Besant's adherence to the path of reform and persuasion resulted in the waning of her influence.

By the 1920s, the Tamil youth had turned to **extremists** and **revolutionaries** for achieving freedom at pace. Many participated in the Tirunelveli riots and the student agitations at Kakinada, Rajamundry, and Madras. **V. U. Chidambaranar**, Subramanya Siva, **G. Subramanya Iyer**, and V. V. S. Iyer provided political inspiration while their minds were fired by the revolutionary poetry of **Subramanya Bharatiyar**. It is noteworthy that two youth in their early twenties—Neelakanta Brahmachari and **Vanchinathan Iyer**—were behind the conspiracy that resulted in Vanchinathan Iyer assassinating the Tirunelveli District collector E. W. D. Ashe, in 1911.

Research has shown that more than 300 student organizations were formed in the Madras Presidency between 1886 and 1947. These organizations coordinated students' participation in the *Swadeshi*, non-cooperation, boycott of the Simon Commission, Salt Satyagraha, and civil disobedience. Besides these, political parties had their own youth wings, such as the Self-Respect Youth League founded in 1923 and the All India Students' Federation of the Communist Party, which held its first session in Madras in 1937. The National Youth Congress was founded in 1943 while the Rashtriya Seva Dal came into existence in 1941. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE.

SUBBALAKSHMI, M. S. (1916–2004). Known to the world of **music** as MS, she acquired celebrity status not only in India but abroad as well which was crowned by her concert before the United Nations General Assembly. MS was born in 1916 into a traditional **Devaradiyar** or Devadasi community and therefore inherited her family legacy of music and **dance**. Because the **women** of the community of dancing girls (what the colonial British regime termed “nautch girls”) seldom married, their children claimed lineage only from the mother. MS claimed hers from grandmother Akkammal and her mother Shanmugavadivu, both *veena* players. In fact MS, stands for **Madurai** Shanmugavadivu. She learned music at home and cut her first recorded disk when she was 10 years old—a devotional song in the Raga Chenchurutti. At the age of 14 she gave her first full-fledged concert. It is noteworthy that in those days women from “respectable” families never sang in public. It was usually only Devadasi women who sang or danced in public. During her early years of concert performances, she was faced by the dilemma of male percussionists refusing to play for a woman! MS also acted in a number of memorable films like *Sevasadan* (1939) and *Meera* (1948). Interestingly, the beautiful MS played the male role of sage Narada in *Savitri* (1941). As a budding singer and actress, Sadasivam interviewed her for the Tamil magazine **Kalki** in the year 1936. MS married Sadasivam, thus cutting free from the stigma of her community. The marriage lasted till his death in the 1990s. MS made her mark not only on the silver screen and the concert platform but also as an unsurpassed singer of devotional songs and a noted philanthropist. The

crowning glory of her career has been the conferring of the Bharat Ratna, India's highest national civilian honor, on her in 1999. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N.; PATTAMMAL, D. K.; TAMIL CINEMA; VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L.

SUBRAMANIAM, C. (1910–2000). A multi-faceted personality, CS, as he was popularly known, is best remembered for anchoring India's Green Revolution. Born into a prominent family of farmers in **Coimbatore** district of Tamil Nadu, CS was a student when he was first imprisoned for participating in the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**. He was a member of the Constituent Assembly, which drafted the Indian Constitution, and a member of the Provisional Parliament until 1952. In 1952, he joined the ministerial cabinet of Madras State, headed by **C. Rajagopalachari**, as minister in charge of the portfolios of Finance and Food. Later, he took charge of the portfolios of Education and Law. He was the president of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee during 1967–1968.

In 1962, CS moved to New Delhi and headed many key ministries. In 1964–1965, he became the union minister for Food and **Agriculture** in the Cabinet headed by Lal Bahadur Shastri. It was the period when the threat of famine loomed over India. This was also a time when Indian agricultural scientists, most notably those under the leadership of Dr. **M. S. Swaminathan**, were experimenting with hybrid varieties of wheat, jowar, and maize, which promised a quantum jump in yields. CS played a key role in enabling the speedy import of the Mexican hybrid seeds. His contributions in this field have earned him the name "Architect of the Green Revolution." In the realm of technology, CS was a key figure in redefining the role of agricultural research in not only the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, but also in the specialized Agricultural Universities. In 1971–1972, CS became the minister of Planning and deputy chairman of the Planning Commission. Between 1972 and 1974, he was in charge of the Ministry of Science and Technology. As a man endowed with a scientific temper, he prepared a vision statement for Science and Technology. His last ministerial tenure as a Congressman was between 1974 and 1977 when he held the Finance portfolio. He played a key role in presenting a paper on integrated rural development, which led to the Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP). He stayed with the

Congress until the end of the Emergency but later joined the short-lived Charan Singh Cabinet as defense minister in 1979–1980. He served as governor of Maharashtra between 1990 and 1993.

For 20 years after retiring from active political service, CS remained an active public figure. He was Chairman of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. He also founded the National Foundation of India, which aimed at addressing wide-ranging issues, such as gender justice, regional imbalances, and issues in information and communication technologies. CS received the Bharat Ratna, the highest national civilian honor, in 1998. He was also the recipient of the U Thant Award and the Norman Borlaug Award (1996).

SUBRAMANIAM, PADMA (1943–). Dr. Padma Subramaniam belongs to the Vazhuvoor School of **Bharatanatyam** dancing and her guru was Ramaiah Pillai. Padma has the distinction of holding a Ph.D. degree in dance from **Annamalai University**. She has designed the sculptures of the 98 dance postures (*karana*) of Lord **Shiva** and the Goddess Parvati in a temple at Satara in Maharashtra. She was conferred the titles Padma Bhushan by the Government of India and *Kalaimamani* by the Government of Tamil Nadu apart from the Sangeet Natak Academy award. She is presently the Director of Nrithyodaya, the **dance** school founded by her father K. Subramanyam in 1942.

SUNDARAM, M. V. (1917–1990). He was one of the architects of the communist movement in Tamil Nadu. He plunged into politics in his boyhood in the 1930s. Sundaram like countless other Marxists of that era represented the twin ideological struggle against British imperialism on the one hand and oppression of the proletariat by the capitalist on the other. It can even be said that the communist agenda because of its anti-capitalist anti-Congress stance (the Congress being perceived as a bourgeois party) was different from the nationalist agenda. In 1988 he came out with his remarkable autobiography in Tamil titled *The Life Journey of a Freedom Fighter*. See also **FREE-DOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU**.

SUNDARAMBAL K. B. (1908–1980). Sundarambal was born in **Coimbatore** and grew up in a poverty-stricken environment. She used

to eke out her livelihood by singing in trains, where she was spotted by M. G. Natesa **Iyer**, the great patron of **music** and **cinema**. In the film *Valli Tirumanam*, she was given the role of Valli opposite the celebrated singer and actor S. G. Kittappa. She picked up her knowledge of **Carnatic music** from Kittappa, whom she eventually married. The husband-and-wife team made a successful pair on screen as well until Kittappa passed away five years after their marriage. As a result of her contact with the political activist **Satyamurthy**, she began to sing patriotic songs at Congress meetings during the years of the **freedom struggle**. Sundarambal is today remembered for her devotional rendering of songs on the Tamil deity **Murugan**.

SUNDARAR (SUNDARAMURTHY NAYANAR). Sundarar is the last of the trinity who constitute the main votaries of Saivism among the **Nayanar** saints. He may have been contemporaneous with the **Pallava** King Rajasimha who ruled in the late 10th–early 11th century. However, some scholars also assign him to the eighth century. Sundarar occupies a unique place among the Nayanar because he was the first to write a hagiography of Saivite saints in his composition *Tiru Tondar Tohai*. Sundarar was born to Sadaiyar and Isaijnaniyar but was adopted by the locals of the region known today as the South Arcot region. He was married to two **women**—Changiliyar and Paravaiyar. It is said that **Shiva** stopped his marriage by claiming that he was his slave as per the deed of slavery recorded at the **temple** of Tiruvennaiallur. Sundarar’s long spiritual journey began at this temple and it is said that he walked with god as his friend and companion although Shiva had reclaimed him from a worldly life by calling him his slave, *Adiyan*. He is said to have been a close friend of **Cheraman** Peruman, the **Chera** king who also became a Nayanar. According to religious lore, Sundarar was taken to heaven in his physical body on a divine white elephant, perhaps the *Iravat*. *See also* APPAR; KARAIKKAL AMMAIYAR; NANDANAR; NAYANAR, IYARPAGAIYAR; NAYANAR, TIRUNEE-LAKANTA; TIRUJNA-NASAMBANDAR.

SVAMICHIDAMBARANAR (1900–1961). Born Chidambara Malayaman in 1900 in **Tanjavur** district, this Tamil poet and writer acquired celebrity as Svamichidambaranar. He showed his social radicalism by

marrying out of **caste**. His wife was the editor of a tract called *Arivukkodi* (Creeper of Knowledge), which commenced publication in 1936. He was an admirer of **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker** and served in an editorial capacity in his journals *Kudi Arasu* and *Viduthalai*. His reputation as a biographer rested on his well-researched book on E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker, the first biography of this much-profiled leader and politician. He also performed a rare service to the cause of Tamil by bringing out simple renditions accessible to the common man of well-known **Sangam** works like *Pathupattu*, *Ettuthogai*, *Silappadikaram*, and *Padinenkizhkanakku* as also the well-known medieval literary classic *Kamba Ramayanam*. On his death in 1961, his entire earnings were donated to the cause of furthering Tamil **language** and **literature**.

SVAYA MARIYADAI IYAKKAM (SELF-RESPECT MOVEMENT).

The Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam, also known as the “Self-Respect Movement,” was started by **E. V. Ramaswami Naicker** in 1925. The ideological thrust of the movement was essentially anti-Brahmanical. It aimed at restoring the self-respect of non-**Brahmins**, said to have been denied to them because of the oppressive nature of the Brahmanical **caste** structure. It was logical that Ramaswami Naicker in calling for the overturning of caste hierarchies created by Sanskritic Brahmanism should also have rejected Brahmanical notions of patriarchy. It can be said that both non-Brahmins and **women** found self-expression within the “Self-Respect Movement.” A third plank of the movement was its iconoclastic ideology, which rejected **religion**, ritual, and even religiosity, opting instead for a wholly secular paradigm. Until 1938, the movement functioned as a non-political organization. In 1938, Naicker became the leader of the **Justice Party** thus bringing together the social and political ideology of anti-Brahmanism. In the initial stages of its inception, the movement went in tandem with the nationalist agenda of the Indian National Congress. When the non-Brahmins within the Congress founded the Madras Presidency Association in 1917, Periyar became its vice-president. When Harijans or untouchables gained the right of temple entry after the Vaikom Satyagraha, Periyar was hailed as *Vaikom Virar* or the hero of Vaikom. By 1926, Periyar severed connections with the Congress because the Self-Respect Movement chose to align itself politically with the Justice Party. With the formation of the **Dravida Kazhagam** in 1944, the Self-Respect Movement gained an agitational

mass base. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU; NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT; TANI TAMIZH IYAKKAM.

SWAMINATHAN, MONKOMBU SAMBASIVAN (1925–). In the 1960s, as a cytogeneticist and administrator of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, he made major scientific advances, pioneering solutions to major **agricultural** problems in Asia. He led the way in introducing high-yielding varieties of wheat and **rice** to India and is widely recognized as the architect of the “Green Revolution” in India that subsequently swept Southeast Asia. This work resulted in doubling food grain production in India, from 12 million tons to 23 million tons in four crop seasons, and transformed India from a “begging bowl” to a “breadbasket.” His work in crop genetics and sustainable agricultural development in India and the Third World earned him the first World Food Prize in 1987, the Tyler and Honda Prizes in 1991, and the UNEP Sasakawa Award in 1994. He has been honored with the Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India, the Magsaysay Award, the Borlaug Award, and the Fellowship of the Royal Society of London. *See also* C. SUBRAMANIAN.

SWAMINATHAN, AMMU (1894–1966). Ammu was born into a prominent Nair family in North Kerala but her political career was centered in Tamil politics. Following her marriage to Dr. Swaminathan, a Tamil **Brahmin**, she became active in politics and social reform in the Tamil country. She founded the All India **Women’s** Conference in Madras (present-day **Chennai**). In 1934 Ammu joined the Indian National Congress. From 1934 to 1939, she was a member of the Madras Corporation. An active participant of the Quit India movement of 1942, she was imprisoned in the Vellore jail for a year. She was a councilor of the Madras Corporation, from which position she rose to be an elected member of the provisional Parliament of India in 1945. In 1946, she was made a member of the committee for drafting the Indian Constitution. From 1950 to 1957, she was a member of the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) and, from 1957 to 1960, a member of the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament). Ammu Swaminathan’s children are distinguished citizens of India, among them Colonel Lakshmi of the Indian National Army and **Mrinalini Sarabhai**, the famous **bharatanatyam** dancer. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

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TAMIL CINEMA. Tamil cinema has been in existence for nearly 86 years. One can even perceive it as the microcosm of the world of the Tamils. Tamil cinema reflects the cross currents that went into movements like the **freedom struggle**, Tamil separatism and the various movements—anti-**caste** or anti-class—that emanated from Tamil society at the close of the last millennium. Theodore Bhaskaran’s studies of the Tamil cinema show that in the early days it penetrated even remote villages, “riding piggyback” on the rural electrification program.

The first bioscope made its appearance on the streets of Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1897, very close to the time of its invention in the West. The credit for founding the first cinema company in Tamil Nadu in 1916 goes to R. Nataraja **Mudaliyar**. His India Film Company produced *Keechakavadham* (The Destruction of Keechaka), followed in 1917 by *Draupadivastrabharanam* (The Disrobing of Draupadi; Draupadi being one of the main female characters in the epic *Mahabharata*). Raghupati Prakasa followed with the film *Bheeshmapratigna* (Bheeshma’s Vow) in 1921. Interestingly, in the same year an Englishman called Whitaker produced *Valli Tirumanam* (Marriage of Valli). At least 73 films were produced during the silent era, the last one being *Vishnu Leela* made by Raghupati Prakasa in 1932.

The era of silent films technically came to an end with the production of the first talkie—*Kalidas*, by H. M. Reddy in 1931. The theme was the life of the Sanskrit poet and playwright who lived in the third century CE in north India. The heroine of the film, T. P. Rajalakshmi, went on to become a legendary figure in Tamil cinema. An interesting aspect of Tamil films was the tendency to copy Western culture in attire, **music**, and cultural practices like kissing on screen, although this was contrary to the Tamil ethos. A raging controversy broke out over the kissing scenes between the heroine Rukmani and the famous actor T. K. Shanmugam in *Menaka* produced by Raja Sandow in 1935. Comedy, however, had a strong indigenous flavor, with actors like N. S. Krishnan, T. S. Maduram, and Nagesh.

Tamil cinema played a crucial role in mobilizing public opinion during the years of the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**. In fact, the

very first talkie, *Kalidas*, featured two songs—one on the spinning wheel, which Gandhi made the insignia of the Indian National Congress and the other covertly supporting Gandhi’s Civil Disobedience movement. The dialogues written by **C. N. Annadurai** and **M. Karunanidhi** set the tone for the Dravidian movement in the Tamil country. Since 1947, Tamil cinema has become closely intertwined with Tamil Nadu politics. It is revealing of the extent to which cinema has been a major cultural preoccupation of the Tamils that five of its chief ministers have been key figures in Tamil cinema. C. N. Annadurai, who became a political idol in the name of *Arinjanar Anna*, was a scriptwriter. The list includes **M. G. Ramachandran** (MGR), founder of the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam**; M. Karunanidhi of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam** and **J. Jayalalitha**, the political heir of MGR.

The phenomenon of star politicians, although not unknown elsewhere, is ubiquitous in Tamil Nadu, with films being used as tools of conflicting political ideologies. Theodore Bhaskaran, in his recent survey, estimates that there are at least 2,548 cinema houses in Tamil Nadu, with 892 of them operating as “touring talkies.” Thus, cinema as a media has enabled the spread of political propaganda. It is noteworthy that the actor **Rajnikant**’s film *Muthu*, released in 1995, was partially responsible for bringing down the previous Jayalalitha regime. The actress **Vijayantimala** has been actively involved in politics over two decades. Major exceptions to this are **Gemini Ganesan**, **Sivaji Ganesan**, and **Kamalahasan** among the men and **B. Saroja Devi**, **Savithri Ganesan**, and K. R. Vijaya among women actors. Although Sivaji Ganesan joined the Congress I, he was not a frontline politician.

Tamil cinema today is known as much for its parallel cinema dealing with sensitive social and political themes as for its mega chart busters, which have made the industry commercially viable. Among the avant garde crop of directors one should mention Balu Mahendru, **Bharatidasan**, and Mani Ratnam. *See also* AVM FILM STUDIOS; GEMINI STUDIOS; ILAYARAJA; RAHMAN, A.R.; SONGS IN TAMIL CINEMA; THYAGARAJA BHAGAVATHAR M.K; TKS THEATRICAL GROUP.

TAMIL DESA PODU UDAMAI KATCHI (TDPUK). Tamil Desa Podu Udamai Katchi was started in 1990 and is headed by Pe. Mai-

yarasan. But the party claims that it is not a votary of Tamil chauvinism. The motto of this party is language-based nationalism. Its organ is *Tamilar Kannottam*.

TAMIL DIASPORA. The renowned Tamil poet and lyricist Kavignar **Kannadasan** once aptly remarked, “*Tamilan illada Nadu illai, Tamilanukku endru oru Nadu illai*” (“There is no land where there are no Tamils [and yet] there is no land that is there for the Tamils.”) The Tamils, therefore, refer to themselves today as a “Trans State Nation.” Tamil culture has spread beyond the shores of the Tamil country in the space of two millennia. Today, around 7–8 million Tamils are spread throughout the world. Among the countries where the Tamil diaspora is strongest, such as **Sri Lanka**, **Malaysia**, and **Singapore**, they are vital players in the politics and culture of that nation. Tamils constitute 2.5 million of the Sri Lankan population, two million (roughly 8%) of the Malaysian population, and 180,000 (roughly 7%) of the Singapore population. Singapore is the only country in the world where **Tamil** enjoys the status of a national language—a status it does not enjoy even in India. It is likely that Tamil merchants traveled as far as Greece and Rome to sell their merchandise. Commodities like pepper (referred in to **Sangam literature** as *Yavana priya* since *Yavana* was the term used by early Tamils for the Greeks and Romans) and textiles from the Tamil country enjoyed immense popularity in the Greco-Roman world.

Although **Tamil literature** is replete with references to the presence of foreign merchants, it is likely that settlement of Tamils is referred to in Greek texts. This is an unexplored area of research in the history of the Tamils.

Many Tamils crossed the ocean into Sri Lanka and the islands of the Malay Archipelago, thereby creating the concept of a “Greater India” during the period of the **Cholas** around the 10th century onward. Although history records many such incidents of Tamils settling beyond their shores, the most recent and significant wave of Tamil migrations took place during the colonial period. It is likely that some Tamils were part of the triangular slave trade of the British Empire in which Africans and Asians were sold as plantation laborers in the Americas and in the West Indies. From the 19th century onward, the Tamils went as indentured laborers to work in the rubber, sugarcane, tea, and coffee

plantations in Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, **Myanmar**, Mauritius, **Reunion Islands**, **South Africa**, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and other West Indian islands. The Tamils also went as migrant laborers to **Fiji** and Mauritius to work on the sugarcane plantations. In South America, Tamils settled in **Guyana**, Surinam, and French Guyana.

In most of these places, the Indian Tamils were lured by false promises of good working conditions and attractive salaries. Most of those who put their thumb prints on these contracts were illiterate. The contracts ranged from three to five years. The affluent classes among the Tamils went to Saigon (now Ho-Chi-Minh City) and Medan (located in Sumatra in Indonesia) and also to Malaysia and Singapore as plantation owners and traders. Many of these belonged to the **Chettiar** community. The Tamils, because of their ancient lineage, have retained their strong cultural identity as Tamils in the places encompassing the Tamil Diaspora, ranging from nearest points like Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Singapore to places as distant as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, **Australia**, and Guyana. *See also* TAMILS IN ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS; TAMILS IN HONGKONG; TAMILS IN THAILAND, TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS.

TAMIL ISAI SANGAM (ACADEMY OF TAMIL MUSIC). The **Madras Music Academy**, founded in 1928 by the **Brahmin** elements within Tamil culture, was greatly resented by those who regarded themselves as the representatives of Tamil Dravidian culture. One facet of the anti-Brahmin struggle, which commenced in the 1920s, was the opposition to the Brahmin-Sanskritic hold over the realm of **music**. As the opposition gradually built up, the great Tamil scholar and patron **Rajah Annamalai Chettiar** started the *Tamil Isai Sangam* (which can be broadly translated as Tamil Music Academy) in 1942 at the **Annamalai University** founded by him. Annamalai continued to function as the hub of the *Tamil Isai Sangam* for many years.

The Sangams emphasized the importance of promoting composers in Tamil and musicians with a non-Brahmin background in contrast to the Madras Music Academy, which was dominated by the Sanskritic compositions of **Muthusvami Dikshitar** and **Shyama Shastri** or the Telugu compositions of **Thyagaraja**. It is noteworthy that it was the *Tamil Isai Sangam* that patronized traditional **musical**

instruments like the **nadasvaram**, while the Brahmin sabhas or gatherings used violins (originating in the West) as accompaniments to the Carnatic classical vocalists. The Academy revived the practice of singing the compositions of Ananda Bharati, Kavikunchala Bharati, **Gopala Krishna Bharati**, and **Arunachala Kavirayar**, all of whom wrote devotional music only in the **Tamil language**. The politics inherent in music becomes clear when it is seen that **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker** organized nine concerts dominated entirely by Tamil music as a part of the conference proceedings of the **Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam (Self-Respect Movement)** in 1930 at Erode.

TAMIL LANGUAGE. Tamil is the oldest of the Dravidian group of languages, and is one of the oldest spoken languages in the world. The earliest body of **literature** in Tamil is the **Sangam literature**, a corpus of poetic anthologies pertaining roughly to the period from the third century BCE to third century CE. The oldest extant work on Tamil grammar and literary theory was written in the pre-Christian era by Tolkappiyar and is therefore known as the **Tolkappiyam**. It is because of its great antiquity that the Tamil language probably has the least number of letters among the Indian languages. However, while speaking, Tamils borrow some letters from Sanskrit, like ksha, ha, and sha. The **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam** (Tamil Separatist Movement), started by **Maraimalai Adigal** and **Neelambikai Ammaiyar** in the 1920s, tried to purge the Tamil language of its Sanskrit-based words. While in the state of Tamil Nadu, Tamil is spoken by about 56 million people, the wide extent of the Tamil diaspora has resulted in the Tamil language registering its presence and influence far beyond its shores. More than 2.5 million **Sri Lankan** Tamils speak Tamil apart from the migrant Indian Tamils. **Burma, Malaysia, Singapore**, and Indonesia together have more than one million Tamils who use their language. It is noteworthy that Tamil is one of the national languages of Singapore. Similarly, countries in east and **South Africa** have large Tamil-speaking populations. This includes **Mauritius, Fiji**, British **Guyana, Reunion Islands**, Madagascar, Trinidad, and Martinique, to name only some of the regions where nearly a million people speak Tamil. Tamil Brahmi inscriptions, which showcase the life and culture of early Tamils, have been found at Azhagarmalai in Madurai and at Mangulam (to name only a few spots) referring to

specialist merchants like cloth merchants and traders in plows. Tamil continues to be a vibrant living language, experimenting with new forms of the written word.

TAMIL MAANILA CONGRESS (TMC). A splinter group from the Congress I, the Tamil Maanila Congress, known as the TMC, was founded by **G. K. Moopanar** in 1996 because the Congress I joined with **J. Jayalalitha** and her party, **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)**. Ironically, Moopanar was regarded so highly by the Congress high command that he came very close to becoming prime minister in 1996. Following the split, seasoned politicians such as **P. Chidambaram**, M. Arunachalam, and S. R. Balasubramaniam, joined the TMC. In 1996, following the split, the party joined with the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** and won 39 seats in the Tamil Nadu Assembly and as many as 20 seats in the Lok Sabha, (the Lower House of Parliament). Since the death of Moopanar in 2001, the TMC has rejoined the Congress I, thus negating the very basis on which it was founded. P. Chidambaram is the finance minister of the Congress I-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA), which came to power in May 2004. Jayanthi Natarajan of the TMC functions in the capacity of spokesperson for the Congress I.

TAMIL THEATER. The dramatic tradition among the Tamils is enshrined in *Agathiyam* by Agathiyar, probably a mythological figure and in the *Bharatam* of Iraiyanar, a **Sangam** poet. The Sangam texts—especially *Silappadikaram*—provide descriptions of ancient Tamil drama. This is referred to as *koothu* and the players as *koothar*. In later Sangam texts, actresses are called *nataka magalir*. Interestingly, during the Sangam period the term *natakam*, which is today used to denote the stage, was being used to characterize musical renderings. It is in this sense that the texts *Perumpanatrupadai* (verse 55) and *Pattinapalai* (verse 114) use the term *natakam*.

Modern Tamil drama can be traced back to the 16th and 17th centuries. Some famous plays composed during this period by anonymous authors are *Pallu Natakam* (on the life of the low **caste** agricultural **Pallar** community) and the *Kuttrala Kuravanji Natakam* (on the life of the nomadic gypsies of the **Tinai Kurinji**). The poet **Arunachala Kavirayar** wrote *Ramanatakam*, which was a socio-

religious play. The 1,000-pillared halls of the **temples** became the cultural centers where such plays were staged.

Modern theater began with Shankardas Svamigal (1867–1922), whose career spanned the years 1885 to 1922. It was he who trained the celebrated TKS brothers (*see* **TKS Theatrical Group**) in the art of stage acting. His best-known production was *Alli Arjuna*. Sambhanda **Mudaliyar** was his worthy successor, and he received the title “Padma Bhushan” from the government of India in recognition of his services to drama.

The first social play in Tamil was *Dambachari Dilasam* (The Address of the Boaster) written in 1867 by Kasi Viswanatha Mudaliyar. Another trend in the 19th century was the enactment of Tamil renderings of English plays, especially those by Shakespeare. Venu-gopalachariyar staged *The Merchant of Venice* as *Venice Vaniyan* while in 1889 Ramaswami **Iyengar** translated and staged “*Two Gentlemen of Verona*” as *Arunasagan*. In 1926, Vipulananda Swami wrote the *Madanga Chulamani*, which was a grammar of Tamil drama based on the indigenous theatrical traditions reflected in the 12th-century Adiyarkunallar’s commentary on the Sangam epic *Silappadikaram*. Renowned Muslim plays in this era include Muhammad Ibrahim’s *Appasu Natakam* and Vanna Kalanjiya Pulavar’s *Alibhadshah Natakam* and *Daiyar Sultan Natakam*.

In the early 20th century, the TKS theatrical group became involved in India’s anti-imperial struggle as well as the Dravidian movement. Tamil theater acquired patriotic overtones and carried a strong Dravidian flavor. Plays like *Rajaraja Chozhan* reflected this mood. Chidambara Swami wrote *Kattabomman Kuthu*, immortalizing the poligar **Virapandya Kattabomman** who opposed the British regime and was hanged for his anti-British activities. It is interesting to note that the British banned any public staging of *Kattabomman Kuthu* and *Oomai Dorai*, another patriotic play centered around a local hero. T. K. Pavalar’s *Kaddar Bhakti*, translated by the playwright himself as the *Love of Kaddar*, began to be staged in 1922, and the published play was circulated widely in 1931 despite being declared proscribed **literature**. The ideology of the Dravidian movement was presented on the Tamil stage by the noted screenplay writer and film producer **Bharatidasan** in his play, *Iranyan Alladu Inayatra Viran* based on **E. V. Ramaswami Naicker**’s ideas and staged in his presence.

The trajectory of Tamil plays changed dramatically from Hindu mythological stories to themes of social reform and political activism. This shift was reflected in M. R. Radha's *Kimayanam* (a parody of *Ramayanam*), **M. Karunanidhi's** *Manthri kumari* staged in 1945, *Needhidevan Mayakkam* (the somnambulant god of justice) staged in 1947, and N. S. Krishnan's *Kindanar* with its fiery anti-caste dialogue. Another major change in the nature of these plays was that the place of songs, so characteristic of the first half of the 19th century, was now replaced by the rhetoric with which the Dravidian movement had become identified.

The post-independence era witnessed two trends—realistic drama, which emulates the “theater of the absurd,” and related trends in Western theater on the one hand and traditional Tamil drama based on folk and mythological themes. “Cho” Ramaswamy, in his plays, introduced political satire. The establishment of the National School of Drama in the capital city of New Delhi inspired establishment of regional schools along similar lines. But unfortunately professional theater groups like that of Manohar or S. V. Shekhar were threatening to fold up because actors opted either for the small screen (**television**) or the big screen (**cinema**). One visible trend in recent years is the proliferation of amateur theater groups and the staging of socially relevant street plays on issues like communal harmony and gender equity. *See also* TAMIL CINEMA.

TAMILS IN ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS. **Andaman and Nicobar** Islands is a cluster of 350 small and large islands. The islands have long time connectivity with the Tamil country. In 1050, they came under the sway of the **Chola dynasty**, and the Tamils who settled in these islands came to be called Chomban. Chola names can still be seen in the manner in which the islands have been named. Out of a total population of 250,000, Tamils today number around 40,000. There are eight Tamil journals, all of which are published from Port Blair, and one of which—*Andaman Mura*—has been running for 18 years. *Idli* and *Dosai* kiosks are a common sight in these parts. There are temples to **Pillaiyar** and **Murugan**, of which the best known is the Murugan temple in Port Blair. Apart from Deepavali, which is widely celebrated by all Indians, Tamils specifically celebrate *Panguni Uttiram* (regarded as Lord Murugan's

birthday) and *kartigai*. The Tamils keep their links with their culture through cinema and songs. Some 6,000 Tamil children learn their mother tongue as an option in the schools. Significantly, the Tamil Nadu government has reserved seats for the Tamil students from these islands in medical and engineering courses. However, Tamils play only a small role in the administrative and political life of the islands. Out of 44 administrative units, only one has a Tamil head. The 11-member municipal council of Port Blair has three Tamils. Thus, the Tamil political presence here is important although not seminal. *See also* TAMIL DIASPORA; TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MALAYSIA; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN SINGAPORE; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA. Australia has a total population of around 15 million out of which 30,000–35,000 are Tamils (excluding the **Sri Lankan** Tamils who are also present in a sizable number). The **Tamil diaspora** in Australia can be dated from around the 1780s when the first wave of migration took place. They came primarily in the capacity of farmers and plantation workers. While the push factor in the case of the Indian Tamils was economic distress, for the Sri Lankan Tamils it was acute political unrest and the virtual civil war conditions in Sri Lanka. Today, Tamils are concentrated mainly in the two states of New South Wales and Victoria. Tamil migration into Australia was not only from Tamil Nadu but also from other south Asian countries. For instance, it has been estimated that in 1981, 2,000 Tamils came from **Singapore** and another 8,000 from **Malaysia, Fiji, Mauritius, and South Africa.**

Historians believe that ancient Tamils went via Southeast Asia and reached Australia while many settled in Papua New Guinea. Inscriptional evidence suggests that in the 15th-century Tamils were trading in Australia and New Zealand. A Tamil ship's bell was found by the Maoris with the inscription in Tamil stating that "this bell belongs to the ship owned by Moiuddin Vakkusu." The record apart from proving Tamil movement toward this region also testifies to the strong presence of Tamil **Muslims** in the trading world.

Today, Australia is a land of opportunity for Tamils hailing from all walks of life—engineering, medicine, and computer software specialists. The influx of students was occasioned by **educational** opportunities and an open society. Tamils have benefited practically from the lack of social discrimination over race, class, or gender. However, despite a relatively high standard of living, the Tamils have had to compromise their cultural identity. For instance, the practice of cremation has been given up because it is alien to Australian society. Temples are few and far between. The first temple was that of Sri Venkatesvara (replicated on the pattern at Tirupati) in the town of Helensburgh. Now the Tamils at Sydney have constructed a **Murugan** (known as the “Tamil god”) temple there. Marriages are still sought to be celebrated in temples although on a very modest scale. Political participation of Tamils in Australia is miniscule, unlike in places like Mauritius, Singapore, or Malaysia, where they are politically active. *See also* TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS. The course of **Tamil diaspora** in Fiji follows the same lines as elsewhere. They were brought here during the 19th century to work on sugar plantations as replacement for slave labor. As indentured laborers, the Tamils came for a period of five years but stayed on because they did not have the means to return to their homeland. On the plantations, 80% of the profits went into the coffers of the Australian companies and 20% to the planter, leaving the plantation laborer living below the poverty line.

Fiji is a conglomeration of small islands in which Tamils are concentrated in Vithilevu and Vanuvalevu. Out of a total migrant population of 350,000, Tamils number around 80,000. Unlike in Mauritius or the **Reunion Islands**, where the Tamils have retained their **language** and cultural identity, the Tamils in Fiji are by and large ignorant of their mother tongue. While around 5,000 may have a slight acquaintance with the language, only around 2,000 can actually read and write Tamil. However, Tamil language and culture among the Fiji Tamils has been revived in recent years by a non-governmental organization styling itself the South Indian Society for Unity of

Religious/Ethical Creeds (the Tamil name is *Ten Indiya Sanmarga Aikiya Sangam*). An interesting aspect of the history of Fijian Tamils is their involvement in the Indian national movement, which had a significant impact on their socioeconomic status. Mahatma Gandhi's close associate, C. F. Andrews, had launched a nationwide agitation against indentured labor. Swami Rudrananda of the Ramakrishna Mutt, Mr. A. T. Patel, and members of the aforementioned society called *Sanmarga Aikiya Sangam* took up the matter in Fiji. The Fijian Satyagraha achieved the feat of transferring the bulk of the profits into the hands of the tiller of the soil. As a result of this "silent revolution" the standard of living of the Tamils has gone up noticeably. Prominent Tamil citizens of the island like Sadhu Kuppasami, M. N. Naidu, and T. A. J. Pillai have used their resources and the auspices of the *Sanmarga Aikiya Sangam* to promote Tamil schools, build **temples**, and encourage cultural troupes from Tamil Nadu to visit Fiji and acquaint the Tamils with their cultural heritage. Among the best-known temples are the Venkatesa Perumal temple in Lampasa and the **Murugan** temple in Nadi, which is nearly 200 years old. *See also* TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MALAYSIA; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN SINGAPORE; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN GUYANA. The Tamils began to migrate to Guyana as indentured laborers in 1838 and continued to migrate until 1917. The first batch of Tamils consisted of 396 laborers brought in by John Gladstone, the owner of a sugarcane plantation. Between 1845–1948, 45 shiploads of laborers reached Guyana, of which 21 ships were from Madras (present-day **Chennai**) harbor alone! The Tamils covered a distance of 19,000 km from the shores of Tamil Nadu to Guyana. Due to inadequate income as plantation "coolies" (meaning laborers), many of them became domestic servants, janitors, and even beggars. Some started small shops called kiosks. By 1921, many of the Tamils had returned to India, except for 1,500 families spread through 60 townships.

The second wave of migration into Guyana consisted of professionals, such as nurses, doctors, teachers, and engineers. In 1987, the Tamils in Guyana totaled 30,000 on the low side and 60,000 on the

high side. Tamils today are producers and traders of sugar and rum and are also marginally involved in the production of gold, aluminium (bauxite), and wood. They are settled in the big cities of New Amsterdam and George Town. Some prominent Tamils of Guyana today are Thiru Selvimuthu, a leading doctor in George Town, J. R. Ramasami, professor of life sciences at Guyana University, Dr. Hirnan Ramasami, a leading general physician in Albion Town, and James Naidu in civil services/administration. They have built a few **temples**, especially to **Murugan** and Ganesha (**Pillaiyar**), which are, however, called “churches” in the local parlance. Out of the Tamil population, actually 35% are converts to **Christianity**, although they retain many of their Tamil traditions. One can therefore say that the Tamil families living in Guyana have effected a curious cultural fusion. *See also* TAMIL DIASPORA; TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MALAYSIA; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN SINGAPORE; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN HONG KONG. In 1898, Hong Kong became a colony of the British and was returned to China in 1997 after the expiration of a 99-year lease. There are barely 1,000 Tamil families in Hong Kong now, out of a total population of 7 million. Their numbers have reduced since the Chinese takeover of the region. Of these, the majority are **Muslims**, who are a fairly affluent community. Tamil culture can be seen in the restaurants run by them and the few Tamil mosques and temples. Interestingly, the tiny Tamil community boasts a Tamil Sangam founded more than 40 years ago to which **C. N. Annadurai**, the chief minister of Tamil Nadu, paid a visit in 1965. The Tamils feel that Chinese control over Hong Kong has rendered their future uncertain since they are not sufficient in numbers to influence state policies. *See also* TAMIL DIASPORA; TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN MALAYSIA; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN SINGAPORE; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN MALAYSIA. Movement into Malaysia may have begun as early as the first–second century CE. The early Tamils who traveled beyond their own shores were mostly traders, and it is interesting that places like Malaysia and **Singapore** have a high percentage of **Chettiars** (the traditional trading **caste** of South India) among their Tamil migrants. Although the process of Indianization may have begun very early in the Malay Archipelago as a result of these early trade links and also the interconnection between the **Cholas** and **Pandyas** and the Archipelago, which historians have described as “Greater India,” the diaspora substantively began their migration only in the 1850s. The British began to use Indian labor to supplant or balance Chinese labor in the rubber plantations, coffee cultivation, and palm oil industry. Of the Indian labor imported into Malaysia, 90% came from South India, and an overwhelming majority were Tamils. It has been estimated that Tamils constitute a whopping 80% of the diasporic Indians in Malaysia. Today, Tamils in Malaysia constitute roughly 8% of the total population. Earlier, the figure was higher, at 10%. Of a total population of 25 million, Tamils number roughly two million. The Malaysian government runs 530 Tamil primary schools, which have around 110,000 Tamil children studying in them. The Tamil community publishes two newspapers—*Tamil Nesan* and *Malayalam Nanban*. The state boasts two exclusive Tamil radio stations—RTM Tamil and THR Raga. There is also an exclusive Tamil cable network called ASTRO Vanavil (meaning “rainbow” in Tamil). The National Education (Indian Schools) Development Council of Malaysia facilitates and funds research on aspects of the **Tamil Diaspora**. The Tamils have built a number of temples to both **Murugan** and **Amman**, who are regarded as “Tamil” gods. Deepavali and Tai Pusam are two major religious festivals of the Tamils, which have been declared as occasions for a national holiday in Malaysia. Unlike many other instances of diaspora Tamils, Malaysia has had Tamils playing a fairly important part in politics and policy making. Samyvellu was a federal minister (minister of works) in the Malaysian government, and three of the federal deputy ministers were Tamils. However, the Islamization of Muslim governments all over the world has also influenced the political climate in Malaysia and the spinoff of this is being felt, although to a marginal degree, by

the Tamil diaspora. *See also* TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN MYANMAR. Movement into Myanmar (formerly Burma) may have begun as early as the first–second century CE, as is the case with **Malaysia** and **Singapore**. This is because these countries formed a part of the commerce between the early Roman Empire and the Tamil and Kerala coasts (the old Tamilaham). However, the migrations in the modern period into British Burma began with the coming of indentured laborers to work on the rubber plantations. Tamils, according to a report published in 1966, numbered 200,000, while the Telugus were 50,000 and the Malayalis merely 5,000. About 50 primary schools are run by Tamils. There are more than 40 **Hindu** temples founded and administered by Tamils in Myanmar and two Tamil Catholic parishes. The Nattukottai **Chettiar** community of Tamil Nadu administers **Murugan** (also known as Dandayuthapani) temples in 32 towns. Many of these temples are concentrated in the Rangoon (present-day Yangon) area. Many south Indians fled Burma during World War II when Rangoon was bombed, but the Tamil business community continued and in fact cornered a major part of the Burmese economy. It is believed that as a result of Tamil domination over the agricultural sector, many Burmese farmers became heavily indebted to the Tamil Chettiars who practically owned all the rice fields of Burma. It was to counterbalance the Chettiar moneylenders that the Burmese government nationalized its banks in the 1960s. The Tamil business class, represented largely by the Chettiars, also own many of the restaurants in Myanmar, which are in fact called “Chetti Hotels.” The prosperity of the Tamil community, combined with the visible signs of their religiosity, is somewhat reminiscent of the Jews in large parts of Europe. The wealthy Tamils earned the resentment of the local population, resulting in the adoption of discriminatory policies against them. The Tamil population figures for 1966 do not seem to have gone up substantially since then because of the somewhat conservative immigration policy adopted by the government of Myanmar. Second, popular Tamil dailies like *Rasika Ranjani* and *Thondan* have

been banned by the military government along with other institutions promoting **Tamil language** and culture. The closed-door policy of Myanmar is leading to the gradual exodus of the Tamils from that country. Those who have remained have, by and large, adopted Myanmar names, customs, and even dress. *See also* TAMIL DIASPORA; TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS. A French colony, Reunion Islands is located on the Indian Ocean a distance of 200 km southeast of Mauritius. The total area is only 2,500 km². Discovered by the Portuguese in 1520, the islands passed into French hands in 1816 and remained so until 1946. The islands have a total population of 550,000, of whom 200,000 are Tamils, making the islands one of the largest **diaspora** settlements.

Initial migrations took place when Tamils, largely from the French colonies of Karaikkal and **Pondicherry**, moved into Reunion as indentured laborers in the sugarcane plantations and the sugar mills between 1848 and 1885. The plantations were being run with slave labor from Madagascar until slavery was officially abolished by the revolutionary council of Republican France in 1848 following the downfall of the July monarchy. Therefore, indentured labor from India replaced the labor of African slaves. It can be said that the triumph of the abolitionist lobby in France marked the beginning of the Tamil diaspora in this region. The Tamils speak Creole, which is a curious admixture of French, **Tamil**, and a few other languages. French citizenship was automatically conferred on the Tamils who remained in the islands. Tamil is taught as an option in schools, colleges, and even the university. **Education** is compulsory for all up to 18 years. Today, Tamils in the Reunion Islands are in the construction business and in transport and road construction. Tamils, like other communities, receive government aid for cultivation of vanilla, geranium, and a medicinal herbal root referred to in Tamil as vettiver. Tamils also own cement and black marble factories. However, Gujarati **Muslims** dominate the entrepreneurial sector.

Since the Tamils constitute a sizable part of the population, their cultural and religious identity is very strong. There are temples to Draupadi and Kali **Amman** as well as **Murugan**. Devout Tamils do fire walking, a unique cultural practice of the Tamils on special religious occasions like *Panguni Uttiram* and *Kanda Shashti*. Most private homes have a small shrine for their gods. It is interesting that even ancient folk dances like *karakattam* and “**Poikal kudirai**,” which have become a rarity in Tamil Nadu, are performed with zest in the Reunion Islands. *See also* TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MALAYSIA; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN SINGAPORE; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN SINGAPORE. The entire southeast Asian region came under sphere of influence of the **Chola** kings from around the 10th century onward when Tamil merchants called **Chettis** formed the earliest diasporic population of the region and the adjacent regions like Indonesia and **Myanmar**. However, movement into the Singapore region may have begun as early as the first–second century CE as a result of the Indo-Roman trade. While these early migrations of the Tamils constitute a logical possibility, hardcore evidence in the form of inscriptions are only forthcoming from the Chola period onward. However, the spate of migrations in the 19th century were brought about by the Chetti entrepreneurs as well as British investments in plantations and in hiring cheap, indentured Tamil labor.

Singapore was founded as a British trading colony in 1819. It joined the Malaysian Federation in 1963 but separated two years later and became independent. Indians have constituted a component of Singapore’s society since its foundation. Tamils form two-thirds (around 64%) of the total migrant Indian population. Tamils in Singapore enjoy the unique distinction of having Tamil as one of its three national languages, a status that the language does not enjoy even in India. Singapore has a total of 200,000 Tamils, constituting roughly 7% of the population. The untouchable **caste** groups from the Tamil country form the major part of the unskilled or semi-skilled labor force in Singapore. However, there is hardly any social stigma attached to these castes, and they are referred to in Singapore by their

modern Tamil nomenclature “**Adi Dravidas.**” They have enjoyed free temple entry, although their own special temple is the **Mariamman temple**, which is the oldest Tamil temple in Singapore. The only social situation in which caste plays a role among the **Tamil diaspora** is in matrimonial alliances. The Tamil community still believes in arranged marriage, and the prominent **Chettiar** community, for instance, would not like inter-marriage with the lower castes. One of the most popular dailies in Singapore is the *Tamil Murasu*. Singapore Tamils also manage Tamil broadcasting channels and have multiple websites dealing with Tamil culture and its spread. Sadly, however, for the future of the **Tamil language**, despite the fact that Singapore University has a very strong department of Tamil linguistics and **literature**, more Indians today claim to understand and speak Malay (nearly 97%) than Tamil (around 79%). The Tamil community in Singapore today is struggling hard to secure residence status, citizenship, or entrance for the families of those men who have contributed to the work force of Singapore and most importantly, the permission for **Brahmin** priests from India to come and organize the religious life of the Tamils. *See also* TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MALAYSIA; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA. The first group of Tamil laborers arrived on 17 November 1860 to work in the sugarcane fields of South Africa. Around 1855, the white settlers in the British colony of Natal had discovered that the coastlands of Natal had tremendous potential for sugarcane farming, provided that reliable labor could be found. They learned that the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius had developed a thriving sugar industry using Indian labor. Adopting the same pattern, South Africa began using indentured labor from India. Among these, 60% came from Madras (present-day **Chennai**). Labor traders went as passengers and brought back shiploads of indentured laborers, most of whom were illiterate and quite ignorant of their destination. Today, Natal is one of the four provinces that make up the Republic of South Africa, with 600,000 out of a total of 800,000 Indians. The majority of these are descendents of these Tamil plantation workers.

The early indentured laborers were followed by Tamil merchants belonging primarily to the **Chettiar** community who came with their silks, spices, rice, and other luxury products. They were fairly well educated and were called “passenger” Indians because they had paid for their passage in the ships. Many of these merchants settled in Transvaal and Johannesburg. **Tillaiyadi Valliyammai**, who led the **women** during the freedom struggle in South Africa and was an associate of Gandhi, belonged to one such diasporic family who had originally migrated from Tillaiyadi in the Tamil country. Many of the children of the indentured laborers in South Africa who chose to make it their home became white-collar workers, teachers, and clerks. While the poorest among them took to fishing or domestic labor, those Tamils who were economically better off started small enterprises like pottery making, basket weaving, etc. Very few Tamils occupy the affluent rung of society. The South African Tamils have a fairly strong sense of cultural identity.

While most of the early indentured laborers were illiterate, there were some Tamil scholars and teachers among the next lot of migrants, and they formed the nucleus of Tamil schools in South Africa. A number of these schools were established in Durban, Transvaal, and Natal. One Vriddachalam Pillai, who had a small business in Durban, ran a Tamil school and published a Tamil weekly called *Viveka Banu* with his own printing press. Other scholars well-known in Durban for their service to Tamil language and culture are S. M. Pillai and G. R. Naidu. It is noteworthy that the Tamil departments in government schools throughout South Africa and the Tamil Department at the University of Durban-Westville are now supplementing these private schools

Among the younger generation of Tamils, the main mode of communication is English; however, Tamil cultural identity is forged through the celebration of Tamil festivals and the observance of religious practices. The reassertion of Tamil identity is being achieved through a number of societies and organization such as The Natal Tamil Vedic Society, South African Tamil Federation, Tamil Advancement Society, and others. The Saiva Siddhanta Sangam and Arutpa Kazhagam are promoting the teaching and singing of Tamil religious music such as Tiruppugazh and **TeVaram**. The Mariamman **temple** in Pretoria has been accorded the status of a national monu-

ment by the South African Government. *See also* TAMIL DIASPORA; TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MALAYSIA; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN SINGAPORE; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN SRI LANKA. Tamil settlements in Sri Lanka go back 1,500 years. The Tamils dominate the northeastern part of the island. According to the 1981 census, the Tamils constitute 2.69 million of the total population. The first major migration into the region took place during the **Chola** period. Many Tamils crossed the ocean into Sri Lanka and the islands of the Malay archipelago, creating the concept of a “Greater India” during the period of **Rajaraja Chola** and Rajendra Chola around the 10th century onward. An interesting episode of the trans-territorial loyalties of diasporic Tamils is recorded in an 11th century inscription of King Vikramaditya Chola. The record refers to the victorious siege of Sri Lanka by the Chola king Virarajendra in 1069 in which he defeated the king of Ceylon (the earlier name for Sri Lanka). The Ceylonese king retaliated by declaring war on Vikramaditya VI, the successor of Virarajendra because the Ceylonese ambassadors to the Chola court had been humiliated and insulted. In the war that ensued, the huge “diasporic” Tamil contingent in the Ceylonese army refused to take up arms against their Tamil kinsmen from across the border. The Tamil rebels even burned down the king’s palace, forcing him to retreat temporarily to Wakirigala. Nilakanta Shastri, the celebrated Tamil scholar, has cited this incident in his *History of South India*.

The **Pandyan** country has had a very long link with the Sri Lankan coast. Pearl fishing carried on at Mannarkudi and Tutukudi (Tutucorin of the British times) had a direct maritime connection with Sri Lanka. In fact, the founder of the Pandyan kingdom is said to have been a Ceylonese princess! The Tamils who migrated into Sri Lanka during the 9th–10th centuries and later on in the medieval period are today called “Sri Lankan Tamils.” Archaeological evidence in the form of ancient temples and Chola bronzes installed in Sri Lankan temples testify to the antiquity of the **Tamil diaspora**. A 48.6-cm bronze image of the Saivite saint **Tirujnanasambandar** has been found in the **Shiva** temple at

Polanaruva, while the Tirukedisvaram temple (earlier called Rajarajesvaram) goes back to the sixth century and was one of the holy sites praised by the **Nayanar** saints in their hymns. The inscriptions, which relate to the Tamils in Sri Lanka during the Chola and Pandyan periods, were assembled by the renowned Sri-Lankan Tamil scholar A. Velupillai in his two-volume work, *Ceylon–Tamil Inscriptions* (1971). However, the Tamils who came into Sri Lanka in the course of the 19th and early 20th centuries as indentured laborers are today considered Indian Tamils, as distinct from the “indigenous Tamils.” According to the Statistical Abstract Census published in 1981, while Sinhala speaking people constitute 73.98% of the population, Sri Lankan Tamils are 12.60% and Indian Tamils 5.56%. Tamil **Muslims**, who are primarily migrants from **Malaysia**, constitute 7.41% and speak a language that is predominantly Tamil but with a smattering of Malay and Sinhala. According to the above report, roughly 25% of the Sri Lankan population has been returned in the census as Tamil-speaking. The influence of the Malabar Coast, which formed a part of the old Tamizhaham and today constitutes the Kerala State, can also be perceived in many ways in the Tamil culture of Sri Lanka. Traces of matrilineal society, reflective of the pattern in Kerala (and possibly among the **Sangam** Tamils), can be perceived among the Tamil diaspora.

Another very interesting story relating the two cultures is the **Kannagi** legend that is narrated in the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram*. Gajabahu, the king of Sri Lanka, attended the consecration of the first shrine ever built in memory of Kannagi, the *Pattini Daivam* (literally “wife-goddess”) at Kodungalur (Cranganore of the **East India Company** period). From here, Gajabahu carried with him a consecrated image of Kannagi, which was duly installed most probably in Yazhpanam (Jafna). Here, however, Kannagi is worshipped by the Sinhalese Tamils as a five-hooded snake. The Tamil god **Murugan** occupies a very special place in the religious and ritual life of the Sri Lankan Tamils. Kadirkamam is a major pilgrimage site not only for the Tamils of Sri Lanka but also for the Indian Tamils.

During the course of the 20th century Sri Lanka emerged as a major linguistic and cultural center of the Tamils. Some of these great Tamil scholars are Srilasri Arumuganavalar, Svami Vipulanandar, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Hanti Perinbanayakam, “Hindu Board” Rajaratnam, the renowned historian

Vidyanandan, and, most important, Ananda Coomaraswamy. All of these scholars have made pioneering contributions not only to the Tamil culture of Sri Lanka but to the history, art, and culture of Tamil Nadu. While up to the pre-independence period Tamils were prominent both in the agrarian sector and in trade, Sri Lanka's independence in 1948 and the bitter ethnic conflicts between the Sinhalese and the Tamils has changed the political and economic landscape of northeastern Sri Lanka since the 1960s. The Liberation Tigers for Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has sought self-governance for the Sinhala Tamils, which has been opposed by the political parties in power at the national level. Unceasing warfare and bloodshed has caused many Tamil families to flee Sri Lanka and settle as refugees in India, Mauritius, Great Britain, mainland Europe, **Australia**, and elsewhere where they have found comparative security. The Tamils of Sri Lanka today are virtually living on the fault line not knowing when a terrorist attack or a military shoot out will destroy their homes. The peace-seeking process is ongoing, and both the Tamil and the Sinhalese, tired of the long years of living in terror, are hoping that tranquility and prosperity returns to this troubled island. *See also* TAMIL DIASPORA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN SINGAPORE; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN THAILAND.

TAMILS IN THAILAND. H. G. Quaritch Wales, a chronicler writing in 1931, describes how **Tamil** chants are used in the coronation ceremony of the kings of Thailand. The renowned Tamil scholar from Sri Lanka, Professor Xavier S. Thaninayagam, identified one as a stanza from the **Nayanar** saint-poet **Manikkavachagar**'s *Thiruvempavai*, while the second chant, called Loripavay, is actually the refrain of the *Tiruppavai* and *Thiruvempavai* called *elorpavai*. Interestingly, another state ceremony of the Thais is called *Triyambavay*—*Tripavay* (a corrupted form of *Tiruvempavai*—*Tiruppavai*) and the actual function is the Tamil Oonjal or swing ceremony, which the Thais call Lo Jin Ja. The Brahmanical high priest of Thailand at present is called Vamadeva Muni.

These ancient traditions take the links between Tamil culture and Thailand to somewhere around the eighth and ninth centuries when the **Pallava** and **Chola** kings extended their socio-religious influence

over Southeast Asia. In fact, the script in use in the kingdom very closely resembles the Pallava script. Mahayana Buddhism, however, seems to have gradually supplanted the influence of Brahminism. Today, Thailand has a very small population of Tamils, most of whom are in business or **banking** and are settled mostly in Bangkok, the capital. *See also* TAMIL DIASPORA; TAMILS IN AUSTRALIA; TAMILS IN FIJI ISLANDS; TAMILS IN GUYANA; TAMILS IN HONG KONG; TAMILS IN MALAYSIA; TAMILS IN MYANMAR; TAMILS IN REUNION ISLANDS; TAMILS IN SINGAPORE; TAMILS IN SOUTH AFRICA; TAMILS IN SRI LANKA.

TANI TAMIZH IYAKKAM (PURE TAMIL MOVEMENT). The proclamation of **Tamil** as the language of Dravidian Nationalism happened during the later half of the 19th century itself. Tamil scholars like Sivajnana Munivar, Panditamani Kadiresan **Chettiar**, **U. V. Swaminatha Iyer**, and Vaiyapuri Pillai contributed greatly to the resurgence of **Tamil language** and **literature**. Tamil renaissance found its political idiom in the concept of *Tamil Tai*, literally the “Tamil Mother.” Apart from the deification of the Tamil language in the persona of the universal Tamil mother, Tamil renaissance also took the form of the *Tamil Isai Iyakkam*, a movement aimed at distilling pure Tamil music from the hybrid confluence with a strong Sanskrit component known as “**Carnatic music**.” All of these strands of Tamil cultural revivalism in the nationalist movement presage the beginnings of the *Tani Tamizh Iyakkam*. The movement was founded by **Maraimalai Adigal** and his daughter **Neelambikai Ammaiyar** and was as strongly critical of Hindi and the Brahmanical hegemony in Tamil society as it was of British dominance and the use of English. Neelambikai Ammaiyar wrote a dictionary expunging Sanskritic words from the spoken and written language and providing Tamil equivalents. While sharing the ideology of anti-Brahmanism with the forces of Dravidian nationalism, the *Tani Tamizh Iyakkam* differed strongly from them in that it was founded on the bedrock of Saiva Siddhanta spiritual creed. In its opposition to Sanskrit and Brahmanism, the *Tani Tamizh Iyakkam* found its echo in the *Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam* of **E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker**. In fact, Maraimalai Adigal and E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker became friends and political allies. The *Tani Tamizh Iyakkam* also formed the cultural component of the **Justice Party**. However, Dravidian nationalism and the Tamil sepa-

ratist movement began to develop tangentially because while the former firmly rejected **religion** as ritual trappings of society, the latter was as firmly embedded in religion. The greatest impact of the movement was in shaping a cultural revolution in Tamil Nadu, which was reflected in Tamil **music**, **theater**, and literature. **Devaneya Pavanar**, one of the strongest votaries of the *Tani Tamizh Iyakkam*, started the **International Institute of Tamil Studies** in 1968. The political fallout from the movement, as reflected in the anti-Hindi agitations led by every “Dravidian” party in Tamil Nadu including the **Dravida Kazhagam (DK)**, **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)**, and the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** can be said to constitute its sub-text. *See also* TAMIL CINEMA.

TANJAVUR. Located in the heart of the delta of **River Kaveri**, Tanjavur was at one time a three-crop region and is now called the rice-bowl of south India. Tanjavur rose to prominence under the **Chola dynasty** around the ninth century when it became their capital and remained so for many centuries. The outstanding feature of the Tanjavur landscape is the **Temple of Brahadisvara**, literally “the temple to the Big God,” containing a huge and majestic Shivalinga. In fact, the priests offer worship to the linga by climbing a ladder. The temple is an architectural wonder and houses some of the most famous Chola murals. Under the Chola kings, Tanjavur became the heart of Tamil culture. It produced the best bronze figurines, most exquisite handicrafts, the metallic inlay art plates, and such **musical instruments** as the *Veenai*. Showing an amazing continuity of more than 1,000 years, places around Tanjavur, such as Kumbakonam, Svamimalai, and Nachchiyar Koyil, continue to have a separate street for craftsmen where the celebrated bronzes are produced. These bronzes even now enjoy a thriving international market. Tanjavur is also the birthplace of the trinity of **Carnatic music**. **Thyagaraja**, **Muthuswami Dikshitar** and **Shama Shastri** (all of them 19th-century musicians), who are regarded as the founding fathers of the Carnatic **music** tradition in its present form, come from Tanjavur and more specifically from Tiruvaiyaru. The literary heritage of the region is preserved in the **Saraswati Mahal library** that was started by Sarfoji Maharaj, the Nayak king of Tanjavur. In fact, the Maratha Nayaks brought to Tanjavur its quaint input of quasi-Maharashtrian culture. The European presence in the region is recorded in a Danish

fort built around 1624 around which the Danes continued to reside until as late as 1825. It is noteworthy that the South Zone Cultural Center created by the government of India is located here. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N.; TANJAVUR QUARTET.

TANJAVUR QUARTET. It is generally accepted that the **Bharatanatyam** concert was systematized by four Saivite brothers, better known as the **Tanjavur** quartet. Of these, Ponnaiah composed *Kavuttuvam Taanavarna Alarippu* in praise of Brihadisvara, the presiding deity at the “Big Temple” in Tanjavur. Chinnayya became the *Samsthana Vidwan* or court poet in the royal court of the Mysore king Krishnaraja Wodaiyar. The third of the brothers, Sivanandam, served in the court of Shivaji II (the last of the Tanjavur rulers). The fourth, Vadivelu, became the *Samasthana Vidwan* in the royal court of Travancore. Vadivelu was both a vocalist and a violinist and composed *ragamalika*, *sabdam*, *jatisvaram*, *padam*, and *tillana* in praise of the presiding deity Padmanabhasvami of Thiruvananthapuram, which are now part of the repertoire of classical Tamil **dance**. It is said that he influenced and refined many of the compositions of Swati Tirunal, the ruler of Travancore.

The brothers systematized the Bharatanatyam repertoire by beginning concerts with *alarippu* followed by *jatisvaram* and *padam*. The last piece was usually a *tillana*. Their musical compositions were not only in honor of the deity but also in honor of their royal patrons like the Maratha rulers of Tanjavur.

TELEVISION. *See* TELEVISION IN TAMIL.

TELEVISION IN TAMIL. The first television program went on air in India in September 1959. This was more than two decades after the British Broadcasting Corporation, which went on air in 1936. In Madras (present-day **Chennai**), the television station was launched on 15 August 1975. During its gestation period, it covered a radius of only 20 km, but by 1976, this had gone up to 80 km. In 1978, commercial channels in the Tamil language were introduced for the first time in Tamil Nadu. Its first director was P. V. Krishnamurthy. Beginning with single channel transmission, Chennai got its second channel by 1988. Between 1988 and 1998, satellite connections were

established even in remote villages linking interior Tamil Nadu to Chennai and New Delhi. Although high-power transmitters were established in the big cities, low-power transmitters are located in small towns and very low power transmissions in tiny places. The central government-owned Doordarshan channel, *Podugai*, airs its own programs such as news, drama, films, and **music**. Apart from the government-owned *Podugai* channel, major political leaders in Tamil Nadu own TV channels operating as fronts, serving the dual purposes of entertainment and political propaganda. The best known of these are Sun TV, which serves as the unofficial channel of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** Party led by **M. Karunanidhi**, and Jaya TV, which has been launched by the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** supremo, **J. Jayalalitha**. Tamil television today spells not merely entertainment but political access to the most popular mode of mass communication. Other TV channels, such as K-TV, Vijay TV, and Raj TV, serve the masses with films, songs, and other forms of entertainment. *See also* NEWSPAPERS; RADIO; TAMIL CINEMA.

TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA. **Tiruvannamalai**, the home of Annamalayaar or Arunachaleswarar (**Shiva** worshipped as a Shiva Lingam) and Unnamulaiyaal (Apitakuchambaal—Parvati), is one of the largest **temples** in India. It occupies a special place in the Saivite realm and is regarded as one of the *Pancha Bhoota Stalams* (five grand temples associated with the five basic elements)—associated with the element Fire, the other four being Tiruvanaikkaval (Water), Chidambaram (Space), **Kanchipuram** (Earth), and Sri Kalahasti (Wind), respectively. Shiva is said to have manifested himself in the form of a massive column of fire, whose crown and feet Brahma and **Vishnu** attempted to reach, in vain. A celebration of this manifestation is seen today in the age-old traditions observed in the *Sivaratri* and the *Kartikai Deepam Utsavams* or festivals held here. There is an air of deep mysticism around the temple, the hill, and its environs, and the town itself has been known for its long association with Yogis, **Siddhas**, the well-known spiritual savant **Ramana Maharishi**, and several others. Although there is no precise dating of this temple, the earliest literary reference to it is to be found in seventh century devotional Tamil poetry. Much of the temple structure, as seen today,

is a result of building activity over the last 1,000 years. All of the four Saivite saints **Appar**, **Sambandar**, **Manikkavacakar**, and **Sundarar**, have sung the glory of this temple, and it was at this temple that **Arunagirinathar** began composing his immortal work *Tiruppugazh*. **Muthuswamy Dikshitar's** *kriti* "Arunachalanatham" pays tribute to the presiding deity of Tiruvannamalai. *See also* TEMPLE OF BRAHADISVARA; TEMPLE OF KAILASANATHASVAMI; TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF MEENAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF NATARAJA; TEMPLE OF NELLAIYAPPAR; TEMPLE OF VARADARAJA PERUMAL.

TEMPLE OF BRAHADISVARA. The outstanding feature of the **Tanjavur** landscape is the Brihadisvara **temple**, literally "the temple to the Big God" containing a huge and majestic Shivalinga. In fact, the priests offer worship to the linga by climbing a ladder. The bull *vahana* of **Shiva** called Nandi is still regarded as the biggest of its kind in the Tamil country since it is 7.5 m tall and weighs 81.3 tons. **Chola Rajaraja I**, said to be the greatest of the Chola kings, built the temple in the 10th century. The architect of the temple honored his patron by erecting a huge statue for him within the temple precincts, the beginnings of what art historians term "portrait sculpture." The massive *gopuram* (similar to a church spire) of the temple, 57 m high, was raised on a fairly narrow square platform. It is believed that the top of the temple could be seen from kilometers around. The temple is an architectural wonder, and houses some of the most famous Chola murals. *See also* TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA; TEMPLE OF KAILASANATHASVAMI; TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF MEENAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF NATARAJA; TEMPLE OF NELLAIYAPPAR; TEMPLE OF VARADARAJA PERUMAL.

TEMPLE OF KAILASANATHASVAMI. This **temple**, dedicated to **Shiva**, is located in the temple town of **Kanchipuram** and is said to represent the "Earth" element in the *Pancha Bhoota Sthalams* (five sacred Shiva sites symbolizing the five elements). King Rajasimha constructed the temple in the time of the **Pallava** kings around the eighth century. *See also* TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA; TEMPLE OF BRAHADISVARA; TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHI-

AMMAN; TEMPLE OF MEENAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF NATARAJA; TEMPLE OF NELLAIYAPPAR; TEMPLE OF VARADARAJA PERUMAL.

TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN. This **temple**, probably built by the Cholas before the 11th century, dedicated to goddess Kamakshi and Sri Ekambaranathar (**Shiva**), is located in the temple town of **Kanchipuram**. The goddess is considered very powerful and she is the patron deity of the Kanchi Komakoti Peetam of the Kanchi **Shankaracharya**. A distinctive feature of the temple is its 1,000-pillared hall. *See also* TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA; TEMPLE OF BRAHADISVARA; TEMPLE OF KAILASANATHASVAMI; TEMPLE OF MEENAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF NATARAJA; TEMPLE OF NELLAIYAPPAR; TEMPLE OF VARADARAJA PERUMAL.

TEMPLE OF MEENAKSHIAMMAN. Life in **Madurai** revolves around the Meenakshi **temple**. In fact, the **Pandyan** kings sought and gained political legitimacy by associating themselves with the sacred presence of Meenakshi, who is regarded as the divine ruler of Madurai, born of a mythical Pandyan king called Malayadwaja. True to its character as a temple town, every street in Madurai radiates from and toward the temple. Despite the passage of centuries, this basic character is preserved even now. According to the mythology associated with the temple, the goddess Meenakshi was born with three breasts, and it was believed that this freak feature endowed her with unusual qualities of leadership, making her a successful ruler. The third breast fell away when she married Sundaesvara or **Shiva**. This event is now celebrated as a religious festival in the temple. The Meenakshiamman temple is also the site of cultural activities. The third and last Tamil **Sangam** met in Madurai, and according to oral tradition the comparative merit of the Sangam poets was decided by letting their works float in the “Lotus Tank” of the temple. It was believed that a divine force would cause the work of superior merit to float on the surface while the inferior literary work would sink. It is noteworthy that the Fifth International Tamil Conference was held in Madurai in 1981 under the aegis of the then chief minister **M. G. Ramachandran**. *See also* TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA; TEMPLE OF

BRAHADISVARA; TEMPLE OF KAILASANATHASVAMI; TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF NATARAJA; TEMPLE OF NELLAIYAPPAR; TEMPLE OF VARADARAJA PERUMAL.

TEMPLE OF NATARAJA. Chidambaram is said to represent the “space” aspect of the five elements among the *Pancha Bhoota Sthalam*, of which the earth element is symbolized in the **Temple of Kailasanathasvami**. The huge temple complex enshrining Nataraja, the cosmic dancer, is spread over a vast area of 22 hectares. The temple bears the mark of several Tamil ruling dynasties including the **Cholas**, the **Pandya**, and the Nayakas. The eastern tower is ascribed to Chola Kulottunga II (1133–1150). The southern tower is dated to the period of Kopperunjingadeva I in around 1237. The crest of the Pandyas, the fish, is found on the gateway. The tower itself is ascribed to Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (1251–1270). The northern *gopuram* or tower was constructed by the Vijayanagara king Krishnadevaraya in the 16th century while the outer *prakaras* or quadrangles were constructed by Virappa Nayak in the 17th century. Chidambaram temple, therefore, reflects a confluence of architectural styles. A unique esoteric aspect of this great temple is a great mystery within the sanctum sanctorum—a mystery that devout Saivites have been trying to fathom through the centuries. *See also* TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA; TEMPLE OF BRAHADISVARA; TEMPLE OF KAILASANATHASVAMI; TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF MEENAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF NELLAIYAPPAR; TEMPLE OF VARADARAJA PERUMAL.

TEMPLE OF NELLAIYAPPAR. **Shiva** is the Destroyer in the Hindu trinity. But here, he is Lord Nellaiyappar, the Protector of Paddy, as the name of the town itself testifies—*nel* meaning paddy and *veli* meaning fence in Tamil. Prefixed to *nelveli* is *tiru*, which signifies something particularly auspicious, like the exceptional role of Nataraja, the Lord of Rhythm, or the unique **musical pillars** of stone in the temple. Temples often have columns portraying dancing damsels or musicians playing their instruments, but rarely do the mute pillars themselves make **music**. In the Nellaiyappar temple, gentle taps on the cluster of columns hewn out of a single piece of

rock can produce the keynotes of Indian classical music. The pillars at the Nellaiyappar temple are a combination of the *Shruti* and *Laya* types. *See also* TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA; TEMPLE OF BRAHADISVARA; TEMPLE OF KAILASANATHASVAMI; TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF MEENAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF NATARAJA; TEMPLE OF VARADARAJA PERUMAL.

TEMPLE OF VARADARAJA PERUMAL. This temple, dedicated to Lord Mahavishnu, is located in the temple town of **Kanchipuram**. It is believed that the **Pallava** king Nandivarman II constructed the temple. In recent years, the murder of a **Brahmin** accountant within its precincts has cast a gloomy shadow over this ancient temple. The **Shankaracharya** of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam has been accused of the murder and is facing a highly publicized trial. *See also* TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA; TEMPLE OF BRAHADISVARA; TEMPLE OF KAILASANATHASVAMI; TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF MEENAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF NATARAJA; TEMPLE OF NELLAIYAPPAR.

TEMPLES. Tamil Nadu is known as the land of temples. The temple in the Tamil country is not a mere structure but an institution, somewhat along the line of the Catholic churches in Europe. Tamil temples were perhaps even more comprehensive in their role functions because they were economic, social, and cultural centers, and the religious aspect was only one feature of the temple, although it can be termed the dominant one. At a time when there were no record offices but records needed to be maintained of royal proclamations; the purchase and sale of lands; settlement of **caste** disputes; and above all endowments to the temple. These were engraved on the temple walls by the professional engravers of the **Kammalar** caste. The temple also served as a major cultural center where **music** and **dance** performances were periodically held either under royal patronage or under the patronage of nobles. Endowments both in cash and in land made the medieval temples landlords as well as money-lenders. The temple earned a tidy interest by giving money on loans. The centrality of the temple to the life of the Tamil communities attracted crafts and commerce. Shops sprang up on both sides of the streets radiating

from the temple. Thus emerged the *tirumadaivilagam*—a term that social historians translate as a temple town. It can, therefore, be said that Tamil temples were major sites of urbanization from the early medieval period onward.

The temple building era in the Tamil country began around the eighth century and is an ongoing activity of Tamil craftsmen and architects. The cave temples at **Mahabalipuram** in **Kanchipuram** district mark the beginnings of temple architecture in the Tamil country. The **Kailasanathasvami temple**, built in the time of Rajasimha **Pallava**, and the shore temple at Mahabalipuram, built by Narasimha Varma Pallava II, are the earliest examples of temple architecture with *gopuram* similar to the church spires. The greatest contribution to temple architecture came from the **Chola** kings. The **Brahadisvara temple** at **Tanjavur** is considered one of the most majestic temples constructed in early times. The most celebrated of the **Pandava** temples is the **Meenakshiamman temple** at **Madurai**. The rulers of the Nayaka kingdoms added to these structures, bringing innovations in style. It is noteworthy that the Tanjavur-Marattha additions to Chola temples are reflected not only in the changing architectural styles but also in the 17th century paintings done under Nayaka patronage. *See also* ECONOMY; TEMPLE OF ARUNACHALESVARA; TEMPLE OF KAMAKSHIAMMAN; TEMPLE OF NATARAJA; TEMPLE OF NELLAIYAPPAR; TEMPLE OF VARADARAJA PERUMAL.

TEVAR (THEVAR). It is noteworthy that the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu** was led by chieftains belonging to the Tevar Community, such as Periya **Marudu**, Chinna Marudu, and **Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Tevar**. The Tevar are also referred to as Mukkulathor. The **Marava**, Agamudaiyan, and **Kallar** communities collectively call themselves “Tevar.” Today, the Tevars are predominantly found in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu such as Tirunelveli, Ramanathapuram, V.O. Chidambaram, Kamarajar, **Madurai**, Anna, **Pudukkottai**, **Tiruchirapalli**, and Kanyakumari.

TEVAR, PASUMPON MUTHURAMALINGA (1908–1963). Pasumpon Muthuramalinga **Tevar** came from the **Marava** community, known since the **Sangam** period for personal valor and heroism. Muthuramalinga Tevar was born in Kamuthi in Ramanathapuram

into an affluent family of a local chieftain. His father, Ukkipandiya Tevar, had received a gift of 32 villages from the Raja of Ramnad. He completed his school education at the Pasumalai Mission High School in **Madurai** but did not pursue higher studies. Tevar brought a combination of spirituality and politics into the public domain, along the lines of Gandhi and Tilak. He remained single all his life. He lectured widely on the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy, and said, “Politics and **Religion** are the two eyes of the nation. Politics without divinity is a body without soul.”

Muthuramalinga Tevar joined the Congress in 1927 as a 19-year-old. His revolutionary ideas led him to part ways with the Congress and join the Forward Bloc, founded by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. He started the Tamil Nadu wing of the party in 1939, and in 1940 he started a Tamil weekly appropriately named *Netaji*. Muthuramalinga was also an important labor leader and a close associate of V. V. Giri, the third president of the Republic of India. As the president of the TVS Workers’ Union and labor leader of the Mahalakshmi Textile Mills between 1936 and 1937, Muthuramalinga Tevar was accused of anti-British activities in 1938. He spent the next six years in prison.

Muthuramalinga Tevar’s connection with the State and Union legislatures was a long and distinguished one. From 1937 onward, he was a member of the Legislative Assembly at Madras. During these years, he fought for the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act, which cruelly suppressed warrior tribes like the **Kallar**, Marava (his own community), and the Agambadiyars under the guise of putting down criminal activity. He continued to appeal to the new Madras government under **T. Prakasam**, formed in 1946, to repeal the Act. In 1957, **K. Kamaraj**, at that time the chief minister of Madras, caused Muthuramalinga Tevar to be arrested under the Preventive Detention Act (an activity that many perceived as political vendetta), accusing Muthuramalinga of stirring up communal violence. Muthuramalinga secured an honorable acquittal in 1960. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

TEVARAM. Spiritual poetry of the Saivite **Nayanar** who believe **Shiva** to be the fountainhead of divinity. It predominantly contains the devotional compositions of the Saivite trinity—**Appar** (Tirunavukkarasar), **Sundarar**, and **Tirujnanasambandar**. It is said that the celebrated

Chola Rajaraja I (985–1014) was responsible for the codification of the *Tevaram* hymns, which was done at his behest by Nambiyandar Nambi. Nambi also sang 89 verses, devoting each verse to the life of one of the 63 **Nayanars**.

THAILAND. *See* TAMILS IN THAILAND.

THEATER. *See* TAMIL THEATER.

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY. Madam H. P. Blavatsky, Colonel H. S. Olcott, and others founded the theosophical Society in New York in 1875. Blavatsky and Olcott, known as “the Theosophical Twins,” came to Bombay in 1879 and established the Theosophical Society at Adayar in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1882 where it continues to this day. Olcott became the first president of the Society and was succeeded by **Annie Besant**. In 1893, she came under the influence of C. W. Leadbeater, an American missionary, and thus began her training in the psychic realm. The Society drew greatly from the philosophy of occultism and practiced esoteric teachings of invisible “gurus” or “mahatmas” as Madam Blavatsky termed them.

The Society became drawn into the **freedom struggle** because of Annie Besant’s own intense involvement and her foundation of the Home League Movement. G. S. Arundale was president from 1934 to 1945. **Rukmini Arundale**, the celebrated **Bharatanatyam** dancer and founder of the Kalakshethra School, succeeded him. Radha Burnier has been the president since 1980.

The Society is organized into National Sections, each of which constitutes a National Society. The three declared objectives of the Theosophical Society are to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood; to promote the study of comparative **religion**, philosophy, and science; and to explain the unexplained laws of nature and explore the metaphysical dimension of human existence. One of the best-known features of the Theosophical Society today is the **Adayar Library**, which houses an exceptional collection of books and manuscripts that attract scholars from all over the world.

THIRUMAVALAVAN (1962–). Thirumavalavan belongs to the down-trodden **Pallar** community and is known for his radicalism in pro-

moting the cause of the Dalit Panthers. In his early years, he was influenced by **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** politics. In 1983, when the Liberation Tigers for Tamil Eelam (LTTE) began their struggle for an independent homeland in **Sri Lanka**, he mustered support for the Sri Lankan Tamils in the Tamil country. From 1988 until 1999, he served as a government servant but resigned his post in 1999 in order to contest the elections. He became the leader of the *Viduthalai Chiruthaigal* or the Liberation Panther Party in Tamil Nadu in 1991. The party itself was founded by a lawyer called Malaisami under the name “Bharatiya Dalit Panthers,” and Tirumavalavan took over its leadership when Malaisami died in 1989. He boycotted elections until 1999 when he was persuaded by **G. K. Moopanar** to contest elections. Despite being an ardent champion of the downtrodden, he has been a bitter opponent of the **Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK)**, which also espouses the cause of the dalits or depressed classes.

THYAGARAJA (1767–1847). Thyagaraja is one of the trinity who shaped the history of **Carnatic music**, the other two being **Muthusvami Dikshitar** and **Shyama Shastri**. All three belonged to the late 18th–early 19th centuries. Thyagaraja—or Thyaga Brahmam as he came to be called—was born in Tiruvarur in **Tanjavur**. He was named Thyagaraja after the **Shiva** deity in Tiruvarur who was also the special deity of the Tanjavur Nayaka kings. One of his Gurus is mentioned as the well-known **musician** Sonti Venkataramanayya.

According to oral tradition, his songs were divinely inspired and were the result of his extraordinary devotion to his deity, Rama. Folk belief credits him with being the recipient of two divine texts given to him by the heavenly messenger Narada, called *Svararnavam* and *Narada Deepam*, which formed the foundations of his prolific musical output. It is believed that he composed more than 1,000 songs, many of which form the core of any Carnatic music concert even today. He also composed musical **dance** plays such as *Nauka Charitram*, *Prahlada Bhakta Vijayam*, and *Sitarama Vijayam*. Refusing the pleasures of courtly life offered to him by the Tanjavur Nayaks, he lived a life of simplicity and poverty. Although the language of his compositions was Telugu and not Tamil, he occupies a unique place in the Tamil culture, especially among the Tamil **Brahmin** community. The

anniversary of his death, which always falls in the month of January (*Pushya Bahula Panchami*), is commemorated as “Thyagaraja Aradhana Day” in Tiruvaiyaru. Not only musicians from the Tamil or Telugu country but from all over south India gather at the Thyagaraja *samadhi* (the burial place of the saint-composer) to offer musical homage by singing in unison the *Pancharatna Kritis*, literally “the five gem-like compositions” that constitute Thyagaraja’s magnum opus. The disciples of Thyagaraja split into three distinctive schools of music—Tillaisthanam, Umaiyalapuram, and Walajapet. The Tillaisthanam School is credited with the organization of the Thyagaraja musical festival. Interestingly, it is a woman musician, Nagaratnammal, a **Devaradiyar**, who devoted her entire earnings to this unique musical homage as her tribute to the saint. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAM, G. N.; PAPANASAM SIVAN.

THYAGARAJA BHAGAVATHAR, M. K. (1910–1959). It is said of the 1944 film *Haridas* that it ran to packed houses for a record period unsurpassed to this day. The phenomenal success of this film was not attributed to the story line but to the musical genius of M. K. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar. MKT, as he is popularly known, had achieved stardom before the age of 30. The film *Pavalakkodi*, released in 1934, had the winning combination of MKT’s voice and **Papanasam Sivan**’s lyrics. Equal success followed the release of *Chintamani*. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar’s musical career came to a dramatic end in 1949 when he was at the heady pinnacle of success. The singer was arrested for complicity in the murder of Lakshmikanthan, the publisher of a scandal pamphlet. MKT was jailed for more than two years. The films that he produced after his release from jail, such as *Rajamukti*, starring **M. G. Ramachandran**, V. N. Janaki (who became M. G. Ramachandran’s wife), and Bhanumati, failed at the box office because of his criminal record. Two more flops, namely *Amarakavi* and *Shyamala*, both produced in 1952, followed close on the heels of the first failure. MKT died in penury. *See also* SONGS IN TAMIL CINEMA; SUBBALAKSHMI, M. S.; TAMIL CINEMA.

TINAI. The concept of *iyintinai* or “five *tinai*s” is a concept peculiar to the Tamil country and goes back to the ancient text on Tamil grammar, *Tolkappiyam*, where these categories were enunciated for the

first time. *Tinai* defines the classification of the Tamil landscape into five eco-geographical types. These were *kurinji* the forest tract; *mullai*, the pastoral tract; *marudam* the settled agrarian tract; and *neydal*, the coastal zone. The last *tinai* called *palai*, is not strictly a *tinai* in the sense that it did not denote any particular geophysical category but comprised of arid zones. Each of these eco-zones had its distinctive economy, its community structure as well as its patron deity. Interestingly, for the ancient **Sangam literature**, *tinai* also constituted a literary genre since each *tinai* has its distinctive poetic mood, as for example romantic dalliance of the *kurinji* hills, separatism of the *palai* region and conjugal love as well as illicit love (the prostitutes or Parataiyar figure as a social category for the first time in this zone) of the *marudam tinai*. See also TINAI KURINJI; TINAI MARUDAM; TINAI MULLAI; TINAI NEYDAL; TINAI PALAI.

TINAI KURINJI. *Kurinji* can be classified as a hilly tract in the five-fold *tinai* classification of eco-zones in the Tamil country. The communities inhabiting this region were known as **Kuravar**, Kanavar, etc., and their main occupation was hunting and gathering, especially of edible roots and variety of yams. They also gathered and sold honey, usually as a barter commodity in exchange for paddy, milk, and fish. Primitive **agriculture**—primarily of millets and bamboo—was practiced on hillsides by the hill tribes. Water supply to the region was obtained from mountain streams, waterfalls, and hill-ponds. The patron deity was *Cheyyon*, who passed into the Sanskrit pantheon as Kartikeya (the Tamil god **Murugan**). See also TINAI MARUDAM; TINAI MULLAI; TINAI NEYDAL; TINAI PALAI.

TINAI MARUDAM. *Marudam* comprised the fertile, agricultural tracts among the fivefold *tinai* zones of the Tamil rural landscape. The riverine region was marked by plow **agriculture**, a well-stratified society, and sedentary agriculture. The patron deity was Indra, the god of gods in the Sanskrit/Brahmanical pantheon. The important communities were the Uzhavar or Kalamar, who became synonymous with the **Vellalar**, the dominant agrarian caste of the Tamil country, and the Kadaiyar or Kadaisiyar, who in the course of time came to denote landless **agricultural labor** like the **Pallar** and **Parayar** castes. The agricultural landscape was marked by multiple modes of

irrigation, especially tanks, canals, and wells. Increasing economic differentiation and social stratification led to the proliferation of *jatis* or castes in this zone. Since it was the practice among the kings and the nobility to donate lands to **Brahmins** in the most fertile areas of the Marudam tract, these areas of settled agriculture, called *Brahmadeya*, were the first to come under the influence of Sanskritization. Brahmanical notions of purity and pollution put an end to the comparative degree of social freedom enjoyed by the poorer occupational groups in **Sangam** society. They were socially pushed to the level of Shudras and untouchables. With the elevation of the male within the farming household, gender inequalities also began to surface. **Women** were forbidden to touch the plow since the plow was regarded as sacred and women, with their monthly menstruation cycles, were considered ritually impure.

It has been argued by Tamil scholars that early state formation began in the Tamil country in the *marudam tinai* because economic stratification and social hierarchies logically led to the emergence of monarchy and state. *See also* TINAI KURUNJI; TINAI MULLAI; TINAI NEYDAL; TINAI PALAI.

TINAI MULLAI. *Mullai* corresponds to the pastoral zone in the five-fold *tinai* classification of eco-geographical zones in the Tamil country. The communities inhabiting this region were known as Kovalar, Ayar, and **Idaiyar**. The main occupation of the people was dairy farming, animal husbandry, including cattle rearing, and growing such dry crops as *varagu* (rye) *chamai*, and *mudirai*, both of which are varieties of millets. The rivers of the pastures constituted the primary source of water along with ponds and small rivulets. Wild streams were also another important source of water. The patron deity was **Mayon**, the Tamil name for Krishna, the shepherd god, one of the most important incarnations of **Vishnu**, the protecting/preserving deity among the Brahmanical trinity. *Mullaipattu* is a folk-music genre that reflects the social and cultural life of the pastoral tract. *See also* AGRICULTURE; TINAI KURUNJI; TINAI MARUDAM; TINAI NEYDAL; TINAI PALAI.

TINAI NEYDAL. *Neydal* can be classified as the littoral tract in the five-fold *tinai* classification of eco-zones in the Tamil country. The

communities inhabiting this region were known as Nulaiyar, Paradavar, Umanar, Timilar, and Alavar. The main occupation of the people was salt-panning, done mainly by the Umanar, and fishing carried out by the other communities. Pearl diving was another highly lucrative occupation of some of these communities. The zone attracted considerable commercial activity, and merchants settling in the littoral tract were associated with inland trade as well as with the Indian Ocean maritime trade. Settlements on the littoral tract tended to evolve into *Pakkam* or *Pattinam*, meaning commercial cities or towns, because of their importance to maritime trade. **Agriculture** was peripheral to the **economy**. Paddy was usually obtained through barter from neighboring *tinai*s, but fish was the staple food of the people. Society tended to be stratified. The patron deity was Varuna, who is supposed to be the rain god of the Sanskritic/Brahmanical pantheon. *See also* TINAI KURUNJI; TINAI MARUDAM; TINAI MULLAI; TINAI PALAI.

TINAI PALAI. *Palai* can be classified as the arid zone in the five-fold *tinai* classification of eco-zones in the Tamil country. In fact, many of the **Sangam** texts do not even acknowledge *palai* as a *tinai* since it had no distinctive economy of its own. The terrain being both dry and harsh, no settled **agriculture** was possible, and farming was of the most primitive type. The communities inhabiting the *palai* were called Eyinar, **Marava**, and **Kallar**. Most of these communities seem to have sustained themselves through systematic thieving and robbery. In fact, “kallar” is the generic term in currency in the **Tamil language** to describe a common thief. Interestingly, in the period of British colonialism the Marava were used by the colonial rulers as watchdogs over the subject peoples. The same Marava, called **Tevar**, like **Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Tevar**, turned against British imperialism and led the first manifestations of the **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu**. *Palai* is the only *tinai* to be headed by a goddess. She was called **Korravai**, and she would correspond to *Durga Paramesvari* in the Sanskritic pantheon. The goddess is worshipped as a fearsome being, presiding over the battleground. In fact, it was the custom among the ancient Tamil warriors and chieftains to cut off the heads of their enemies and offer them to the goddess Korravai. *See also* TINAI KURUNJI; TINAI MARUDAM; TINAI MULLAI; TINAI NEYDAL.

TIRUCHIRAPALLI. Tiruchirapalli (also called Tiruchi), situated on the banks of the **River Kaveri**, is the fourth largest city in Tamil Nadu. Once the citadel of the **Chola** dynasty, Tiruchi was later under the **Pandyas** and came under the sway of the Vijayanagar Empire in medieval times. Tiruchi was a craft town in the seventh and eighth centuries. Among its most famous structures is the grand anicut (dam), said to have been built by **Karikala Chola** in the second century CE to harness the waters of River Kaveri. An example of rain-water harvesting technique, the dam, made of stone, is 329 m long and 20 m wide and is still in use! Tiruchirapalli is also a renowned **temple** town. Srirangam, a major Vaishnavite pilgrimage center, is at a distance of 7 km. The Ranganathaswami temple enshrines Lord **Vishnu** in a reclining pose. The area is also an important Saivite pilgrimage center, being a *Pancha Bhoota Sthala* (the five elements are enshrined in five Shivalingas located in the **Tamil** country) because of the Tiruvanaikaval temple. Here, **Shiva** is known as *Jamubukesvaram*. He represents the “water” element, and the Shivalinga itself is submerged in water. The European presence in the region is registered in the Rock Fort. The top of the rock houses a **Pillaiyar** temple with inscriptions dating back to the third century BCE. The fort may have very early origins, but its historic importance dates from the period of the Carnatic wars in the 17th century when the French and the British waged a bitter struggle culminating in British ascendancy. At the foot of the hill near the ancient **Chola** tank is the house in which Robert Clive, the first governor-general of India, lived. The modern presence in this ancient town is marked by St. Joseph’s College, which is the alma mater of India’s current president, **A. P. J. Abdul Kalam**.

TIRUJNANASAMBANDAR. The life of Tirujnanasambandar was like a brief but brilliant meteor since he died in his 16th year. He was a younger contemporary of **Appar** and flourished in the seventh century. In fact, it was he who by addressing the **Nayanar** Tirunavukkarasar as “Appar” bestowed upon the saint the name by which he is popularly known today. He was born into a **Brahmin** community of **Tanjavur**. According to mythology, the goddess Parvati, the consort of **Shiva**, fed him her breast milk when the three-year-old Tirujnanasambandar was crying for milk. Immediately, the child burst out into spiritual poetry.

His spiritual journey is coupled with that of Appar with whom he visited many sites sacred to Shiva. One of his most famous compositions is *Kolaru Padigam*, the recitation of which is said to be efficacious in solving both material and spiritual problems. He was a close associate of Siruttonda Nayanar, who, under the name Paranjodi Adigal, was a commander of the armies of Narasimha **Pallava**. It is noteworthy that Tirujnanasambandar, who was known for his compassion, was, however, a bitter opponent of Buddhism and Jainism. According to oral tradition, he destroyed the entire village of Bodhimangai by invoking a thunderbolt because the Buddhist nun Buddhanandi dared to challenge Saivism! See also KARAikkAL AMMAIYAR; NANDANAR; NAYANAR, IYARPPAGAIYAR; NAYANAR, TIRUNEELAKANTAR; SUNDARAR.

TIRUKKURAL. This famous text on social ethics has been translated into many languages. **Tiruvalluvar**, a Jaina weaver by **caste**, authored it. It constitutes one of the major texts in the *Padinenkizhkanakku* anthology, a late-Sangam collection. The *Tirukkural* most probably was composed during the period of the Third Sangam, perhaps around the third or fourth century CE. It consists of 1,330 couplets divided into 133 sections. The text is broadly divided into three parts: *aram* (dealing with *dharma* in the sense of the both moral and social order); *porul* (aphorisms dealing with politics, social relationships, and material prosperity); and *kamam* dealing with matters involving desire and pleasure.

The text is written in the style of couplets that are regarded as aphorisms or wise sayings. Exalting the profession of **agriculture**, the *Kural* states:

“Those who till the ground are truly great, All others live by serving and following the tillers”

As a Jaina, Tiruvalluvar was a believer in non-violence and an advocate of vegetarianism. The *Kural* states:

“Better it is to avoid the killing of one living being Than to pour ghee and perform a thousand (animal) sacrifices.” The moral tone of the *Kural* is reflected in the following verse: “The false embrace of a harlot is like the clasping of a corpse in a dark room.”

Along with **Auvaiyar**'s *Athichoodi*, the *Tirukkural* has probably had the greatest influence in shaping the **Tamil** ethos. It is a reflection of

Tirukkural's greatness that every child born into Tamil culture narrates/ lips these by rote, and every public place in Tamil Nadu, including bus stops and public transport, is adorned with verses from it. *Tirukkural* has been translated into many languages, and the *kural* concepts are perhaps the most widely quoted among the Tamils today. *See also* LITERATURE; SANGAM LITERATURE.

TIRUMALAI. Located near Polur in North Arcot district this town belongs to the late Vijayanagar period and provides evidence of the revival of Jainism in the region during the medieval period. The area is distinguished by structural temples and murals in the double-storied division of the natural rocks and by its brick walls. The rock cut art here belong to the **Chola**-Rashtrakuta mixed style. The majority of images are sculptural representations of the Tirthankaras (Jain spiritual teachers), the outstanding one being a massive rock-cut Neminatha on the hilltop. The magnificent Jalakhanteshwara **temple** complex consecrated to **Shiva** also distinguishes Tirumalai. The temple, with its majestic *gopurams* (dome), charming *mandapam* (pavilion), and the inner and outer recesses, all involving massive granite workmanship and rich baroque art, is a fine example of late Vijayanagar and Nayaka art of Tamil Nadu.

TIRUMANGAI ALVAR. One of the **Alvar** Vaishnavite saints. He was born in a village near Nagapattinam and was brought up by a couple belonging to the Vedar or hunter **caste**. It is believed that he became a dacoit and used to plunder wayfarers to achieve his purpose of feeding Vaishnavites. He is also believed to have stolen and melted a golden image of Buddha from the **Buddhist** Vihara at Nagapattinam in order to build the pinnacle or *gopuram* for the deity at Srirangam **temple**. His poetic compositions are called *Periaturumoli*. *See also* ANDAL; RELIGION; TIRUMAVISAI ALVAR.

TIRUMAVISAI ALVAR. The fourth among the **Alvars**, he is believed to be the incarnation of **Vishnu**'s powerful wheel, the *Sudarshana Chakara*. It is believed that his parents abandoned him after birth because he was a mere lump of flesh. A low-**caste** cane weaver called Tiruvalan picked him up, and the mass of flesh turned into a divine child. The hagiography of this Alvar records many miracles. It is be-

lieved that in **Kanchipuram**, where he lived, he turned an ugly old maid who had served him faithfully into a young and beautiful one on her request. Granted the gift of eternal youth, she married the Pandyan king who found out from her the secret of her youth. He summoned the Alvar to the court, but he instead sent his disciple Kannikrishna. The king ordered the disciple to compose songs in his honor, which he refused to do, and both teacher and disciple were forced to leave the kingdom. Unable to be parted from his *bhakta*, the Lord Vishnu also left his **temple** and followed the Alvar. It was only when the Pandyan king humbly sought the pardon of Tirumavisai Alvar and Kannikrishna that the deity returned to his temple! *See also* ANDAL; RELIGION; TIRUMANGAI ALVAR.

TIRUNAVUKKARASU, S. (1949–). Tirunavukkarasu is an important figure among the new breed of politicians in Tamil Nadu. Like the majority of Tamil politicians, he was deeply involved with **Tamil cinema**. He acted in the film *Agni Parvai* and wrote the script for the successful film *Marudu Pandian*. A well-known **M. G. Ramachandran** (MGR) loyalist, he joined the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)** after the death of MGR. He won his Assembly seat from Arantangi in 1989 but was expelled from the party in 1990. Tirunavukkarasu then started the party called initially *Anna Puratchitalaivar Tamizha Munnetra Kazhagam* and subsequently known as MGRAIADMK and contested the elections under the new banner in 1991, putting up candidates in nine constituencies. He rejoined the AIADMK in 1996 contesting the elections under their banner only to defect from the party once again in 1997 to resurrect his own party, the MGRAIADMK. As an example of what today political analysts call the politics of defection, he fought the 1999 general elections as an ally of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** led by **Karunanidhi**, known to be a bitter political opponent of Jayalalitha. Today, Tirunavukkarasu heads the MGRAIADMK party and is regarded a political heavyweight.

TIRUPPUR KUMARAN. Kumaran hailed from an ordinary weaver's family in Chennimalai in Periyar district. Kumaran (or Kumarasvami) came under the influence of the Gandhian movement and boycotted the wearing of foreign cloth. Following the arrest of Mahatma

Gandhi in 1932, the town of Tiruppur, near **Coimbatore**, rose in revolt against the British regime. The young Kumaran held the Indian National Congress flag, which symbolized the Indian freedom struggle. The imperial police beat him to death, and he died with the flag still firmly clutched in his hands. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

TIRUVALLUVAR. Tiruvalluvar is celebrated for the *Tirukkural*, a didactic Jaina text that forms a part of the *Padinenkizhkanakku*, an anthology of 18 texts belonging to the late **Sangam** period. Legend has it that Tiruvalluvar was born to a **Brahmin** man and an untouchable **caste** woman. It is said that he had six siblings, of whom **Auvaiyar** is the best known. His greatness was recognized by his contemporaries who composed *Tiruvalluvamalai*, a garland of 53 quatrains, in his praise. Stylistically, this panegyric seems to belong to a much later (probably late medieval) period. *See also* LITERATURE; SANGAM LITERATURE.

TIRUVANNAMALAI. The place known as Tiruvannamalai or Arunachalam, which is its Sanskritic nomenclature, is one of the important pilgrimage centers of India. The hill ranges of Annamalai abound in rare medicinal plants. Tiruvannamalai, like Brindavan in Uttar Pradesh, is a town where divinity resides in the hills and people offer worship by circumambulating the entire town, a distance of roughly 14 km. The town enjoyed a measure of commercial importance because it lay on the ancient Chengam-**Kanchipuram** trade route. Tiruvannamalai came under the sway of the **Pallavas**, **Cholas**, and later the Vijayanagara Empire, and each dynasty left behind invaluable artifacts in the forms of sculptures, ornate pillars, and water tanks. The **Temple of Arunachalesvara** located here is rich in inscriptional material. Apart from its ecological and archaeological value, Tiruvannamalai is spiritually charged because it is the site of the Ramana Ashram, the hermitage of the internationally renowned sage **Ramana Maharshi**. With people of all faiths flocking to the ashram, it has emerged as a great center of multi-faith dialogue. *See also* LE SOUX, DOM HENRI.

TKS THEATRICAL GROUP. One of the best known and perhaps the earliest professional **theater** company from Tamil Nadu, it was started

by the four sons of a small time actor T. S. Kannusami Pillai. In the course of time, it became identified with T. K. Shanmugam, the most famous of the four brothers. The group began as successors to the theater company of the 19th-century pioneer Shankardas Svamigal. They founded the Madurai Bala Shanmukananda Sabha in 1925. In the pre-independence era, the brothers staged plays that reflected the patriotic mood of freedom fighters. Apart from acting in plays like *Kadarin Vetri* (literally the “Triumph of Khadi”), they also staged plays such as *Raja Raja Chozhan* that were heavily laced with patriotic dialogue. In 1935, T. K. Shanmugam turned producer, collaborating with Raja Sandow to produce *Menaka*. The TKS group has branched into totally new directions and is constantly experimenting with new themes and new actors.

TODAS. The Todas are one of the most important tribes inhabiting the **Nilgiris** hills. The community refers to itself as Olh. The Toda are also referred to as Tuduvar. The Todas constitute a major segment of the Scheduled Tribes of Tamil Nadu. The Todas are rather distinctive in appearance, with a lifestyle that is at variance with the plains people, and have hence been the subject of many anthropological studies. The major economic activities of the Toda males are **agriculture** and animal husbandry, with basket weaving and making walking sticks as subsidiary occupations. Toda **women** are experts in embroidery, like the women of the Kutch region of Gujarat.

TOLKAPPIYAM. This is a comprehensive work on **Tamil** grammar composed by Tolkappiyar. The period assigned to the *Tolkappiyam* has varied from the sixth century BCE to the second century CE. In terms of its historical location as well as its grammatical style and content, it has been compared to the celebrated Sanskrit text, the *Ashtadhyayi* of Panini with which it is said to be contemporaneous. Apart from a detailed exposition on the use of language and similes, the *Tolkappiyam* also deals with social norms in the *Karpiyal* of the *Porul Adikaram*. The text is divided into three major sections: *Chol Adikaram*, covering etymology; *Ezhuthu Adikaram*, covering morphology with **language** syntax; and *Porul Adikaram*, covering poetics, respectively. Each part is further divided into nine *iyals*, resulting in a total of 27 *iyals*. The concept of the *tinai*—so crucial to the Tamil ecological and literary landscapes—finds place for the first time in

the *Tolkappiyam*. The author also describes the patron deities of each *tinai*, such as **Murugan**, **Mayon**, and **Korravai**.

The later medieval period in Tamil **literature** is noteworthy for the number of grammarians who made their mark by writing commentaries on the *Tolkappiyam*, such as Ilampuranar, Chenavaraiyar, Perasiriyar, Daivachilaiyar, Kalladar, and Nachchinarkkiniyar. The Jain thinker, Bhavanandi Adigal, composed the only other major Tamil grammar called *Nannul* in the 13th century.

TSUNAMI (2004). A series of tremors and tidal waves hit the south Indian coast on 26 December 2004 when the world was waking to the day after Christmas. The earthquake, measuring 8.9 on the Richter scale, and resultant tidal waves that hit the entire coastline of Asia is believed to have been one of the worst natural disasters in recent times. The tsunami, a Japanese word meaning “harbor wave,” has been defined by scientists as a train of waves generated in a body of water caused by an impulsive disturbance (a seismic quake underwater) resulting in the displacement of the water column.

Scientists are certain about what happened. However, they are uncertain why it happened. They believe that the seismic fault between the Indian and Burma Plates, which was under great stress for a considerable period of time, gave way at a place roughly 80 km north-northeast of the coast of Sumatra in the Indian Ocean. The quake caused the Indian Plate to sink 5–10 m over a length of 500 km along the fault line and rise again immediately. This rise and fall of the plate led to the displacement of a huge body of water, leading to the tsunami waves.

The tsunami brought enormous devastation to lives and property along the coastlines of Indonesia, **Thailand**, India, **Sri Lanka**, and Somalia. In India, the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands** and the states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala were the worst affected. More than 5,000 people were killed by the tsunami in Tamil Nadu alone, and perhaps 50 times that number were rendered homeless and destitute. The worst affected areas were **Chennai**, the coastal areas of Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Shivagangai, Ramanathapuram, **Tanjavur**, Tirunelveli, and Kanyakumari. The nuclear power station in Kalapakkam near Chennai was safely shut down after water entered it. One of the saddest aspects of the tsunami is the number of children who died and the children who have been orphaned.

TVS GROUP OF COMPANIES. TVS Group of Companies are now one of the biggest **industry** business groups in Tamil Nadu, along with **Amalgamations, Murugappa Business Group**, and others. The founder of the TVS business empire was **T. V. Sundaram Iyengar**, an orthodox Vaishnavite **Brahmin** who proved to be an extremely successful entrepreneur. His father was a lawyer, but T.V. Sundaram Iyengar went against his family wishes and rejected a legal career in order to embark as a small entrepreneur. He started commercial farming in Tirukkanangudi, his mother's estate at Nerugari hills. He cultivated bamboo and several other trees and sold timber and bamboo on contract. He invested the profits from timber in a bus business with a transporter named Khan Bahadur Kadar in the **Tanjavur–Pudukkottai** route. This has grown as a major TVS transport company with a fleet of over 600 buses and trucks plying to different places from **Madurai**. Today, the TVS group is engaged in multifarious industrial ventures. From transport TVS has moved into automobile spare parts, manufacture of motorcycles and mopeds, etc. Two important persons in the TVS group today are Suresh Krishna and Venu Srinivasan.

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UNIVERSITY, ANNA. Anna University was established on 4 September 1978 as a unitary university by bringing together and integrating two well-known technical institutions in the city of Madras (present-day **Chennai**) namely the College of Engineering, Guindy (established in 1894), Madras Institute of Technology, Chrompet (established in 1949), and three Technological Departments of the **University of Madras**, apart from Alagappa College of Technology (established in 1944) and the School of Architecture and Planning (established in 1957).

Situated in the southern part of the city of Chennai, the university's main campus extends over 100 hectares abutting the Adayar River on the north and Raj Bhavan on the south. The Madras Institute of Technology at Chrompet constitutes the second campus of the university, extending over 20 hectares. Both of the campuses have a variety of buildings serving the various needs of the university community. A third campus, extending over 80 hectares, is located at Taramani near

the Instronic campus, Adayar. The Bioprocess Laboratory, donated by Southern Petrochemicals Industries Company, is located at present on this campus, and several more centers of advanced studies including the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Sugar Research Institute, Mechatronics Institute, Entrepreneurship Development Park, and Convention Center will be housed there in future.

Since December 2001, the university has become a large, highly renowned affiliating institution, having brought into its fold about 225 self-financing engineering colleges, six government colleges, and three government-aided engineering colleges located in various parts of Tamil Nadu State. *See also* EDUCATION; UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIDASAN; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIYAR; UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ; UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. MGR MEDICAL.

UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI. The Annamalai University is a unitary, teaching and residential university. It was founded by the munificence of the farsighted philanthropist and patron of letters, the late **Rajah Annamalai Chettiar** of Chettinad. He started several colleges and ultimately the university in 1929. Since its inception, it has progressively tried to realize the aims of its founder pro-chancellor. After him, his illustrious son, Dr. Muthiah Chettiar, was the pro-chancellor from 1948 to 1984, and he diligently nurtured the growth and development of the university. The present pro-chancellor, Dr. M. A. M. Ramaswamy, a philanthropist and patron of sports, is the son of Dr. Muthiah Chettiar. The university has had the unique good fortune of having a succession of eminent vice-chancellors to guide its destinies. During the last 75 years, it has grown rapidly and has consolidated its position as a unitary and residential university with 48 departments of study and over 1,664 members on its teaching staff. Annamalainagar is a busy and full-fledged university town east of Chidambaram, the abode of Lord Nataraja, that form of **Siva** that represents the eternal cosmic dancer. The university campus, including the colleges, hostels, and playgrounds, occupies an area of about 405 hectares. *See also* EDUCATION; UNIVERSITY, ANNA; UNI-

UNIVERSITY, BHARATIDASAN; UNIVERISTY, BHARATIYAR; UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ; UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. MGR MEDICAL.

UNIVERSITY, BHARATIDASAN. Located in **Tiruchirapalli** district, the **Bharatidasan** University is today considered one of the premier institutions of higher **education** in Tamil Nadu. It began as a post-graduate extension center of **University of Madras** but was established as an independent university around 1980 and was named after the famous revolutionary poet Kanaka Subburatnam who is known today only as **Bharatidasan**. Today, the university boasts 26 academic departments. The institution has excellent infrastructural facilities including libraries, computer and Internet centers, and, interestingly, also is a popular yoga center. *See also* UNIVERSITY, ANNA; UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI; UNIVERISTY, BHARATIYAR; UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. MGR MEDICAL.

UNIVERSITY, BHARATIYAR. The government of Tamil Nadu established the Bharathiyar university at **Coimbatore** in February 1982 under the provision of the Bharathiyar University Act 1981, with jurisdiction over the districts of Coimbatore, Erode, and the **Nilgiris**. The post-graduate center of the **University of Madras**, which was functioning in Coimbatore until 1982, formed the nucleus of the university. The University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi, recognized the university in 1985. Named after the Great National Poet **Subramania Bharathiyar**, "Educate to Elevate" is its motto. It is the aim of the university to participate in imparting knowledge, skills, and creative attitudes and values among the youth of this country to contribute more effectively toward establishing an equitable social and economic order and secular ideal. The university is situated in the foothills of Maruthamalai, a mountain that forms the part of Western Ghats, in a sprawling campus of 405 hectares at a distance of 15 km from the city of Coimbatore. Currently, the university has 85 affiliated institutions.

There are also 19 research institutes of the state and central governments, which are recognised by this university for research purposes. All of these institutions cater to the educational needs of about 150,000 students and research scholars. *See also* UNIVERSITY, ANNA; UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI; UNIVERISTY, BHARATIDASAN; UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS; UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. MGR MEDICAL.

UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ. The **Madurai Kamaraj** University was established in 1966 and has 18 schools comprising 72 departments. The Directorate of Distance **Education** of the university has about 130,000 students. The university has 109 affiliated colleges including other approved institutions and seven evening colleges. There are centers to promote research potential of teachers. Extension activities are carried out through the Department of Youth Welfare, National Social Service, Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe Cell and Adult Education programs. The university (originally known as Madurai University) was named after the historical city of Madurai, the ancient capital of the **Pandyan** rulers and the seat of three famous **Tamil** academies going back to the beginning of the **Christian** era and perhaps even earlier. It was inaugurated on 6 February 1966 in the heart of the city. Its nucleus was the extension center of the **University of Madras** located at Madurai. Two years later, the foundation stone for a new campus was laid by Dr. Zakir Hussain, the then president of India on the Madurai-Theni road, 13 km to the west of the city. Since then, the campus has grown into a beautiful university township with an area of about 304 hectares, appropriately called in Tamil "Palkalainagar." And in 1978, the name of the university was changed to Madurai Kamaraj University to honor **K. Kamaraj**, a great politician and former chief minister of Tamil Nadu. *See also* UNIVERSITY, ANNA; UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI; UNIVERISTY, BHARATIDASAN; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIYAR; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. MGR MEDICAL.

UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS. One of the earliest universities to be founded in India besides the ones at Calcutta (present-day Kolkata) and Bombay (present-day Mumbai), the University of Madras came into existence as a result of an Act in 1857 and was designed after the pattern of the University of London as an affiliating body with constituent colleges. The Madras University has 118 affiliated colleges. The Presidency College and the Madras Christian College were two of the earliest famous ones. The university covers a wide range of disciplines nearly all in the humanities, sciences, fine arts, and medicine. The Alagappa College of Technology, now a part of the **Anna University**, was an integral part of the university. The university also has an Open University scheme. Although at the time of its inception the university was conceived of as an institution with total autonomy, national policies like **Reservations** and affirmative action enshrined in the Indian constitution of 1950 have tended to dilute the notion of autonomy with the idea of a proactive state role in university administration. *See also* UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI; UNIVERISTY, BHARATIDASAN; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIYAR; UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVER-SITY, TAMIL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. MGR MEDICAL.

UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S. This was the only **women's** university in Tamil Nadu for over two decades. The university was established by the Tamil Nadu Government at **Kodaikanal** in **Madurai** district for providing greater opportunities for women to engage in research and teaching. Interestingly, the university has special medical and legal wings for addressing women's manifold specific problems. The university has on its special agenda health care and family planning in the pursuit of which it has adopted villages. The university has recently been moved to **Chennai**. *See also* UNIVERSITY, ANNA; UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI; UNIVERISTY, BHARATIDASAN; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIYAR; UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. MGR MEDICAL.

UNIVERSITY, TAMIL. Located in **Tanjavur**, this university was started in 1981 for promoting advanced research in **Tamil language** and culture by the Tamil University Ordinance. The university has 16 departments that include unusual departments such as one for Palm Leaf Manuscripts, another for Epigraphy, etc., aside from the usual ones such as linguistics, sculpture, architecture, and **music**. It is noteworthy that the university has instituted the Rajaraja Award (after the great King **Rajaraja Chola I**) of Indian Rupees 100,000 for the best book in Tamil every year. *See also* UNIVERSITY, ANNA; UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIDASAN; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIYAR; UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. MGR MEDICAL.

UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL. The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) came into being on 1 June 1971. However, it had its origin in the establishment of an Agricultural School at Saidapet, Madras (present-day **Chennai**), Tamil Nadu, as early as 1868 and was later relocated at **Coimbatore**. In 1920, it was affiliated to the **University of Madras**. The Agricultural College and Research Institute, Coimbatore, as it came to be called, assumed full responsibilities of agricultural **education** and research and supported the State Agricultural Department by delivering research products.

Until 1946, the college was the only institute for agricultural education for the whole of south India. In 1958, it was recognized as a post-graduate center leading to Masters and Doctoral degrees. The Agricultural College and Research Institute, **Madurai**, was established in 1965. These two colleges formed the nucleus of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University when it was established in 1971. The third Agricultural College was started at Killikulam in 1984. The fourth Agricultural College, named Anbil Dharmalingam Agricultural College and Research Institute, was started at Kumulur (**Tiruchirapalli**) in 1989 and was later moved to Navalur Kuttappattu (Tiruchirapalli) in 1992. In line with technological changes, the B. E. (**Agriculture**) hitherto offered is being offered as B. Tech. (Agricultural Engineering) from 2002–2003 at Agricultural Engineering College and Research Institute, Kumulur. The Pandit Jawa-

harlal Nehru College of Agriculture and Research Institute, Karaikal, governed by Government of **Pondicherry**, is an affiliated institute of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, where agriculture courses are being offered. Apart from these academic institutes, the university now has research programs at more than 32 stations, spread throughout Tamil Nadu with more than 1,000 scientists and teachers. *See also* UNIVERSITY, ANNA; UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIDASAN; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIYAR; UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. MGR MEDICAL.

UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU Dr. M. G. R. MEDICAL. The Tamil Nadu Dr. M. G. R. Medical University Act, 1987 received the assent of the President of India on 24 September 1987. This affiliating university began operations in July 1988. The Tamil Nadu Dr. M. G. R. Medical University, situated in the southern part of **Chennai**, is one of the premier medical universities of India, named after the former chief minister of Tamil Nadu, the late **M. G. Ramachandran**, and it is the second largest health sciences university in India. This is the only medical university in Tamil Nadu capable of granting affiliation to new medical and paramedical colleges, government or self-financing; and awarding degrees (until 1988, all degrees in health sciences were awarded by the **University of Madras**). Besides medical and paramedical courses, the university also regulates dental **education** and education in the Indian systems of medicine under a single umbrella to maintain uniform and high standards of education. The university also promotes research and disseminates knowledge gained therefrom. *See also* UNIVERSITY, ANNA; UNIVERSITY, ANNAMALAI; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIDASAN; UNIVERSITY, BHARATIYAR; UNIVERSITY, MADURAI KAMARAJ; UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL; UNIVERSITY, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL.

URITHIRAN KANNANAR. Kannanar was a **Sangam** poet and author of the texts *Malaipadukadam* and *Pattinapalai*. The fame enjoyed by this author is testified to in a medieval inscription from Tiruvellam, which says that during an invasion an entire township was

destroyed except the 16-pillared pavilion (*mandapam*), where the composition of Kannanar was inaugurated.

UTTIRAMERUR INSCRIPTION. The Uttiramerur inscription is one of the most significant inscriptions of **Tamil** history. It is widely quoted as an exemplar of local self-government and grassroots democracy. The Uttiramerur inscriptions, of which actually there are two, set apart from each other by a few years, belong to the 10th century. Dated 919 and 921, respectively, the inscriptions issued by Maduraikonda (the conquerer of **Madurai**) Koperunkesari Verman, detail the rules and regulations governing the democratic functioning of the **Brahmin sabha** (local assembly) of Uttiramerur. The local assembly functioned through various subcommittees such as the tank committee, accounts committee, finance committee, and general annual committee. The members of all committees, which are called *variya*m, were democratically elected. The entire region was divided into 30 wards or electoral constituencies. The candidates would have to be propertied people with good character, between the ages of 35 and 65. Defaulters, people with criminal records, or those charged with immoral conduct would be automatically disqualified. From the candidates, members would be chosen for the various committees by drawing lots with the names of the candidates being put in a big pot called *kuda olai*. Candidates who had already held office on a particular committee could not contest for the same committee again. The amazing nature of the Uttiramerur inscriptions, detailing a system of self-governance, personal accountability, and democratic procedures, has made it not only the most important document of ancient Tamil polity but one that sets an example for future politicians and administrators to emulate.

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VADAI. Vadai is traditionally made of de-husked black gram. The gram is ground into a paste with salt and chopped ginger and green chillies are added, mixed, and then patted into circular shapes, like a doughnut, and fried to a golden brown in oil. It is usually served with coconut chutney and **sambar**. *See also* CUISINE.

VAIDYANATHA BHAGAVATHAR, CHEMBAI (1896–1974).

Fondly called “Chembai,” Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar hailed from an orthodox **Brahmin** family in Chembai located in Palakkad district (presently in Kerala). His voice, which has been likened by critics to a lion’s roar, was regarded in the pre-microphone days as an asset. Both Vaidyanatha and his brother Subramaniam received musical training from their father, Ananta Bhagavathar, a violinist. They gave their first concert in 1904 when “Vaitha” was eight and “Suppamani” six at the Parthasarathy temple in Chembai. Like all musicians of his age, Chembai soon made his way to Tirvarur, the home of the musical trinity. The brothers gave musical performances together until 1918, after which Subramaniam returned to Chembai to become a **music** teacher there, while his brother went on to scale great heights in the musical world. To Chembai goes the credit of discovering that great percussion (*mridangam*) genius Palghat Mani Iyer.

Chembai entered the electronic age when he recorded his first disk in 1932 with the Columbia Company. In 1954–1955, the great musician suddenly lost his voice in the middle of a concert. Chembai’s life and his career ended as it had begun, in the small Krishna temple in his native village. He gave a soul-stirring performance, came home, and died peacefully. *See also* BALASUBRAMANIAN, G. N; SUBBULAKSHMI, M. S.

VAIKO. *See* GOPALASWAMY, V.

VALANGAI. *See* IDANGAI.

VALAYAPATI. This text is included among the five great epics of **Tamil literature**, the others being *Silappadikaram*, *Manimekalai*, *Jivakachintamani*, and *Kundalakesi*. Only a small portion of this text is extant in the *Vaishya Puranam*, consisting of some 66 poems. Extensive references to this composition can be found in the writings of the famous 12th-century Tamil commentator Adiyarku Nallar. Tamil scholars infer this to be a Jain text. The epic centers round the diamond merchant Navakoti Narayanan who, despite his marriage to a girl from his own merchant community, chooses to have a liaison with a foreigner. On the threat of ostracism by his community, he abandons the pregnant woman and settles down in the commercial

port town of **Kaveripumpattinam**. The deserted wife turns to Goddess Kali (Parvati) for refuge. She delivers a male child and after five years is united with her husband through divine providence. *See also* SANGAM LITERATURE.

VALLIMALAI. Located in North Arcot district the site belongs to the early historic period. It contains natural caverns, which were inhabited by Digambar Jain monks. Oral traditions of the Tamils associate Vallimalai with Valli, the gypsy consort of **Murugan**, the Tamil god who already had a divine consort, Devayanai. He is said to have courted and married Valli in Vallimalai. On top of the Vallimalai hills is a famous Murugan temple built by the **Pallava** dynasty. *See also* AMMAN KUTTAL.

VALLIYAMMAI, TILLAIYADI (1898–1914). Valliyammai was an ordinary woman who showed remarkable courage and patriotism. This amazing Tamil teenager fought alongside Mahatma Gandhi during the **South African** phase of his struggle and was jailed in the same prison as Kasturiba Gandhi, Gandhi's wife. Her family originally came from **Pondicherry** but had settled down in Johannesburg. Her father, R. Munusami **Mudaliyar**, was a petty shopkeeper. Valliyammai belonged to the Sengunthar community who were traditionally weavers. In 1913, the Indians in South Africa decided to adopt the Gandhian methods of protest against the European policy of apartheid. Young girls like Valliyammai were particularly indignant that the British government should pronounce the traditional Indian marriages as null and void. A large group of **women**, including the 15-year-old Valliyammai and her mother, Mangalathammal, moved from Johannesburg to Charlestown and Durban, rallying public opinion against British policies. When she and her mother were marching from Newcastle into Transvaal, they were arrested and imprisoned under the worst conditions. It is noteworthy that Gandhi came to meet her when she was released. In 1914, Valliyammai died and Gandhi wrote in his paper that Valliyammai's sacrifice would be immortalized in the South African phase of the Indian freedom struggle. Today, a monument to evoke her memory has been constructed in her native place, Tillaiyadi, at the insistence of the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)** leader **M. Karunanidhi**.

VANCHINATHAN IYER, R. (ca. 1881–1911). An **extremist** freedom fighter from Chenkottai in the Tirunelveli district, Vanchinathan is known for the murder of the Tirunelveli collector, E. W. D. Ashe. It is noteworthy that Vanji, as he was called, was an educated youth who hailed from an orthodox **Brahmin** family. After killing Ashe in the train station at Maniyatchi, Vanchinathan shot himself to evade arrest. Recently, a commemorative plaque placed at the Maniyatchi station, which has been renamed Vanji Maniyatchi station. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU; REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM IN TAMIL NADU.

VANNIYAR. The Vanniyars are primarily **agriculturists**. The **Pallar caste**, who constitute landless **agricultural labor**, were Calico painters in the Coromandel textile **industry** during the colonial period and are classified as “Vanniyar” in some **administrative manuals**. In certain areas, the Vanniyar are known as *Padaiyachi*. While historically they seem to have had a low status, the caste began to generate a superior identity for itself from the mid-19th century. Today, they call themselves *Agnicula Kshathriya*. A treatise dealing with the divine origin of the Vanniyar, *Vanniyar Kula Vilagam*, was published in 1892, which claimed for them a divine origin and a royal lineage from the **Pallava** rulers of **Mandalam Thondai** or the Nayaka rulers of the 16th century. In this process of Sanskritisation, the Vanniyars began wearing the sacred thread, the signifier of Brahmanical status since the thread ceremony marks one’s entry into Brahminhood. They also began using the titles “Gounder” and “**Naicker**.” In the shifting political scenario of present-day Tamil Nadu, their ideology has turned a cartwheel. They are as anxious today to claim “low caste” or dalit status as they were, at one point of time, to claim Brahminhood. The Vanniyars have entered politics on the strength of their status as a “depressed” caste. The Vanniyar Sangam is an association of the Vanniyar caste, who dominate regions of Vellore, Cuddalore, **Tiruchirapalli**, Salem, and **Tanjavur** districts. The community is represented in Tamil politics by the **Pat-tali Makkal Katchi** led by Dr. **Anbumani Ramadoss**.

VARADACHARI, N. S. (1897–1980). He came to be known as “No Shirt” Varadachari (a pun on his initials) because, as a staunch supporter

of *svadeshi*, he did not want to wear Western attire. A close disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, he, along with Undam Baker, authored the work *Kairattu* (in Tamil, meaning “spinning wheel”), which was translated into English as *Hand Spinning and Weaving*. The book, published in 1926, received an award from the government. N. S. Varadachari was born to N. S. Anantachari and Singarammal at Tarani near Tirupati. He did his Honors in History and Economics at the Presidency College in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) and also received a degree in law in 1918. During the non-cooperation movement launched by Gandhi, he abandoned his legal career and participated in the Gandhian struggle. In 1934, he presided over the Madras District Political Conference. In 1937, when the first Congress Ministry was formed by **C. Rajagopalachari**, he was made parliamentary secretary. He took a leading part in the Nagpur flag Satyagraha movement and the **Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha**. Like **Annie Besant**, he appealed to the students to join the **freedom struggle**. In his later years, Varadachari left the Congress and joined the Swatantra Party under C. Rajagopalachari. In the post-independence era, he was elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1950 and served as a cabinet minister. Although Varadachari never became an all-India figure, he contributed in no small measure to the freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu.

VASANTHAKUMARI, M. L. (1928–1990). Vasanthakumari, popularly known as MLV, came from the traditional family of **Devaradiyars** who dominated the field of classical **dance** and **music** in pre-independence Tamil Nadu. Like other **women** singers of this community, notably **M. S. Subbalakshmi**, she too claimed her lineage only from her mother, calling herself Madras Lalithangi Vasanthakumari. Vasanthakumari was studying in a convent when the handsome *avant-garde* musician **G. N. Balasubramaniam** (GNB) spotted her and taught her music for 10 years. Under his tutelage, she emerged as a notable musician. In 1940, she gave her first solo concert in Bangalore. Her biographer, Indira Menon, says that MLV “bridged the gap between tradition and modernity.” The medieval Kannada composer Purandaradasa was her favorite, and she published a collection of his compositions called *Devarnama* with musical notations. MLV is also known for her rendering of the seventh century woman saint **Andal**’s passionate songs, *Tiruppavai*. Today, Sudha Raghunathan is,

effectively, carrying on the musical legacy of MLV and her guru GNB. *See also* BRINDA, T. AND MUKTA; MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; PATTAMMAL, D. K.; TAMIL ISAI SANGAM.

VEDANTA DESIKA (1268–1369). Sri Vedanta Desika was born in 1268 at Thooppul, a village near **Kanchipuram**, to Totaramba and Ananta Suri, both from very traditional Sri Vaishnava backgrounds. His parents gave him the name Venkatanatha, but he is universally known as “Vedanta Desika.” His devotion, combined with his expertise in the art of debate, earned him the title *Kavi Tarkika Simha* (lion among poets and debaters) by the time he was 20.

Desika moved to Tiruvahindrapuram and meditated on the Haya-griva form of **Vishnu**. Works such as the *Hayagriva Stotram*, *Raghu Vira Gadyam*, *Gopala Vimsati* (all in Sanskrit), *Achyuta Satakam* (in Prakrit), and *Mummanikkovai* and *Navamani Maalai* (in **Tamil**) are among his hymns in praise of the deities enshrined here. In his Tamil love poems to Lord Devanatha, for example, the influence of the **Alvars** is transparent, as is his mastery of the **Sangam** Tamil conventions. At some point, Desika returned to Kanchipuram to continue his teaching and writing. He eventually moved to Srirangam, the center of Vaishnava culture, in order to defeat the *Advaita* followers of **Shankaracharya** and firmly establish the *Visishtadvaita* philosophy of **Ramanujacharya**. He summarized his objections to Advaita in the polemic work *Satadusani*. It is also in Srirangam that Desika composed the *Paduka Sahasram*, 1,008 verses on the sandals of the Lord Vishnu, which is regarded as his greatest work. In 1327, Malik Kafur invaded Srirangam from the north, with tragic consequences. Hundreds if not thousands of Sri Vaishnavas are said to have been massacred, and the very existence of the **temple** of Lord Ranganatha was threatened. Led by Pillai Lokacharya, the senior-most acharya, a group of Sri Vaishnavas escaped from Srirangam. The aged Sudarsana Suri and Pillai Lokacharya were among those who died during the invasion. With the invasion of the temple came the need for Desika himself to leave Srirangam, so he took his family and the sons of Sudarsana Suri and headed northwest, settling first in Satyaman-galam, in present-day Karnataka, and then in Melkote. Seeing the devastating destruction caused to Srirangam, he composed the *Abhiti Stava*, or Prayer for Freedom from Fear. The *Abhiti Stava* is a poetic

request for protection from all unholy forces, particularly those opposed to the *Vaidika* lifestyle. Around 1360, Gopanna Udaiyar defeated the **Muslims**, and the Sri Vaishnavas led by Vedanta Desikar returned to Srirangam. With the restoration of Srirangam, Desika now returned to his service of Lord Ranganatha. Tradition records that he composed *Sri Rahasya Traya Saaram*, an exhaustive work on the essence of Sri Vaishnava philosophy, lifestyle, and the meaning of the esoteric mantras in these last few years of his life. *See also* IYENGARS—THE VAISHNAVITE BRAHMIN; RELIGION.

VEDARANYAM SALT SATYAGRAHA. Mahatma Gandhi had organized the Dandi March (in Gujarat) on 5 March 1930 to protest the Salt Tax imposed by the colonial British Government. The Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha was conceived along the same lines and was organized by **C. Rajagopalachari** from **Tiruchirapalli** to march to the coast of Vedaranyam on 13 April 1930. Hundreds of Tamil freedom fighters, including Rajagopalachari himself, followed by **K. Santhanam**, K. Venkatarama **Iyer**, and K. Subramanya Iyer, collected salt at Agastyanpalli and courted arrest. Newspapers in Britain, such as the *Daily Republican*, sarcastically compared it to the “Boston Tea Party.” *See also* FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN TAMIL NADU.

VEENAI. Also called Veena, it is regarded as the oldest south Indian **musical instrument**. It occupies a unique place in Indian **religion**, culture, and mythology. Saraswati, the goddess of learning, is always shown with a *veenai* in her hands. Narada, the divine sage, is depicted with the same instrument. Indira Menon, in her book *Madras Quartet*, says, “the *veenai* played an important role in the evolution of **Carnatic music**.” Ramamatry during the 15th century is said to have located 12 notes of the musical scale. on the *veenai*. This, in turn, became the basis for the classification of the 72 *melakarta ragas* (musical structures) in the 17th century by the grammarian of **music** Venkatamakhi. *Veenai*, perhaps because of the divinity attributed to it, was usually associated with the **Brahmin** community. **Muthuswami Dikshitar** and **Shyama Shastri** of the famous musical trinity are said to have been excellent exponents of the *Veenai*. However, Dhanammal, granddaughter of the temple dancer at **Tanjavur**,

Kamakshi Ammal, coming from the **Devaradiyar** tradition, put an end to this Brahmanical monopoly and her daughter became celebrated as “**Veenai Dhanammal**.”

VELLALAR. Vellalar are the most important of the farming communities of the Tamil country. The community is mentioned as early as the **Sangam** period (roughly dated between third century BCE to third century CE). The name is said to be derived from *vellam* (floods) and *anmai* or *alvathu* (control). In **Sangam literature**, they are also referred to as *Karalar*, meaning “controller of rain-bearing clouds.” Interestingly, the name given to this community dates the technique of harnessing and controlling floods to very early times. The term extends beyond notions of **caste** and seems rather to be a generic term for farming groups dispersed over space. As a result, the Vellalar of the Kongu region are either called Kongu Vellalar or Goundar. The two also seem to treat each other as distinct and different in some places. The Vellalars settled in the **Mandalam Chola** region call themselves *Choliya Vellalar*. Edgar Thurston, in his monumental work, *The Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, suggests that these were normally endogamous groups that did not choose to intermingle or intermarry although the situation was fluid and flexible, depending on historical space and time. The suffix “Pillai” (in this case, literally, “sons of the soil”) and Mudali/**Mudaliyar** are used by the Vellalar indicating the highest status among the non-**Brahmin** groups. *See also* AGRICULTURAL CASTES; NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT.

VELLORE MUTINY. This was one of the earliest organized rebellions by the Indian regiments against the British and is therefore seen by the Tamils as a precursor of the Great Rebellion of 1857. On 10 May 1806, the 23rd Regiment launched a sudden attack on the European forces based in Vellore fort in present-day North Arcot district. The **East India Company** believed that the family of Tippu Sultan, whose name could still rally both **Hindus** and **Muslims** against their common enemy, the British, engineered the mutiny. The mutineers declared Futteh Hyder, Tippu’s second son, as their ruler and hoisted the tiger-striped flag of the house of Tippu atop the Vellore fort. The mutiny was crushed with great cruelty, and 800 bodies were found

just inside the fort while 1,000 were blown from the canons. *See also* FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN TAMIL NADU.

VELU NACHCHIYAR (ca. 18th century). Velu Nachchiyar governed the principality of Shivagangai during the period of Tippu Sultan. Shivagangai **Maravas**, in fact, played a crucial role in the early part of India's **freedom struggle** against the British. She was married to Raja Muthu Vadukanatha Devar. Together, they fought the British. According to oral tradition, Kattu was a powerful bandit of the locality who, with the connivance of the British, abducted Velu Nachchiyar. While she was being carried away on his horse, she managed to break free and cut him up with his sword. On her return to Shivagangai, Colonel Jackson's forces laid siege to her kingdom. In the initial battle, the Shivagangai forces won against the English East India Company forces on the banks of the Vaigai, but subsequently Muthu Vadukanatha Devar was killed in the siege. Velu Nachchiyar managed to flee and find asylum with Tippu Sultan of Mysore. With his military help, she was restored to the throne of Shivagangai, but Velu Nachchiyar chose to end her life on the spot where her husband had died. She is still revered in the Tamil country as a **woman** of extraordinary valor, similar to the legendary popularity of Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi during the 1857 rebellion.

VELUTHAMBI DALAVAY (DEWAN) (mid-19th century). The role that Vira Pandya **Kattabomman**, the well-known Palayakkarar of Panjalakurichchi, played at the beginning of the 19th century, Dewan Veluthambi (alternately Velupillai) played two decades later. Velupillai was born into an affluent family in a village called Talaikulam in Nanjil Nadu, the Tamil portion of the old Travancore State (presently in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu). He rose rapidly in his brilliant political career to become the dewan or prime minister of the Travancore State. Initially, he followed a policy of subservience to the British but turned against the colonial regime when the king of Travancore was forcibly guarded by "white" (that is, British) troops, which replaced the indigenous Nair army of the king. Veluthambi, along with the minister of the kingdom of Cochin, Pazhaiya Achchan, led troops against the army of the British Resident Colonel Macaulay in Travancore. The proclamation of rebellion that he issued on the occasion is known as "Guntard" (after Dr. Guntard, the author of *Dra-*

vidian Elements in Sanskrit) proclamation. The gallant Travancore forces were defeated, and Veluthambi committed suicide rather than surrender to the British forces, which would have subjected him to the same fate met by Kattabomman and **Marudu Pandyan**.

VENKATARAGHAVAN, SRINIVASA (1945–). This renowned cricketer, ICC match referee, and umpire, born on 21 April 1945, was a member of the famous Indian spin quartet that tormented batsmen for well over a decade in the 1960s and 1970s. A right arm spinner who was accurate and attacking, Venkataraghavan made his Test debut against New Zealand in 1964–1965 at Madras (present-day **Chennai**). Venkat played for India from February 1965 to September 1983, which was one of the longest stints for any Indian player. Having started his career with 21 wickets in four Test matches, Venkat was described as a premium bowler, a useful tail-end batsman, an excellent close-in fielder, and a shrewd captain. His best bowling figure in Test matches read 8 for 72. He also engineered three five-wicket hauls. As a batsman, he scored two half-centuries in Test cricket. He led the Indian team in the first two World Cup tournaments and also during the tour of England in 1979. He retired from first-class cricket in 1985 after taking the second biggest haul of wickets in the Ranji Trophy—530. He made his umpiring debut in 1992–1993, both in one-day internationals and Test matches, and has also been a match referee. He became famous again, as an umpire, in the 1990s, umpiring in 73 Test matches and 52 one-day internationals from 1993 until his retirement in March 2004. He was honored with the Padma Shri in 2003. *See also* AMRITRAJ, VIJAY; KARTIKEYAN NARAIN; KRISHNAN, RAMESH; PILLAI, DHANRAJ; VISHWANATHAN ANAND.

VENKATARAMAN, R. (1910–). Born on 4 December 1910 in the village of Rajamadam, **Tanjavur** district, Venkataraman obtained his master's degree in economics from the **University of Madras**. He later qualified in law from the Law College, Madras (present-day **Chennai**). Venkataraman was enrolled in the Madras High Court in 1935 and in the Supreme Court in 1951. While practicing law, he was drawn into the movement for India's freedom from Britain's colonial subjugation. His active participation in the Indian National Congress' resistance to the British Government, the "Quit India Movement of

1942,” resulted in his detention for two years under the British Government’s Defense of India Rules. In the years 1947 to 1950, Venkataraman served as secretary of the Madras Provincial Bar Federation. Venkataraman displayed an abiding interest in labor law. In 1949, he founded the *Labour Law Journal*, which publishes important decisions pertaining to labor. He is regarded as leader and sympathizer of trade unions, especially organizations of plantation workers, railway employees, and working journalists. Law and trade union activity led to Venkataraman’s increasing association with politics. He was elected in 1950 to free India’s Provisional Parliament (1950–1952) and to the First Parliament (1952–1957). Although re-elected to parliament in 1957, Venkataraman resigned his seat in the Lok Sabha to join the state government of Madras and held the ministerial portfolios of **industries**, labor, cooperation, power, transport, and commercial taxes from 1957 to 1967. Venkataraman was appointed a member of the Union Planning Commission in 1967 and held that office until 1971. In 1980, Venkataraman was reelected to the Lok Sabha and was appointed Union minister of finance in the government headed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi. He was later appointed Union minister of defense. Venkataraman was elected vice president of India in August 1984 and was sworn in as the eighth president of the Republic of India in 1987—an office that he held until 1992. *See also* ABDUL KALAM, A. P. J.; AGRICULTURAL LABOR; RADHAKRISHNAN, SARVAPALLI.

VIJAYANTIMALA (1936–). Vijayantimala rose to fame in post-independence **Tamil cinema**, becoming successful in both Tamil and Hindi films. Beginning with the film *Vazhkai* in 1949, in which she co-starred with **Gemini Ganesan**, she went on to act in historical films, including *Parthiban Kanavu* and *Vanjikottai Valiban* (1958) in which her skill as a **Bharatanatyam** dancer was exploited fully. Along with the actress Padmini, she brought the graces of the classical **dance** form to the silver screen. It was, however, for her excellent performance in the Hindi film *Madhumati* that she won the National Award as Best Actress in 1958. Following the usual route of Tamil film stars, Vijayantimala entered politics in 1984 when she contested and won on a Congress I ticket and became a member of parliament. In recent years, she has changed sides and currently supports the

Bharatiya Janata Party, which represents a diametrically opposed ideology. The actress, who is now in her seventies, continues to train students in the Bharatanatyam dance form and also gives performances. *See also* SAROJA DEVI, B.; SAVITHRI GANESAN.

VIRAMAMUNIVAR. *See* BESCHI, C. J.

VIRAPPAN (1952–2004). Koose Muniswamy Veerappan (also known as Virappan) was a Tamil brigand wanted by the police of three states—Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka. The man came to be known as “Chandanakadathal Virappan,” literally “the smuggler of sandalwood,” an act that is forbidden by Indian law. Virappan was the head of a smuggling gang that controlled the trade not only in sandalwood but also in ivory. His hideout was in the forests of Satyamangalam, Biligirirangan, Malai Mahadeswara, and Gundiyal—covering an area of more than 6,000 km². The man was ruthless in his elimination of informers and rivals but acquired a reputation as a friend of the poor. His political connections made him virtually invincible. In the course of three decades, his name became a byword for both courage and ruthlessness in the Tamil country, making him a major figure of the Tamil cultural landscape. A reward of Rs.50 million was offered for his capture. He was ambushed and killed by the Tamil Nadu Special Task Force in 2004.

VIRAPPAN R. M. (1926–). Virappa can be described as one of the satellite leaders of the **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)**. Like many of the Tamil politicians of yesteryear, he entered politics via the **theater**. He joined the **TKS Theatre Group** and acted in plays till 1944 when he became head of the **Dravida Kazhagam** at Karaikkudi. He was the right-hand man of **M. G. Ramachandran (MGR)**, and after the death of his mentor, he joined the AIADMK under **J. Jayalalitha**. In 1987, he was expelled from the party by Jayalalitha but was brought back into its fold in 1991 when he won his parliamentary seat from Kangeyam. He held a number of ministerial berths under the AIADMK regime until he was once again expelled from the party in 1995. He is currently head of the MGR Kazhagam. Given the mercurial state of Tamil Nadu politics, Virappan can be seen as a fairly successful survivor.

VISHNU. *See* MAYON.

VISHVESHWARAN, CHITRA (1950–). She is one of the leading **Bharatanatyam** dancers of India and operates her institute of **dance**, “Chidambaram,” at **Chennai**. Chitra’s husband, Vishveshwaran, is the nephew of the legendary **Carnatic musician G. N. Balasubramaniam** and is involved in the choreography of many of her performances. She is deeply involved in fund-raising for Ramana Sunritya Aalaya Trust (RASA), an institute using creative dance and **music** therapy for children with learning disabilities.

VISHWANATHAN, MAHARAJAPURAM (1890–1970) and MAHARAJAPURAM, SANTHANAM (1928–1992). Both father and son are illustrious singers who were raised in the musical tradition of saint-composer **Thyagaraja** and represented the Umaiyalpuram stream of the composer’s *shishya parampara* or disciples’ lineage. Maharajapuram Vishwanathan learned **music** from the age of 13. His guru was Umaiyalpuram Svaminatha Iyer. He underwent further training under **Tanjavur** Rangappa Iyer. His first public concert was at the age of 13 in the Kudaivayil temple near Kumbakonam. Like his contemporary, **G. N. Balasubramaniam**, Vishwanatha Iyer also tried his hand at acting. He played the role of the cruel **Brahmin** landlord in the film *Nandanar*. Vishwanathan’s style was distinguished by its breeziness and fast tempo. This musical rendering also reflected the influence of the north Indian “Hindustani” music. His son, Santanam, acquired even greater fame as a musician. Certain special *ragas* like *Mohanam* and *Durbar* became linked with his music. Santanam’s musical career was unfortunately cut short when he was killed in a car accident. Today, his sons continue to give performances although they are not as well recognized as their predecessors. *See also* IYENGAR, ARIYAKUDI RAMANUJAM; IYER, CHEMMANGUDI SRINIVASA; IYER, MUSIRI SUBRAMANYA; MADRAS MUSIC ACADEMY; NARAYANASWAMY; PALAKKAD K. V.

VISWANATHAN ANAND (1969–). Viswanathan Anand is the first Asian to win the World Chess Championship title. He won the title on 24 December 2000, defeating Spain’s Alexei Shirov, becoming the

world's youngest Asian Grandmaster (31 years old) to win the title. Born in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in December 1969, he began playing chess at the age of 6. He learned chess from his mother, Susheela. His parents encouraged him and would take him to the Tal Chess club. Young Anand had an exceptional memory and an ability to grasp things quickly, which made him excel in chess. Anand received his B.Com. degree from Loyola College in Chennai. He has won many titles even at a young age. He was the youngest Asian to win the International Master's Title at the age of 15. At 16, he became the National Champion and at 18 India's First Grandmaster. In 1987, he became the first Asian to win the World Junior Chess Championship. In 1992, he won the formidable Reggio Emilia Tournament. He was the runner up to Garry Kasparov in World Championship final in 1995. He beat Kasparov in the rapid chess tournament in September 1996 and Karpov in June 1997 in Hamburg Rapid Chess. Anand outplayed the most popular chess software program, Fritz, in July 1999. He has also received many awards—the Arjuna Award for Outstanding Indian Sportsman in 1985, Padmashree, National Citizens Award and Soviet Land Nehru Award in 1987, Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award, Chess Oscar, etc. *See also* AMRITRAJ, KARTIKEYAN, NARAIN; VIJAY; KRISHNAN, RAMESH; PILLAI, DHANRAJ; VENKATARAGAVAN, SRINIVASA.

– W –

WOMEN. Women in early **Tamil** society (for Tamils “early” would mean the **Sangam** era) seemed to have occupied an equal position with men. Tamil society of that era may not have been matriarchal or matrilineal, but it can definitely be characterized as matrilocal. Women chose their own life partners, and Sangam women, except for the **Brahmins**, were both audible and visible. Brahmanization and Sanskritization of Tamil society, which began in the early medieval period, gradually relegated women to an inferior role both in the public and the private domain. This was due largely to a number of interlinked factors such as the assigning of “Brahmadeya” or land-grants to Brahmins, the support sought by the **Pallava**, **Chola**, and

Pandya states from the priestly class of Brahmins, male domination in **temple** rituals, and the subsequent pushing out of women from sacred and secular spaces. With greater militarization during the period of medieval polities, women were most visible only within the **Devadasi** system. The patriarchal notion of female chastity and subordination to their spouses was partially reflected even in the Hindu pantheon of divine consorts.

The **freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu** during the colonial period provided women with some scope for self-expression. The foundation of the **Theosophical Society** and the influence of Gandhi led to the banding of women, sarcastically referred to in the 19th century Madras Press as “Adayar Feminists.” In 1917, **Annie Besant** and Margaret Cousins founded the Indian Women’s Association in Madras (present-day **Chennai**). Annie Besant and her colleagues Rukmini Lakshmi pathi and **Muthulakshmi Reddy** of the Theosophical Society worked for the advancement of women. During this period, Muthulakshmi Reddy founded the Avvai Home in Madras for the benefit of the destitute and rescued women. Though adult franchise was extended to women in 1929, there was no woman member in the Madras Legislative Council to focus their grievances. Hence, the Indian Women’s Association in Madras brought great pressure to bear on the government of Madras to nominate a woman member to the council to represent them. Muthulakshmi Reddy was nominated as the first Indian woman to be represented in a legislature. She was also the first woman to graduate in medicine from the **University of Madras**. She was later elected vice-president of the council.

Women also gained political space and the opportunity for playing a pro-active role in social reforms, especially those concerning women, within the **Tani Tamizh Iyakkam** (Movement for Pure Tamil) founded in 1916 by **Neelambikai Ammaiyar**, jointly with her father. Moovalur Ammaiyar, a **Devaradiyar** who fought a bitter social struggle to abolish this system of “sacred prostitution,” became active within the **Svaya Mariyadai Iyakkam** (Self Respect Movement) of **E. V. Ramaswami Naicker**. Neelambikai Ammaiyar, Dr. Dharmambal, K. V. Kamatchi, K. E. Veera Kalyani, Paripoornathammal Nagammai (wife of Ramaswami Naicker), and Kannamma (sister of Ramaswami Naicker) are some of the women who participated actively in Naicker’s Self-Respect Movement. From 1929 onward,

the All India Women's Conference carried on the struggle for the emancipation of women.

During the Civil Disobedience Movement, Muthulakshmi Reddy resigned from the Legislative Council. Kamala Bai Lakshmana Rao of Madras resigned her office as the Honorary Magistrate. The freedom movement, under the leadership of Gandhi, also attracted women like Sister Subbalakshmi and Achalambikai Ammaiyar who actively took up the issue of women's **education**.

At the beginning of World War II, a band of voluntary air-raid women workers started the Precaution Corps for Women in 1941 in order to educate women in the slums about air-raid safety measures. When the war ended, the government of Madras felt that the experience of these women workers should be utilized for constructive social service among women in order to promote their status in society. The corps was reconstituted and renamed Indian Women's Civic Corps. In 1947, the government of Madras instituted a separate Department for Women's Welfare, replacing the Indian Women's Civic Corps. In 1955, a separate Director of Women's Welfare was appointed. Almost simultaneously, the State Social Welfare Board, consisting of 21 members, was constituted to formulate policies and schemes to promote the welfare of women in Tamil Nadu.

Music and the visual arts have always been regarded as women's domain, but even here women have had to encounter and challenge the bastion of patriarchy. Only Devaradiyar were visible on the stage either as musicians or as **dancers**. Nagaratnammal (the moving spirit behind the Tiruvaiyaru **Thyagaraja** festival), **M. S. Subbalakshmi**, **K. B. Sundarambal**, **M. L. Vasanthakumari**, and the Sisters **Brinda and Mukta** (the nieces of **Veenai Dhanammal**) all belonged to this community. It is interesting that these women gained their identity from their mother since their parentage was often unknown. For example, M. S. Subbalakshmi is "**Madurai** Shanmugavadivu Subbalakshmi" while M. L. Vasanthakumari is "Madras Lalithangi Vasanthakumari." When Brahmin women began to enter the field of **Carnatic music** it was seen as a flagrant violation of social norms. However, both Vasanthakokilam and, following her, **D. K. Pattammal** successfully carved out a space for upper caste (especially Brahmin) women within the musical domain. The Sulamangalam Sisters (Jayalakshmi and Rajalakshmi), Radha and Jayalakshmi and more recently Sudha Raghunathan

as well as Bombay Jaishree, are well-known in the field of vocal music. Shaik Mahbub Subhani is considered an expert in **nadasvaram**. **Padma Subramaniam, Indrani Rahman, Leela Samson, and Alarmelvalli** are well-known **bharatanatyam** dancers. The sisters Leela and Kunjumani have established reputations as accomplished flutists, a wind instrument usually associated with men, originating with Krishna, the quintessential male god.

Tamil Nadu had 23.9 million females in its population of 48.4 million, according to the 1931 census, the first major census report during the pre-independence period. This figure is, however, notional because in the pre-independence phase Madras State consisted of the current states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka. In 1997, women's population in the state was around 28 million out of an overall figure of 55.9 million. According to the 1997 figures, of India's 321 million females, one in 14 resided in the state of Tamil Nadu. The sex ratio was 977 females per 1,000 males in 1981. According to the 2001 census (which has the latest population figures), Tamil Nadu's total population was around 62.1 million, with the sex ratio working out to 986 females per 1,000 males. The growth of the female population has fallen behind the males, having a female deficit of over 500,000. The factors that tended to diminish their numbers are said to be primarily poor nutritional intake as well as pregnancy and post-partum care-related problems. As per the Sample Registration System conducted in 1994, 39.6% of the pregnancies in Tamil Nadu occur in the age group of 15–19, resulting in a higher mortality rate of both woman and child. Female infanticide is another major factor, with districts like Salem registering a sex ratio as low as 929 females in 2001 (marginally higher than the 1991 figure of 925).

In the spheres of literacy and **education**, Tamil women have made significant strides in the post-independence era. To some extent, the freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu opened up avenues for women. In 1821, the first girls school was opened in Madras, and in 1897 women were allowed to sit for university examinations. The efforts of Annie Besant, Dr. Muthulakshmi, Margaret Cousins, and Sister Subbalakshmi led to the passage of the Child Marriage Restraint Act in 1929, which went a long way toward facilitating the education of the girl child. Missionary schools also provided an impetus for women's education. Despite these efforts, women's literacy in the

pre-1947 phase was just 6%, and a miniscule 0.05% could go in for higher education. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, a Tamilian from **Pudukkottai**, was the first woman to sit in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.

In the post-independence period, the year 1975, which was the International Women's Year, can be seen as a watershed for women's development in the spheres of health, education, and employment. The 1974 Report on the Status of Women in India became operational in 1975 to enable meaningful legislative as well as affirmative social action for the overall development of women. The Sixth Educational Survey of 1993 provided a valuable database for women's education. The Sixth Plan Document of 1980–1985 had a separate chapter on “Women and Development,” which looked into all of the three crucial areas of health, education, and employment. To provide some comparative statistics in the sphere of education, the 1971 census shows that only 26.9% of Tamil women were literate as opposed to 51.8% of men. However, the gap seems to have closed somewhat according to the 1991 census. The total literacy level for rural Tamil Nadu is 54.59%. Female literacy was 41.84% as compared to 67.18% male literacy. In the urban areas, the total literacy rate was 77.99%; the female literacy rate was 69.61% compared to the male literacy rate of 86.06%.

In terms of employment, women are predominant in the informal and unorganized sectors of labor, where they are subjected to long working hours, low wages, and quite often, sexual exploitation by their employers and overseers. The Shramshakti Report of the National Commission on Self-Employed Women and Women in the Unorganized Sector, released in 1988, brought to light the problems faced by the working woman. Gradual changes are in the offing with the establishment of the Women's Development Corporation, specifically the Tamil Nadu Women's Development Project called *Mahalir Thittam* initiated in 1990, which was launched in eight districts. The area was further expanded to nearly double the number in 1996, and in 2001 the corporation has spread its policies and actions in all the 28 districts of Tamil Nadu. The planning is women-centered, participatory, and process-oriented and involves women at all levels—the state government and its agencies such as the National Bank for **Agriculture** and Rural Development (NABARD), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

both national and international. Several international NGOs are involved with women's employment in the areas of agriculture and fisheries. In cities like Chennai, women have made great gains in terms of technical education and employment in sectors such as information technology, engineering, and medicine, traditionally perceived as male preserves. *See also* ECONOMY; WOMEN IN BUSINESS; WOMEN IN TAMIL CINEMA; WOMEN PERIODICALS.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS. The traditional Indian roles for **women** have been perceived as ideal wives and mothers rather than as businesswomen and entrepreneurs. Canonical texts like the *Manusmriti* repeatedly state that women are fickle and have clouded thinking, precluding them from all economic activities. However, this perception of Tamil women began to change visibly when they participated in large numbers in the **freedom struggle**. In the post-independence era, Tamil women have exploded into the public domain, the corporate world, the service sector, and, above, all private entrepreneurship. Tamil businesswomen today are most visible in the garment **industry** and in beauty/body care. Beauty parlors, which have mushroomed all over Tamil Nadu, are mostly women's ventures. A few, like Sharan Apparao, are into "the business of Art," particularly the exhibition and sale of paintings. The well-known publishing firm based in **Chennai** called the East-West Publishers has as its moving spirit Chandra Padmanabhan, who, along with her husband, publishes quality books on Tamil culture including Tamil **literature**. Chandra herself has authored two popular books on Tamil foods. Usha Ranganathan, a Chennai-based **Brahmin** entrepreneur in her 50s, is involved in aquaculture and the export of shrimp. Her choice of business may seem surprising in view of the fact that Brahmins do not eat prawns or shrimp. A successful name in Chennai in the field of travel and tourism is that of Radhika Chandrasekhar, who owns and operates Shibi Travels. Some women entrepreneurs have inherited their family business. Rajeshwari Ramakrishnan inherited two of her father's companies—Jeypore Sugars and Krishna Industrial Corporation, which runs a chemical plant. Malini Parthasarathy belongs to *The Hindu* Kasturi group and is closely involved with running the **newspapers** and magazines in that group. Rajashreepathy has also inherited the family sugar business from her father and runs Ra-

jashree Sugars and Chemicals Limited with factories in **Coimbatore**. Mallika Srinivasan is the granddaughter of the celebrated industrialist S. Ananthakrishnan, known in business circles as “J.” Mallika is involved in the management of Tractors and Farm Equipments Ltd. (TAFE), which forms a part of the **Amalgamations** group of companies. Many women are engaged in the gold and jewelry business either independently or as part of a family enterprise. *See also* ECONOMY; INDUSTRY; WOMEN IN TAMIL CINEMA.

WOMEN IN TAMIL CINEMA. In the early years of the **Tamil cinema**, no Tamil **women** were willing to act on the silver screen because no “respectable” woman liked to encounter male attention/gaze in public spaces. Nataraja **Mudaliyar** solved this problem by persuading Englishwomen or Anglo-Indians to act in his films. Violet Berry was one such actress. In his film *Draupadi Vastrabharanam*, released in 1917, it was a foreigner who played the role of Draupadi because no Indian woman would go through the imaginary act of public stripping! Another way out of this situation was to get men to play the role of women. This practice persisted during the period of the talkies as well. In the film *Menaka* (1935), actor T. K. Muthuswamy played the role of Perundevi, a widow, since no woman was willing to accept this inauspicious role. In the film *Bhakta Ramadas* (1935), all female characters, including Sita, were played by men. Men who were adept at playing women’s roles came to be addressed by the prefix “Streepart,” such as Streepart “**Alli**” Ananthanarayan, Streepart “Nallatangal” T. S. Kannusami, Streepart “Valli” Vaidyanatha **Iyer**, etc. In a peculiar situation of role reversal in the dramatic and cinematic version of *SriValli* (1933), P. U. Kittappa acted the female role of Valli while the singing sensation **K. B. Sundarambal** acted the male role of **Murugan**! Women came into their own in Tamil films with such actresses as T. P. Rajalakshmi who began her career in the 1930s acting a boy’s role in the film *Pavalakkodi*. Subsequently, Tamil cinema has seen such great actresses as T. R. Rajakumari, P. Bhanumati, **Savitri Ganeshan**, and **B. Saroja Devi**. The erstwhile chief minister **J. Jayalalitha** was known for her romantic pairing, both on and off-screen, with **M. G. Ramachandran**. *See also* WOMEN IN BUSINESS; WOMEN’S PERIODICALS.

WOMEN'S PERIODICALS. The earliest effort in the direction of producing a journal exclusively for **women** was in 1887 when the *Madar Mithiri* was started. V. Krishnamachari began *Maharani* also in the same year, while C. S. Ramaswami **Iyer** published *Madar Manoranjani* in 1901. Vaithyanatha Iyer published *Charkravarthini* in 1905. It is noteworthy that, up to this point, progressive **Brahmin** males had launched all of the journals and magazines for women. In 1911, Mrs. English (this appears to be the pen name of an Indian woman) began the *Madar Bodini*. A series of journals started by women for women followed. Interestingly, some of these began to focus on specific issues relating to women. R. Jayammal published *Pen Kalvi* at Madras (present-day **Chennai**) aimed at women's **education** in 1911. In 1926, S. Mangalammal founded *Tamizh Magal* at Madras, which sought to address many areas of women's concerns, while *Grahani* by Mrs. V. K. Black (Anglo-Indian?) addressed only housewives. In 1936, M. Maragathavalli started the radical magazine *Marumanam* at Karaikkudi (literally re-marriage, which was a votary of widow re-marriage).

Diaspora Tamil women also played important roles in addressing the concerns of Indian women through their periodicals. Two of these are noteworthy—*Tamizh Arasi*, founded by A. Kamalavati in Kuala Lumpur in 1936, and *Mangai*, also from the same place, by K. Savi-triammal in 1947. Nearly 60 years later, *Mangai* still continues as one of the most popular women's magazines. Many of these journals were also deeply involved with the **freedom struggle**.

After 1947, women's journals began making a gradual transition into quasi-feminist and full-fledged feminist journals. One of the most important in this genre was *Pudumaipen*, begun by Gugapriya (a celebrated woman writer) in 1947. In 1948, S. Visalakshi founded *Kumkumam* that continues to be published and is read widely. Men also continue to publish women's journals, and a good example is R. Rajaram's *Sahodari*, started in 1948. The last few decades have witnessed a spate of women's journals. In 1961, the Women's Association of Chennai started *Bhagalakshmi*. This was followed by *Kadambari* in 1965. In 1975, *Mangai* revived under Visvam. The same year, *Mangaiyar Malar* was started by V. Murali. This journal along with *Manamagal* followed the traditional pattern of the housewife magazine with beauty tips, recipes and family issues. Magazines like *Mangaiyar Malar* have

also added a regular column on religion. In 1984, Parasakti started *Sumangali*, which became the subject of an M.Phil. dissertation by J. R. Lakshmi submitted to the **University of Madras**. The list of women's journals continues to grow as women oscillate between "feminine" and "feminist" concerns. *See also* EDUCATION; NEWSPAPERS; WOMEN IN BUSINESS; WOMEN IN TAMIL CINEMA.

WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA. *See* UNIVERSITY, MOTHER TERESA WOMEN'S.

WORLD TAMIL CONFERENCE. The International Association of **Tamil** Research was founded in 1964, and it proposed to conduct World Tamil Conferences once every two years. Due to the initiative taken by Rev. Xavier S. Taninayagam, the first World Tamil Conference was held in **Malaysia** in 1966. Some 130 scholars from 22 countries presented research papers on Tamil language and culture. The Second World Tamil Conference was held in Madras (present-day **Chennai**) in 1968, and 190 scholars from 41 countries took part in its deliberations. A souvenir called *Kaiyidu* was edited by S. Ganesan and released by the then Tamil Nadu chief minister **C. N. Annadurai**. The Third World Tamil Conference was held in Paris in 1970, the choice of the venue indicating the major role of the **Tamil Diaspora** in Europe. The then Tamil Nadu chief minister **M. Karunanidhi**, himself, participated in the proceedings. The Fourth World Tamil Conference was held at Jaffna in Ceylon (present-day **Sri Lanka**) in 1974, and 175 scholars from 20 countries participated. The Fifth World Tamil Conference was held in **Madurai**, the home of **Sangam** Tamil in 1981. The Sixth World Tamil Conference was once again held in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia in 1987. The Seventh was at Mauritius, another major center of Tamil Diaspora, in 1990. The most recent World Tamil Conference—the eighth—was held in **Tanjavur** in 1995 during **J. Jayalalitha**'s first term as the chief minister of Tamil Nadu.

– X –

XAVIER, ST. FRANCIS (1506–1552). Landing at Manapadu (south of Tiruchendur) in 1542, the Catholic missionary Francis Xavier

went to Tuttukkudi by foot and on his way saw some villages sparsely populated by convert **Christians** “who knew nothing about their new religion.” These groups had been converted by the Portuguese in the 15th century and belonged to the extremely backward classes. Xavier baptized all of the children who were born after the mass baptisms of 1536 and 1537 and translated into Tamil the most essential parts of the small Christian catechism. There were 30 Christian villages, and he appointed a catechist to teach the children the Christian doctrine twice a day. He further arranged with the queen of Portugal that 4,000 gold *panams* (a Tamil unit of money with fluctuating metallic and exchange value) that the Parava community (a fishing community of Kerala) paid yearly for the slippers of the queen should be handed over in future to the missionaries for the maintenance of the catechists of the court. He left for Malacca in 1546 and was succeeded by Fr. Antony Crimali, who could read and write Tamil, a skill that greatly facilitated the process of conversion. *See also* BESCHI; C. J.; RELIGION; ZIEGENBALG BARTHOLOMAEUS G.

– Z –

ZIEGENBALG, BARTHOLOMAEUS (1681–1719). He was a German Lutheran Missionary who came to India for the sole purpose of conversion but is remembered today for his contributions to **Tamil** language and culture. He was the first Western scholar to prepare a catalog of Tamil literary works with brief sketches about each text. His *Bibliotheca Malabarica*, published in 1708, contained a descriptive catalog of books in his possession. Ziegenbalg, however, never gave up his missionary zeal. He set up a printing press in Tranquebar (located at the estuary of **River Kaveri** and called Tarangampadi by the local people) and a small paper mill at Poriyar in its vicinity. The translation and publication of the Bible in Tamil was one of his major goals. The benefits that this press rendered in the modernization and spread of the Tamil language was incidental, but the **Christian** press went far in furthering the cause of conversions in South India. *See also* BESCHI, C. J.; POPE, G. U.; RELIGION; XAVIER, ST. FRANCIS.

Bibliography

INTRODUCTION

The renowned Tamil poet and lyricist Kannadasan once aptly remarked, “*Tamilan illada Nadu illai, Tamilanukku endru oru Nadu illai*” [“There’s no land where there are no Tamils (and yet) there is no land that is there for the Tamils.”] The Tamils, therefore, call themselves today a “Trans State Nation.” This bibliography is intended as a pathfinder for those who wish to research the Tamils as well as for those Tamils who want to know more about their own historical and social roots. The bibliography is, by and large, a catalog of English books on Tamil history, society, culture, and economy. However, there is an exclusive section devoted to books in Tamil, which the author found most useful while writing this historical dictionary. Those who are conversant with the language and are interested in doing some follow-up reading could use this select Tamil bibliography as pointers. It must be stated, however, that publishing details are very often not available for many of these Tamil works. They are either published by the authors themselves or by some private press with no outreach. Many of these also do not carry the year of publication. Tracing these sources can therefore be a painstaking albeit rewarding experience.

This bibliography endeavors to be a judicious mix of the old and new. Like most colonies of the British, in the old Madras Presidency too, the earliest mapping of the land, topographical surveys, land revenue reports, anthropological analysis of castes and tribes, and historical overviews were either provided by British administrators like B. T. Boag, engineers like Colin Mackenzie, or civil servants-cum-anthropologists like Edgar Thurston. Another category of Western scholars who would figure in this bibliography are the Christian missionaries like Abbe Carrie whose accounts are most valuable in understanding Tamil language and literature, albeit from the perspective

of the “Outsider.” These works, which go back to the late 19th and early 20th century, are indispensable for a broad understanding of the geographical and economic terrain of the Tamil country.

The other category of early writings on the Tamils was by Nationalist Tamil scholars like Maraimalai Adgal, Subramanya Bharatiyar, and others. Perhaps the most scintillating of these early writings on the Tamils is V. Kanakasabai’s *The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago*, published in 1904. This book brings to the narration of Tamil history, culture, and commerce, a passion that is totally absent in the meticulous but dry accounts of the British colonial servants. Another equally valuable introduction to the early Tamils is P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar’s *History of the Tamils: From the Earliest Times to 600 AD*. This work was completed in 1928 but published only in 1945 by Lokanathan and Co. Srinivasa Iyengar’s exquisite translations of Sangam poetry and their reflection on life of the early Tamils should prove an excellent introduction to anyone seeking to be initiated into Tamil studies.

The bibliography contains a number of entries on the writings of Nilakanta Shastri, who is regarded as a doyen among Tamil historians. His monographs on the Chola and Pandya dynasties are the most authoritative works on these dynasties to date. The other pioneering historians of the nationalist era would include C. S. Srinivasachari, S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar, and V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar. Insofar as early histories written in Tamil are concerned, Ramachandra Chettiar’s *Kongu Nattu Varalaru* and Sadasiva Pandarattar’s *Pirkala Chozhargal* can be considered truly path-breaking works.

Literature was another area that was of great interest to the Tamil scholars deeply involved in the resurgence of Tamil language and the reassertion of Tamil identity through a Tamil literary renaissance. The names of Vaiyapuri Pillai, who wrote the history of Tamil literature, and of U. V. Svinimatha Iyer, who edited a large part of the Sangam anthologies, are at the forefront of such pioneers. Both find a place in this bibliography. The bibliography on Tamil literature contains references to works by those scholars who were participants in the Tamil linguistic nationalism of the early decades of the 20th century. Tamil works by missionary scholars, including G. U. Pope, who translated texts such as the late Sangam *Naladiyar* and the 10th century *Tiruvachagam*, as well as Bishop Robert Caldwell, who wrote several authoritative works on Tamil grammar, are essential reading for the committed student of Tamil

literature. In recent years scholars like George L. Hart (*The Poems of Ancient Tamils: Their Milieu and their Sanskrit Counterparts*); Kamil Zvelebil (*The Smile of Murugan: On Tamil Literature of South India*); and Alain Danielou who translated the *Silappadikaram* have made major contributions to the field of Tamil literature and culture.

Finally, it is essential to point out the tremendous contribution made by Sri Lankan Tamils to the field of Tamil arts, literature, and culture. This bibliographical list contains a number of references to the works of A. K. (Ananda Kentish) Coomaraswamy whose books, like *The Dance of Siva* (collection of essays) and *The Indian Craftsman*, are indispensable source materials to researchers and laymen seeking to understand Indian ethos and aesthetics. Vidyandandan is another Sri Lankan Tamil scholar whose work *Tamizhar Salbu* in the Tamil language is a comprehensive study of the life of the Sangam Tamils.

The bibliography section on folklore has references to the works of N. Vanamamalai. He ran his own research journal on Tamil folklore called *Aarai-chchi*, which died with him. One must state here that Vanamamalai was one among the many Tamil scholars who lived under straitened circumstances but spent their own money to bring out journals on Tamil culture and language. K. P. Aravanan started the publishing press called *Tamil Koottam* with similar ideals. It is worth mentioning that when I wrote to the official address of the Tamil Koottam press asking for some of their publications, his widow simply parcelled to me a number of their books, delighted at my interest in the Tamils! Books published by the Tamil Koottam have been listed in this bibliography, and interested scholars would do well to contact the press directly since it has no marketing outlets. Dr. R. Nagaswamy, similarly, brings out a number of books through his Tamil Academic Press. Among the Tamil literary journals the well-known *Kalachchuvadhu* has been cited along with the lesser known *Arivottam* published by the archaeologist and historian K. R. Shankaran along with a dedicated team of Tamil scholars who are putting their own money and resources into this commendable venture.

The bibliographical list on the economic survey of Tamil Nadu largely contains colonial reports coupled with recent writings by economic historians who choose to identify themselves more specifically as labor economists or business economists. The only economic historian of note in the early 20th century was A. Appadorai who wrote his two-volume work, *Economic Conditions in Southern India*, in 1936.

The reading list on Tamil politics and Tamil economy both have a number of citations from the *Economic and Political Weekly*, a leading Indian journal started in the 1950s, which serves as a barometer of public opinion on many leading issues in the Indian polity. Some of the most thought-provoking essays on Tamil politics and culture are from the *EPW*, as the journal is popularly known.

Some of the bibliographical entries may appear incongruous in the place where they are located but fit in perfectly in terms of their content if not their title. To give an example, R. Nagaswamy's tiny monograph called *Uttaramerur: The Historic Village in South India* deals with two ninth-tenth century inscriptions describing the democratic functioning of a Chola village with a system of fair elections and a clearly laid out code of conduct for politicians. The book is therefore placed under both politics and history as a case study of political and social democracy rather than under the rubric of "Society" as a village study.

One other clarification is needed about the use of "Chennai" and "Madras" in the bibliography. Chennai is alternatively referred to as Madras, the colonial name for the capital of Tamil Nadu. Now the Tamil Nadu government has reverted back to the indigenous name of "Chennai." The resultant confusion gets reflected in the details of publication as well, both in English and in Tamil works. It must therefore be understood that while the citing follows the logic of the author, both the names refer to the capital city of Tamil Nadu.

This bibliography is selective. This is especially true of the Tamil citations, essentially an acknowledgment of the sources that proved most useful in the writing of this dictionary. It is hoped that it will act as an academic road map to scholars on their way to studying the Tamils and their multi-faceted history.

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